



**MS. ROSA MALANGO, RESIDENT COORDINATOR  
SPOTLIGHT COUNTRY PROGRAM DOCUMENT SIGNING CEREMONY  
MINISTRY OF GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
7/06/2019, 11:00AM  
VENUE: BOARDROOM, MGLSD**

**TALKING POINT**

- Hon. Minister Janat Mukwaya; Ministers of Gender Labour and Social Development; Permanent Secretary and Gender Champion, Mr. Pius Bigirimana; Deputy Head of the EU Delegation and other representatives of the European Union, and UN Colleagues (UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA), media, all protocol observed.
- I am delighted to be with you this morning at the signing of the program document for this transformational initiative and to communicate the United Nations' commitment and support to the Government and the people of Uganda in combating violence against women and children.
- I am here this morning representing the United Nations system in Uganda, along with my colleagues from individual UN agencies who have led in the design and will guide the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in Uganda. [*Introduce Heads of Agencies present Dr. Maxime Houinato UNWomen, Ms. Elsie Attafuah (UNDP), Mr. Alain Sibenaler (UNFPA and Deputies; Ms. Noreen Prendiville (UNICEF), Ms. Mahoua Parums (UNHCR)]*]
- We all know that violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in the world today. It is a major obstacle to the fulfillment of women's and girls' human rights and a threat to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Uganda's Development.
- The high-level statistics are well known: 56% of women have experience spousal violence and 22% sexual violence;<sup>1</sup> 35% of girls and 17% of boys had experienced sexual violence, and 59% of females and 68% of males reporting experiencing physical violence during childhood.<sup>2</sup> We also know that harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) still prevail in some parts of Uganda.

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<sup>1</sup> 2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey;

<sup>2</sup> 2015 Violence Against Children Survey

- To address these staggering statistics, the Spotlight Initiative will respond to all forms of violence against women and girls, with a particular focus in Uganda on sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices of child marriage and female genital mutilation, as well the linkages between GBV and sexual and reproductive health and rights and the linkages between GBV and violence against children more broadly.
- As a demonstration fund for action on the **SDGs**, the Spotlight Initiative aims to demonstrate that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in gender equality can make a transformative difference in the lives of women and girls. In addition to supporting Uganda's advancement towards Goal 5 (Gender Equality), it also will support Goal 3 (with respect to sexual and reproductive health), Goal 10 (reducing inequalities), Goal 16 (rule of law and accountable institutions), and Goal 17 (strengthening strategic partnerships).
- In line with Goal 17, the Spotlight Initiative is a result of **extensive global and national consultations** with multiple government sectors, civil society, the private sector, donors, religious and cultural leaders, local governments, women, youth, men, and vulnerable groups. It represents the essence of the **UN Reform**, which prioritizes broad and meaningful partnerships across UN agencies, government sectors and actors to effectively contribute to the attainment of the SDGs.
- As a result, the Spotlight Initiative takes a **whole of government, whole of society, whole of UN approach**. Together, we will address legislative and policy gaps, strengthen institutions, promote gender-equitable attitudes, provide quality services for survivors and their families, and end impunity for violence against women and children. Interventions will also strengthen systems for collecting data on violence against women and girls and empower women's movements.
- Through this Initiative, the Government of Uganda, the United Nations, and the European Union are once again demonstrating our individual and collective commitment to achieving a society where women and girls are safe from violence and abuse.
- We hope that this initiative will be catalytic, and the targets and multi-sectoral strategies become embedded in the forthcoming National Development Plan III, as well as the forthcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2021-2021 (formerly called UNDAF). This is about hope and mind set change.
- Before I conclude, I want to personally thank the Hon. Minister, the Permanent Secretary, and the technical team at the MGLSD for your commitment to this initiative and your willingness to work through differences to achieve a stronger programme that reflects the priorities of the people and government of Uganda. Your leadership is key for success.

- We look forward to meeting again later this month for the first Joint Steering Committee meeting, as well as a National Launch of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative in Uganda.
- I conclude by reiterating our commitment to women and girls in Uganda through this Joint EU-UN Spotlight Initiative. Together we can make sure that women and girls are not left behind. Thank you.