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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
and the Secretary-General**

**Economic and Social Council
Commission on the Status of Women
Sixtieth session**

14-24 March 2016

Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Follow-up to the Fourth World
Conference on Women and to the twenty-
third special session of the General
Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender
equality, development and peace for the
twenty-first century”: gender
mainstreaming, situations and
programmatic matters**

**Report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the
United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to
Eliminate Violence against Women**

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith, to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council, the report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, which was prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166.

* E/CN.6/2016/1.



I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women is a global, multilateral, grant-making mechanism that supports efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. It was established in 1996 by the General Assembly, in its resolution 50/166, and is administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on behalf of the United Nations system.

2. UN-Women provides the Trust Fund with a strong institutional foundation and field support through its regional, multi-country and country offices. The Trust Fund supports and strengthens the work of UN-Women and the United Nations system, working closely with the rest of the United Nations system through its inter-agency Programme Advisory Committee,¹ and plays a vital role in driving collective efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.

3. The Trust Fund raises and distributes funds in support of multi-year programmes to address, prevent and ultimately end violence against women and girls. To date, it has supported 426 initiatives in 136 countries and territories. The Trust Fund currently supports 111 initiatives involving civil society organizations, governments and United Nations country teams in 76 countries and territories, with grants totalling \$57 million. In 2015, the Trust Fund almost doubled its grant-giving portfolio, to \$14 million.

4. As at December 2015, the Governments of Australia, Austria, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had contributed to the Trust Fund's nineteenth grant-making cycle. Support was also received from the UN-Women National Committees of Finland, Germany, Iceland, Japan and Sweden and the UN-Women for Peace Association, the Swedish Postcode Foundation, Soko and Yuwei Design. The Trust Fund was also one of the beneficiaries of funds raised in June at the United Nations International Bazaar, an event supported by Mrs. Ban Soon-taek.

5. The present report, prepared for the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council, describes the impact and achievements of the Trust Fund in 2015.

¹ In 2015, the Trust Fund convened eight inter-agency, regional and global meetings of the Programme Advisory Committee. In those meetings, 46 people from 15 United Nations agencies, funds and programmes participated in the grantee selection process relating to the nineteenth grant-making cycle. In 2015, agencies participating in the Advisory Committee included: the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the liaison office for the regional commissions in New York, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. Intergovernmental organizations and other experts at the global and field levels, including representatives from the Center for Women's Global Leadership and Equality Now, were also actively involved in the grant-making process.

II. Context

6. The movement to prevent and end violence against women and girls has seen enormous progress since the Trust Fund was established 20 years ago. However, despite achievements in a number of areas, gender-based violence remains a human rights crisis affecting girls and women all over the world, regardless of class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation or culture. Such violence is at the brutal extreme of a spectrum of discrimination that denies women a whole range of rights and is one of the key cross-cutting challenges identified in General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which Member States adopted the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015.

7. The estimates concerning current levels of violence against women and girls reflect a prevalence that is painfully familiar, with around a third of women worldwide having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence by a non-partner. Intimate partner violence remains the most common form of violence and women account for two thirds of victims of intimate partner or family-related homicides. Violence against women and girls takes many forms, from sexual harassment in schools to systematic sexual violence in conflict-related situations and female genital mutilation, the latter affecting more than 125 million women. In most countries, fewer than 40 per cent of women survivors of violence seek help of any sort.²

8. In the Sustainable Development Goals, States reiterated their recognition of the fact that eliminating gender-based violence is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development. The Trust Fund has elaborated its future priorities in the context of those global commitments. They will serve to direct and galvanize Trust Fund efforts to elicit and allocate the resources needed to support the achievement of relevant targets within the new Sustainable Development Goals.

9. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, in July 2015, reaffirmed the centrality of the full realization of women’s and girls’ rights, including the right to be free of violence (see General Assembly resolution 69/313). The Trust Fund welcomed the reaffirmation by the world’s governments that resourcing efforts to address and end violence against women is crucial to achieving sustainable development.

10. In line with the recommendations made by the Commission at its fifty-seventh session, in 2013, the Trust Fund focuses its efforts strategically on initiatives that look to strengthen the implementation of legal and policy frameworks and the provision of timely, comprehensive and multisectoral services for survivors (see E/2013/27-E/CN.6/2013/11). As the projects described below show, such initiatives can produce life-changing results, including in conflict and post-conflict situations. Responding to recommendations about the need for an enhanced evidence base, since 2013 the Trust Fund has also worked to develop and establish improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms with the ultimate aim of sharing lessons learned and replicating and upscaling effective initiatives to address various aspects of violence against women. The programmes are as diverse as the communities in

² Statistics Division, *The World’s Women 2015: Trends and Statistics*, chapter 6, available from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/chapter6/chapter6.html>.

which they operate. However, community engagement, awareness-raising and education campaigns are strong themes running through the range of programmes for addressing the structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent violence against women and girls and effect sustainable change.

