**Spotlight Initiative’s Civil Society Global Reference Group – Draft Terms of Reference**

**Background and Objective**

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is an egregious human rights violation that cuts across all countries and cultures. It hinders the achievement of women and girls’ human rights and their abilities to live and love and reach their full potential in safety and dignity. Eliminating VAWG and achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment is, therefore, a pre-requisite to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

In September 2017, the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) launched the Spotlight Initiative -- a global partnership to eliminate all forms of VAWG. Backed by a financial investment of EUR 500 million, the Initiative will operate in five regions (Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific) and respond to all forms of VAWG, with a particular focus in specific regions on domestic and family violence, sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, femicide, trafficking in human beings and sexual and economic (labour) exploitation. In line with the 2030 Agenda, the Initiative will fully integrate the principle of *‘leaving no one behind’* and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach.

For decades women’s movements have been at the forefront of the fight to eliminate violence and harmful practices against women and girls across the globe. Their expertise spans all the Outcomes of the Spotlight Initiative’s comprehensive Theory of Change -- supporting the implementation of laws, policies and interventions in order to prohibit, prevent and sanction all forms of VAWG; tackling impunity; ensuring timely, adequate and high-quality multi-sectoral services for survivors; educating women and girls on their rights, as well as men and boys on the harmful consequences of traditional notions of masculinity; addressing social and cultural norms that perpetuate and enable discrimination; ensuring accurate, reliable and meaningful data on all forms of VAWG; and building alliances, movements and solidarity across the world to advance progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The Spotlight Initiative intends to work closely with women’s movements and relevant human rights-based civil society organizations (CSOs) on the design and implementation of the Initiative and its Country and Regional Programmes in a mutually supportive and reinforcing way, deploying and building upon their vast knowledge and experience, developed at global, regional, national and community levels.

To this end the Initiative will establish a Civil Society Global Reference Group (CS-GRG) as an institutional mechanism to harness civil society expertise. The CS-GRG will have a dual responsibility — as advisors to the Spotlight Initiative and as advocates and partners for the realization of its objectives.

**Mandate**

The CS-GRG is a group of around 15 pre-eminent global experts on eliminating VAWG and harmful practices (HP) as well as on women’s rights more broadly. The CS-GRG will also nominate one of its members to serve on the Governing Body[[1]](#footnote-1) of the Spotlight Initiative as a non-voting representative.

The Group should meet at least twice a year (at least once physically), preferably in the margins of global events, such as the Commission on the Status of Women or the UN General Assembly. Other *ad-hoc* virtual meetings could be convened as necessary. The CS-GRG will:

* Provide advice on the overall strategic direction of the Spotlight Initiative and on cutting-edge global policy issues on eliminating VAWG and HP
* Provide advice and perspectives on current eliminating VAWG and HP-related issues where the Spotlight Initiative’s advocacy, leadership and support to civil society advocacy is important
* Assist as a partner in high-level advocacy and communications as well as political dialogue, including by supporting visibility and promotion of the Initiative’s goals at the global level
* Support efforts at dissemination of the messages of the Spotlight Initiative on VAWG and HP to the public, from the global to the community level, especially to marginalized groups, youth and relevant media
* Serve as an interactive space and open forum for dialogue between the Spotlight Initiative and organisations working on eliminating VAWG and HP, including global developments, trends and risks related to work on eliminating VAWG and HP
* Provide feedback to the Governing Body on the Spotlight Initiative’s implementation

In addition to advising the Governing Body of the Initiative, the CS-GRG will have a close working relationship with the Secretariat of the Spotlight Initiative to ensure its systematic engagement in providing technical advice and informing programming on addressing VAWG, including for the most marginalized groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, which is key to responding to Agenda 2030’s *‘leaving no one behind’* imperative.

**Criteria**

* All members included in the CS-GRG should be leaders with significant experience working on women’s rights and gender equality and have expertise in eliminating VAWG
* Additionally, members should include individuals with knowledge of human rights and feminist frameworks and experience in issues of protection of women human rights defenders
* Members should ideally be leaders or members of global, regional and/or sub-regional women’s rights organisations/networks and other relevant networks of CSOs working on eliminating VAWG from a human rights and local-global articulation perspective
* In adherence with the *leaving no one behind* (LNOB) principle, intersectionality and diversity of communities/constituencies should be well represented, and sexual and reproductive health and rights activists, leaders of indigenous groups, LBTQI leaders, representatives of organisations of persons with disabilities, grassroots organizations, community-based organizations, networks and movements, labour/trade unions and women activists living with HIV, migrant, domestic, informal and sex workers considered for inclusion
* Geographic balance will be a key consideration to ensure fair representation of all regions on the CS-GRG
* More than 50% of the CS-GRG members represent women’s rights movements and feminist organisations
* The Group should include representatives from important constituencies such as youth networks, progressive faith-based groups and networks of men and boys working on eliminating VAWG using a human rights-based approach
* CS-GRG members will not have any formal affiliations with governments or political parties
* CS-GRG members join the group in their individual capacities and not as representatives of their organizations

Knowledge of English will not be a pre-condition for participation in the CS-GRG.

**Call for nominations for members the Spotlight Initiative’s Civil Society Global Reference Group**

The Secretariat of the Spotlight Initiative invites nominations from the women’s movement and relevant human rights-based civil society organizations and networks to be part of the Initiative’s Civil Society Global Reference Group (CS-GRG).

All nominations will be reviewed by a 7-person Selection Committee[[2]](#footnote-2) comprising civil society leaders and two members of the Spotlight Secretariat.

Individuals may nominate themselves and organisations, entities and individuals may nominate other individuals using the Nomination Form below. All Nomination Forms must be accompanied by the candidate’s CV or a brief bio and sent to the following e-mail address: **sonya.thimmaiah@undp.org.**

The deadline for the submission of all nominations is **22 November 2018**. Please note we will not be able to accept any nominations after this date.

It is expected that the Spotlight Initiative’s Civil Society Global Reference Group will be in place by early December 2018.

**Nomination Form for the Spotlight Initiative’s Civil Society Global Reference Group**

1. First name of candidate:
2. Last name of candidate:
3. Nationality:
4. Region of expertise:
5. Telephone:
6. e-mail address:
7. Is this a self-nomination? Yes/No

Are you/is the candidate currently affiliated with a formal or informal organization/network/group? If yes, please explain the nature of the work you do/the candidate does with this organization/network/group, areas of focus and expertise and how the work is linked to eliminating VAWG and the pursuit of gender equality and women’s empowerment more broadly using a human rights-based approach.

Keeping in mind the criteria for membership listed above, please provide a brief justification for your/the candidate’s suitability to be a member of the Spotlight Initiative’s Civil Society Global Reference Group.

1. The Governing Body of the Spotlight Initiative is responsible for providing strategic direction and leadership on the Initiative. Representation on the Governing Body is as follows: High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, and an eminent women’s rights and civil society leader with experience on eliminating VAWG nominated by the CS-GRG. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Civil society members: Shahbaz Akbar, Dr. Alessandra Aresu, Marusia Lopez, Dr. Karen Müller and Zuki Mihyo; Spotlight Secretariat members: Erin Kenny and Sonya Thimmaiah [↑](#footnote-ref-2)