III. Setting a course for the future

11. A fundamental premise at the core of the Trust Fund's mission is that ensuring freedom from violence is inseparable from improving the life chances, choices and opportunities available to all women and girls and empowering them to pursue such opportunities. Therefore, the Trust Fund centres its work within the framework of intersectionality and the existing obligations of States under international and national law. In that context, the newly agreed Sustainable Development Goals provide a platform and umbrella for the Trust Fund's strategic vision.

12. The Trust Fund has set the course for its future work with the adoption of its new strategic plan, 2015-2020. The plan was developed in consultation with Trust Fund donors and grantees, Member States, members of civil society organizations, experts on the issue of violence against women and girls and members of the Trust Fund's Programme Advisory Committee.

13. The key focus areas that will guide Trust Fund interventions are: providing multisectoral services for survivors, paying particular attention to the needs of underserved women and girls; prevention, with a specific focus on formal education; changing social norms, beliefs and attitudes, with a specific focus on actively engaging men and young people; proactively using advances in technology; disseminating and publicizing lessons learned by building a global evidence hub based on the evaluated results of Trust Fund grantees; ensuring that supported programmes focus on delivering sustainable and impact-oriented results; and advocating for increased global giving in order to fund programmes that address violence against women and girls.

14. In line with its aim of securing concrete and sustainable results, the Trust Fund will look to award larger and longer-term grants that allow projects to be implemented and evaluated adequately. Where the evidence suggests that specific results could provide a model that can be replicated elsewhere, the Trust Fund may consider directly reinvesting in those projects. Those grantees invited to submit a second proposal, for a further funding cycle, will be selected on the basis of specific, measurable criteria, including evidence of specific results achieved, sustainability, the potential for replication and the use of innovative methodologies and approaches. The work of identifying existing grantees who fulfil those criteria has already begun.

15. The Trust Fund has increased its investment in improving the monitoring and evaluation capacity of its grantees. A central focus of the new strategic plan is to enhance evaluation capacity- and evidence-building in order not only to strengthen accountability, but also to harness the global community of practice represented by Trust Fund grantees in support of evidence-based programming. Such measures as creating spaces to collate, analyse and present Trust Fund findings and further developing the Trust Fund's interactive online grant management system will form part of the operationalization of the plan.

16. The strategic plan reaffirms the Trust Fund's determination to reverse the chronic underinvestment that continues to hamper work to prevent and end violence against women and girls.³ Specifically, the Trust Fund aims to play a catalytic role in advocating for enhanced global giving and liaise with new potential partners, particularly in the private and business sectors. In 2015, the Trust Fund formed a new partnership with the Swedish Postcode Lottery Foundation to support technology-based programmes to end violence. The Trust Fund continued its successful partnership with Soko, an ethical fashion brand, and with Yuwei Designs, a jewellery company, and forged greater links with the fashion and entertainment sectors through partnerships with FASH UNITED, a California-based non-governmental organization; We-Are (The Collective), an organization in London; the LDNY Foundation; and the Women: Inspiration and Enterprise Network. In April, the Trust Fund was honoured at the Women: Inspiration and Enterprise Network Awards in the United Kingdom, which celebrate the success of inspirational women. The Trust Fund's partnership with Music for Life International culminated in a fundraising concert, held at Carnegie Hall, in New York, in October.

Grant giving in 2015

17. In 2015, the Trust Fund received 1,715 applications, from 119 countries and territories. The total funding requested was more than \$662 million. The Trust Fund awarded \$12.86 million, in 33 grants, covering 29 countries and territories. Thirty civil society organizations and three governments received grants for projects that are expected to reach 1.2 million beneficiaries by 2018.

18. In terms of grant value, 22 per cent of the funds allocated went to programmes in Asia and the Pacific; 28 per cent to programmes in Africa; 20 per cent to programmes in Europe and Central Asia; 12 per cent to programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean; 10 per cent to programmes in the Arab States and North Africa; and 8 per cent to cross-regional programmes. Grants amounting to some 8 per cent of the total (\$1,085,832) were awarded in the form of small grants (less than \$100,000), predominantly to smaller women's organizations, as part of the Trust Fund's new strategy to increase funding to smaller grass-roots organizations.

19. Projects in Africa awarded grants in 2015 will address a range of issues, from breaking the social consensus of silence around sexual harassment in secondary schools (Cameroon), to using transformative participation processes to engage young men in decreasing violence against women (Kenya). Other Trust Fund projects will address harmful practices through community-driven projects (United Republic of Tanzania) and efforts to translate state commitments, laws and policies into action to prevent the perpetration of and protect women from violence and other harmful practices, with a focus on female genital mutilation/cutting and early marriage (Kenya). A regional initiative will continue and upscale a previous Trust Fund-supported project to enhance multisectoral strategies to respond effectively to violence in conflict-related settings (Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kenya). This new phase of the project, for which the grantee was invited to apply, focuses on strengthening the capacity of local partners to assume full ownership of training

³ Angelika Arutyunova and Cindy Clark, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality* (Toronto, Canada, Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID), 2013).

on forensic methods and documentation, including through a mobile application, known as MediCapt, which was developed in the first phase of the project.

20. In Latin America and the Caribbean, projects will focus on addressing the needs of young, marginalized women and improving access to justice and support services for women from indigenous and rural communities (Brazil), creating safer schools and communities (Guyana), and capacity-building among indigenous and rural women to change attitudes in order to implement legislation on violence against women (Nicaragua). A project focusing on the needs of survivors of violence perpetrated during the long internal armed conflict in Peru will seek to empower older women.

21. In the Arab region and North Africa, projects will aim to strengthen the institutional capacity of non-governmental organizations and trade unions to eliminate violence against women in the garment and health sectors (Egypt), to produce a toolkit for disseminating specialized legal knowledge among non-specialist audiences (Jordan), and to improve access to vital services for survivors of domestic violence and to teach children and young people to identify and protect themselves from sexual violence (State of Palestine).

22. In Asia and the Pacific, strengthening institutional responses to violence against women and girls and improving access to justice for survivors of sexual violence perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge will be the focus of projects in Cambodia, one of which builds on and extends the work of a previous Trust Fund-backed project. Another new project will work to empower women and girl survivors of violence from marginalized communities, such as lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and women living with HIV/AIDS (China). In Nepal, a new project will focus on schools, using a twofold strategy of football coaching and life skills workshops to teach young girls how to protect themselves against violence. A project in Viet Nam will address the problem of intimate partner violence against pregnant women and new mothers.

23. New projects in Europe and Central Asia show a similar broad spectrum of approaches. One Trust Fund-backed project focuses on primary prevention of domestic violence and improving service delivery to survivors, through capacity-building among officials, effective safeguarding measures and multisectoral service delivery (Armenia). Another will set up a shelter to provide a safe environment and free legal, medical and psychological services for survivors of domestic violence (Azerbaijan). Projects in Serbia address a range of issues, from improving service delivery for survivors of sexual violence, to eliminating the harmful practice of early marriage among Roma girls and minority women and improving measures to end violence against women with disabilities in custodial institutions.

24. The Trust Fund also awarded a grant to a cross-regional project that seeks to extend the application of a groundbreaking evidence-based community mobilization approach, known as “SASA!”, developed by Raising Voices. Currently, the SASA! methodology is being implemented in over 20 countries, by more than 60 organizations. The Trust Fund previously supported the first cohort of organizations working with Raising Voices across Eastern and Southern Africa. The project will collaborate with three partner organizations in the United Republic of Tanzania, Ethiopia and Haiti. The unique learning and tools coming out of the programme are ultimately expected to enhance the global impact of SASA! in preventing violence against women and girls.

IV. Trust Fund grantee achievements in 2015

25. Trust Fund grantees around the world work to change attitudes, improve service delivery and advocate for the implementation of laws. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, efforts by civil society groups, supported by UN-Women, led to the final approval in 2013 of legislation designed to end bride kidnapping, one of the issues highlighted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its concluding observations from 2008 (see CEDAW/C/KGZ/CO/3). Nevertheless, according to Women's Support Centre, a non-governmental organization, women and girls continue to experience high rates of domestic violence, including bride kidnapping and early and forced marriage.⁴ The National Federation of Female Communities in Kyrgyzstan is piloting a school-based education programme, in two schools, to build leadership skills and teach girls how to prevent and respond to threats of violence. An expert team developed an educational package focusing on empowering girls through education, art and media, the first of its kind in Kyrgyzstan. Trust Fund team members on a mission to monitor the project learned of its effect on generations of women in the same family. One woman said, of her 15-year-old granddaughter, "My generation had no choice, I had to stay in that marriage. I am happy that things are changing and that my granddaughter knows her rights".

26. The work of Trust Fund grantees in 2015 was varied, reflecting the Trust Fund's work to address and end violence against women and girls in all its forms. Grantee programmes are working with the police, addressing harassment in the workplace, reaching girls through sports, creating safe houses and advancing gender justice in post-conflict settings, among other strategies.

27. During the year, programmes supported by the Trust Fund benefited at least 1 million women, girls, men and boys, both directly and indirectly, through project activities. In total, 176,461 women and girls were reported as directly benefiting from project activities (as at 1 December 2015), including 5,810 survivors of violence, 5,108 indigenous women and/or women from ethnic minorities, 13,592 female migrant workers and 680 women and girls with disabilities. In addition, such projects engaged at least 101,333 men and boys, as well as 19,764 education professionals, 6,156 members of community-based organizations and 2,342 uniformed personnel as agents of change. Awareness-raising, social media campaigns, radio and television shows, theatre and other forms of edutainment enabled grantee programmes to strategically reach at least 678,335 people worldwide.

28. Throughout 2015, the Trust Fund undertook extensive monitoring missions to nine countries, in four regions, in order to validate the effectiveness of grantee programmes. The Trust Fund visited seven grantees from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan and Kosovo; one grantee from Asia, in Myanmar; two grantees from Africa, in Morocco and South Africa; and two grantees from Latin America and the Caribbean, in Antigua and Barbuda and El Salvador. During those missions, the Trust Fund visited key project sites and met

⁴ More information available from www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2013/12/un%20women-evaw-kyrgystan-brief_us-web%20pdf.ashx?v=2&d=20141013T121456.

grantee organizations, partner organizations, primary and secondary beneficiaries and key stakeholders.

A. Prevention: focus on young people

29. Data on violence against young and adolescent girls, at the national level, remain scarce. However, a recent study carried out by the United Nations Children's Fund in 42 countries found that the proportion of adolescent girls who reported experiencing some form of physical violence between the ages of 15 and 19 ranged from 4 per cent in Kazakhstan to more than 50 per cent in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. In countries where comparable data are available, up to 12 per cent of girls aged 15 to 19 reported incidents of sexual violence during the previous year.⁵

30. A core component of many Trust Fund grantee initiatives is raising awareness about violence among teenagers and young people, who are at a critical stage in life when values and norms about gender equality are instilled. The Trust Fund is currently investing more than \$12 million to support 20 grantees in addressing violence against young and adolescent girls.

31. An initiative by Society Without Violence, in Armenia, led to the formal adoption of a module on gender and gender-based violence by the Ministry of Education and Science and its integration into professional development classes for teachers. In addition, in 2015, the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women, of which Society Without Violence is a co-founder, received the Woman of Courage Award at the annual Universal Rights Award Ceremony, organized by the United Nations office in Armenia, the office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Yerevan, the Embassy of the United States of America, the delegation of the European Union to Armenia, the Embassy of the United Kingdom and the office of the Council of Europe in Yerevan. The award recognized, in particular, the courageous advocacy work of Hasmik Khachatryan, a survivor of domestic violence, for the protection of women's rights and assistance to survivors of domestic violence in Armenia.

32. A project by Plan Viet Nam is working to address gender-based violence in and around schools, which is one of the main barriers to girls' empowerment and gender equality. A research-based model piloted in 20 schools across Hanoi reached approximately 30,000 adolescent girls and boys aged 11 to 18. Following the success of the pilot project, the Hanoi Department of Education has undertaken to replicate the initiative across 766 schools in the city, potentially reaching more than 500,000 adolescents.

33. Grassroot Soccer is implementing a girl-centred project in five subdistricts in South Africa, a country with one of the world's highest rates of violence against girls aged between 12 and 17. In coordination with Thuthuzela one-stop care centres and civil society partners, it is expanding its innovative SKILLZ Plus sports-based intervention to foster girls' empowerment. The South African Department of Basic Education has signed a memorandum of understanding with Grassroot Soccer

⁵ UNICEF, *Hidden in Plain Sight: a statistical analysis of violence against children*, September 2014. The report found that only 8 per cent of children worldwide live in countries that prohibit corporal punishment in all settings (see pp. 110-111).

endorsing Generation SKILLZ activities in schools. This will allow the organization greater access to the school system and demonstrates that there is support for its gender programming at the highest level. In June, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women visited the project and spoke to some of the young people involved. One young member of the SKILLZ Street team told her: “it’s built so much confidence in me, because I know what’s ahead for me. I feel proud of myself that I am part of the positive side, the safe side”. By the end of 2015, almost 3,000 girls aged between 10 and 14 had graduated from the SKILLZ Street programme in Soweto, Alexandra and Khayelitsha.

34. Male violence is used to produce and reproduce the subordination of women and girls. It is therefore imperative to reach men and boys. Breakthrough, a non-governmental organization, is implementing an initiative in India to empower young people to understand their stake in ending violence against women. Operating in six Hindi-speaking states, the project places a special emphasis on engaging men and boys between the ages of 15 and 30. The campaign with the hashtag #Askingforit has reached some 3,000 people and more women and girls are breaking the silence about domestic violence. More than 1.2 million people engaged with the project online, through Facebook, in 2015, and more than 50,000 people did so through Twitter.

35. In the Gambia, the Gambia Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children is working to promote women’s sexual and reproductive health and to advocate for a total ban on female genital mutilation/cutting, to be enforced by law. An estimated 76.3 per cent of women and 42 per cent of girls in the Gambia have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting. The Committee organized training for community leaders and workshops for women to empower them to claim their rights and take an active role in protecting other women, especially girls, from female genital mutilation/cutting and other harmful traditional practices. The community leaders took the bold step of making positive statements on the eradication of female genital mutilation/cutting in their communities. As one of those reached by the project commented: “I no longer believe that my granddaughter should be subjected to female genital mutilation/cutting. It is people who decide on cultural practices. People can agree on an issue and reach consensus to end any practices that are no longer beneficial to them”.

36. Concern Worldwide, in partnership with local non-governmental organizations and government agencies, is working to create a safe learning environment for girls in primary schools in the Nsanje district in Malawi. Assessments carried out in years 2 and 3 of the project showed marked improvements in attendance rates for girls in the 17 targeted schools. More than 7,000 girls aged between 10 and 19 have been reached so far. Open days involving interactive theatre performances have reached an estimated 40,000 people and the Tisenthe radio programme has an estimated national audience of 500,000. A major breakthrough was achieved with the passage of legislation increasing the legal age for marriage from 15 to 18; Concern Worldwide was a member of a consortium of civil society actors advocating for the legislation. Through local training and discussion sessions held in Nsanje, chiefs have been made aware of the new law and some 25 have now passed local by-laws enforcing the law within their communities.

37. A project implemented by Sonke Gender Justice Network worked to advocate for laws and policies in Kenya, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. During this project, the organization worked through its MenEngage Alliance country networks and partner organizations to evaluate the gaps in the implementation of existing laws and policies on gender-based violence and HIV across Southern and Eastern Africa and to build capacity for advancing a more complete legal framework. The project directly challenged attitudes regarding domestic violence among men and boys and encouraged them to act to prevent violence against women in their communities. The final evaluation of the project noted an overall positive impact. For example, women and men reported that they felt more empowered to report gender-based violence and men expressed an appreciation of the project's ability to create platforms for dialogue on issues that cause conflict in households.

B. Implementing laws: widening access to services and justice

38. Although states have progressively put in place laws and policies to prevent and respond to violence against women, implementation in many countries remains slow and uneven. An effective response strategy should not only criminalize violence against women and girls, but should also include preventative measures and support for survivors so that they can access justice. The efforts that have had the most significant success are those involving multisectoral strategies that include partnerships between governments and civil society organizations, effective prevention systems and support services for survivors, adequate budgets, extensive data collection and analysis, specific timelines and targets and strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (see A/69/222, paras. 10 and 22). Such elements are, therefore, essential criteria for identifying initiatives that are likely to have the greatest impact and are, consequently, a priority for Trust Fund support.

39. ActionAid Myanmar is implementing a comprehensive initiative, building on a successful pilot project conducted in 2012. The project is improving service delivery, with a special emphasis on promoting access to justice by providing legal aid services for rural women. Twenty male leaders have been trained on ending violence against women and their involvement in changing attitudes has been key to the progress made so far. A mid-term survey identified a change of behaviour regarding violence against women and girls in some 40 per cent of those in the target communities. Reporting of gender-based violence has increased: in the first six months of 2015, 12 cases were referred by paralegals and 443 cases through the legal aid hotline number. Six cases went to trial and three resulted in convictions.

40. The Episcopal Relief and Development project supported by the Trust Fund is working to encourage the underutilized platform of Christian, interfaith and Muslim organizations, in six districts in Liberia, to become agents of change. At the end of June 2015, the President of Liberia and the cabinet of ministers endorsed the draft domestic violence law, addressing all forms of violence in the family, and sent it to the Legislature for enactment. The project activities will look to disseminate clear and practical information about what the law means for women and girls and to advocate for its implementation.

41. A project by the Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe Trust is working to facilitate access to justice for at least 900 women and girls with disabilities who have survived violence and/or who are currently involved in legal cases as

complainants or witnesses, in 10 districts in Zimbabwe. The programme provides specialized services in cases involving girls and women with disabilities and, during the period under review, facilitated the processing of 270 cases of violence against girls and women with disabilities. In total, the project supported 298 direct and indirect beneficiaries with logistical support in accessing justice and other relevant services for survivors.

42. Physicians for Human Rights worked to address impunity by developing a medico-legal system for the collection and processing of forensic evidence in rape cases. The project operated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kenya, where the International Criminal Court is currently investigating rape as a war crime. The programme trained 851 health-care, legal and law enforcement representatives, who supported more than 17,400 survivors of sexual assault. A final evaluation of the project noted overall improvements in medical documentation and sample collection, which translated into improved investigative services for survivors of sexual assault.

43. In Peru, Estudio para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer is working to end impunity for sexual violence through improved application of the new Peruvian Code of Criminal Procedure. The project worked with the National Judicial Academy to integrate gender criteria into the training and evaluation of judges, thereby helping to institutionalize knowledge. More than 60 magistrates took part in awareness-raising on the importance of reforming justice processes in order to implement the new Code effectively. In the city of Junin, a protocol on the constitution of a unified declaration procedure for victims of sexual violence, drafted by the organization, was approved.

44. In Uruguay, where domestic violence accounts for more than half of all crimes against the person, the Trust Fund is supporting a project led by the United Nations country team to improve justice and health-care services for survivors. The project, which involves seven United Nations agencies, 12 government entities and a network of more than 30 civil society organizations, builds on the experience gained through Uruguay's 2004-2010 action plan to end domestic violence. Notable outcomes of the project include the first national survey on the prevalence of gender- and generation-based violence, the results of which are a benchmark for policy construction; a review of the legal framework for updating laws on violence; and materials for journalists to encourage reflection on how violence is dealt with in the news media.

C. Violence against women and girls in conflict and emergency settings

45. The important role of women in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction has been recognized by the international community, most significantly in Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2122 (2013). As those resolutions highlighted, the increased risk of violence facing women in conflict and emergency settings prevents women from fulfilling that role. Increased research on gender-based violence during conflict has provided improved data on the extent of such crimes.⁶ While studies vary in their findings, with some research indicating

⁶ See the evolving data set on sexual violence in armed conflict, available from www.sexualviolencedata.org/dataset/.

that sexual violence affects between 4.3 per cent and 22 per cent of women, while other studies suggest the figure is as high as 1 in 3, they clearly attest to the prevalence of the problem. Such violence may be opportunistic, a result of the exploitation of increased vulnerabilities, or the result of the weakening of social structures and judicial systems that exacerbates underlying family or community violence.⁷ Access to justice and support services remains beyond the reach of many women and girl survivors of conflict-related violence. Among the obstacles to justice they face are limited awareness of their rights and multiple social and institutional barriers that prevent them from exercising their human rights.⁸

46. A Trust Fund-supported project to address such challenges is being implemented by the International Rescue Committee, in Thailand. The project is scaling-up an already proven approach to service delivery for Karenni refugee women on gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts. The Karenni National Women's Organization, a respected and trusted community-based organization, is playing a leading role. Service providers in two camps have demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skills related to gender-based violence and service delivery; refresher training shows participants achieving an average post-test score of 85 per cent, compared to 60 per cent pre-training.

47. In Cambodia, an initiative by the Victims Support Section of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia has strengthened the ability of the Extraordinary Chambers to process and analyse gender-based cases, removing some of the barriers to justice faced by survivors. The Victims Support Section has provided training to court officials and other stakeholders, improved women's legal literacy and expanded access to quality psychosocial services, reaching 185 women. An external evaluation of the project found that it contributed to substantial progress in ensuring that female survivors of violence perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge can exercise their rights to justice, accountability and redress. More broadly, the evaluation found evidence that the project effectively increased the Cambodian public's awareness of gender-based violence under the Khmer Rouge and of women's human rights in the present moment.

48. Funding from the Trust Fund enabled the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice to expand access to justice for war-affected women and girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, the Sudan and Uganda. The organization is the only international women's organization that has been granted *amicus curiae* status by the International Criminal Court. Working with its extensive network of women's organizations, it has directly influenced the International Criminal Court's inclusion of sexual and gender-based crimes in its priorities. Overall, such charges have been brought in 14 cases, nine of which relate to three of the project countries. In April 2015, a ruling by the Supreme Court of Uganda recognized acts of sexual violence as crimes for which an individual would not be eligible for amnesty. This is a groundbreaking judgement in the Ugandan context and addresses issues that the organization had been advocating for since 2010. In February 2015, following sustained and strategic advocacy by Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, its

⁷ Jo Spangaro and others, *What is the evidence of the impact of initiatives to reduce risk and incidence of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict zones and other humanitarian crises in lower- and middle-income countries?* (London, EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, 2013).

⁸ UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2011-2012: In Pursuit of Justice* (New York, 2011).

partners and others, the President of the Sudan signed an amendment to remove an adultery clause from the legal definition of rape. Previously, if a married woman was raped but was unable to prove the assault, she would be accused of adultery, a crime punishable by up to 100 lashes. Since 2013, over 2,400 victims/survivors of gender-based violence who would otherwise not have had access to medical services, including surgeries relating to rape, were assisted through transit houses in South and North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which are supported by the Trust Fund.

49. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a programme implemented by the Panzi Foundation worked to upscale the internationally recognized holistic Panzi model in one-stop centres and affiliated facilities providing integrated, human rights-based medical, psychosocial, legal and socioeconomic support. In partnership with Physicians for Human Rights, the programme also trained medical, legal and psychosocial professionals. During the reporting period, 163 new cases of sexual violence were reported in the programme's two target areas (Walungu and Minova).

50. In Sierra Leone, an International Rescue Committee project sought to increase access for survivors to justice as a key element of preventing violence against women and girls. The programme worked with partners to strengthen the implementation of the Gender Acts, a series of legal frameworks to prosecute sexual and gender-based violence. For example, the International Rescue Committee developed tools to monitor enforcement and trained family support units of the Sierra Leone Police to support adequate implementation.

51. In Egypt, a project by Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development worked with women and girl survivors of violence, women domestic workers, female sex workers and women living with HIV/AIDS in two marginalized communities in Cairo. By the end of June 2015, a new drop-in centre had been established, providing legal and psychological services. Between April and June 2015, the programme touched the lives of 111 women and girl survivors of violence and of 231 women domestic workers, sex workers and women living with HIV/AIDS in the targeted communities.

D. Providing multisectoral services for survivors, paying particular attention to the needs of underserved women and girls

52. As the report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly acknowledged, progress "has been particularly slow for women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination" (see E/CN.6/2015/3). Groups such as women with disabilities, indigenous women, members of ethnic minority groups, and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women are more likely to live in poverty, to be at greater risk of violence and to have very limited access to justice, redress and the integrated services needed to overcome violence. Several Trust Fund-backed projects focus on marginalized women as agents of change working to prevent and end violence against women and girls.

53. In Kosovo, the European Centre for Minority Issues is implementing a programme focusing on reducing the risk of domestic violence and early and forced marriage in minority communities. The project primarily targets women and girls

from Serbian, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, but beneficiaries also include community-based groups, educational professionals and boys and men. In a groundbreaking initiative, eight women from these minority groups have been trained as paralegals. Beneficiaries paid tribute to the vital support they had been given. One survivor of gender-based violence said: “Dijana [a paralegal] saved me. I don’t know whether I would have been able to move on with my life if I hadn’t met her”. Skills training and strengthening the employability of survivors is another key aspect of the programme.

54. The non-governmental organization Najoti kudakon, through one of its projects, is working to enhance the implementation of recent legislation on domestic violence in Tajikistan and to improve access to services, particularly in the rural and isolated areas of the region of Kulob. In addition to running the only shelter for survivors of domestic violence in the country, the organization is spreading its support networks through the establishment of six women’s support groups in remote rural areas. The groups have become active community mobilizers, organizing events and preparing material to share information about the new law and women’s rights, as well as improving referral mechanisms for survivors and access to multisectoral services. During the project period, nine cases of violence against women reached the courts as a result of legal aid provided by the project.

55. In Serbia, a programme run by the Association of Women — Sandglass is working to strengthen prevention and response services in Rasina, one of the most underdeveloped districts of the country. In the first six months of 2015, the project helped three women’s groups establish specialist support services for women survivors of violence; the working hours of a support helpline were increased from 15 to 23 hours per week, and the number of women survivors seeking assistance also rose; and 65 new beneficiaries (women survivors of violence) accessed specialist support services.

56. In Colombia, the Trust Fund supported an initiative by the Organización Nacional de Indígenas de Colombia to strengthen measures to prevent and respond to violence against indigenous women. Impunity for such crimes, which some studies indicate affect up to 70 per cent of indigenous women, is widespread. The programme documents and conducts research into violence against indigenous women, raises awareness among the community and relevant authorities and provides psychocultural, social, legal and psychological support to survivors and their families. In total, 150 cases have been registered and 48 per cent of the women affected have received support services.

57. In Guatemala, Fundacio Sida i Societat is working to strengthen the institutional capacity and coordination of organizations working on the issues of violence against women and HIV. The project seeks to overcome the stigma and discrimination faced by sex workers, who are mostly young, indigenous women, which prevent them from getting the support they need. In the border town of Escuintla, working with government officials, a mechanism was validated to register cases of violence against sex workers on a monthly basis. The mechanism served as the basis for a referral system involving the national police, the national hospital of Escuintla, the Health Directorate and the government’s judicial office on femicide.

58. A Community Media Center project supported by the Trust Fund is working to shed light on the pervasiveness of violence against women in Gaza (State of Palestine) and to put pressure on decision makers to formulate policies and

procedures so as to protect women from violence. The organization delivered a training programme, aimed at young female media graduates, on reporting cases of violence against women and girls from a human rights perspective. The organization has completed 85 training hours for 30 graduates, who produced 16 media stories and reports on violence against women.

E. The private sector, a key stakeholder

59. Globally, 53 per cent of women are employed in jobs that are either self-employed or unpaid (see E/CN.6/2015/3). Such employment, which is particularly widespread in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, can put women at increased risk of violence. In addition, 79 countries have laws that restrict the type of work women can perform. A report from 2014, commissioned by the World Bank, asserted that the private sector has been insufficiently involved in efforts to prevent and address violence against women.⁹ In order for the situation to change, workplaces need to adopt anti-harassment codes and guidelines to make workplaces safe for women and establish alliances with women's rights organizations.¹⁰ The Trust Fund has invested in programmes that address such challenges and that aim to fully integrate the private sector as a key stakeholder in ending violence against women.

60. Building on a successful initiative previously supported by the Trust Fund in Cambodia, CARE Cambodia with its local partner, the Solidarity Association of Beer Promoters in Cambodia, is implementing a project to scale up participatory community and workplace interventions in the garment, tourism and hospitality industries. The multi-pronged strategy includes working with community and workplace groups of female employees, involving employers in taking concrete measures to prevent sexual harassment and engaging men to promote long-term behaviour and attitudinal changes. The Association has reached 1,935 women working in beer gardens, restaurants and karaoke venues through its various training sessions and events. Training and awareness-raising in garment factories has reached approximately 11,500 women.

61. The Fair Wear Foundation implemented a project to improve working conditions and reduce workplace violence in export-oriented garment factories in Bangladesh and India. More than 3,500 workers in India and Bangladesh received direct training in 24 factories, while another 15,000 workers were trained via peer-to-peer education. One of the project's major achievements has been the higher level of reporting of harassment cases to anti-harassment committees and through a telephone helpline.

62. A project implemented in the United Republic of Tanzania by Equality for Growth, a local women's organization, is working to bolster women's economic rights and reduce the risk of violence by creating safe environments in six markets, in two districts of Dar es Salaam. The project focused on improving access to knowledge about rights and violence against women for market traders and market

⁹ The World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Women, Business and the Law 2014: Removing Restrictions to Enhance Gender Equality* (London, Bloomsbury Press, 2013).

¹⁰ Jennifer L. Solotaroff and Rohini Prabha Pande, *Violence against Women and Girls: Lessons from South Asia* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2014).

officials. Regular monitoring has shown that as a result of the project, traders have a greater awareness and understanding of how to report violence against women.

F. HIV/AIDS and violence against women

63. Jamaica AIDS Support for Life is working to strengthen efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, a key driver of the HIV epidemic in Jamaica. A total of 1,220 sex workers were reached through community outreach and involvement in workshops. Of that number, 109 utilized the organization's integrated services, including access to clinics, HIV testing and counselling. It is the only non-governmental organization providing clinical responses to people living with HIV and other key populations in the country and has consistently been part of the best practices submission to the Global AIDS Response Progress Report. The perspective of more than 90 per cent of all clients who access the services is that they are enjoying better health.

64. A project supported by the Trust Fund and implemented by the Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health is working with women and girls living with HIV and street-involved women and girls who are survivors of gender-based violence, in Ukraine. The project successfully managed to put in place an intersectoral response system and to build the capacity of service providers. A total of 2,626 street-involved and HIV-positive survivors and 708 of their partners were identified and engaged in services. The evaluation found that both male and female project participants reported a reduction or elimination of violence in their lives as a result of their participation in the project.

65. A project by the Coalition of Women Living with HIV and AIDS, supported by the Trust Fund, aimed to tackle the myths and stereotypes that underpin violence against women generally and, more specifically, as they relate to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Malawi. Community paralegals trained by the project handled the cases of 1,475 women and girl survivors of violence. Working with women, men and traditional leaders, the project's efforts to tackle the myths and stereotypes that fuel violence reached 13,285 women living with HIV, far exceeding the expected numbers for both women and girl survivors. The final external evaluation found that the "Stepping Stones" methodology used by the project enabled couples to open up on the issues that trigger violence. Participants reported a reduction in alcoholism, particularly among men, which was reported as a trigger of violence in some relationships.

G. The way ahead

66. The Sustainable Development Goals make clear that ending gender-based discrimination is vital to achieving sustainable development. All over the world, discrimination is depriving women of their basic rights, and key among these is the right to be free from violence. Women's contribution and leadership are central to finding a solution to the global problems facing humanity, from poverty to climate change, but violence against women prevents millions of women from fulfilling this role and, as underscored in the Sustainable Development Goals, addressing this problem is fundamental to creating a peaceful and equitable future. The Trust Fund has a pivotal role to play in translating the commitments made by governments in

the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into real and transformative efforts to end violence against women and girls. As the Trust Fund approaches its twentieth anniversary, there is greater determination than ever that the Fund rise to the challenge. To that end, the Fund has set the ambitious goal of increasing its grant-giving by more than 40 per cent in 2016, to \$20 million, with a specific focus on giving by the private sector and individual giving, as well as voluntary contributions by Member States.

67. The review of the recommendations made by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh, to be undertaken in 2016, provides a crucial opportunity to evaluate Trust Fund efforts to operationalize those recommendations, which are reflected in the main priority areas set out in the Trust Fund's strategic plan for 2015-2020. Information management is an area where the Trust Fund, through the work of its grantees, has a unique role to play, hence the development of a global evidence hub in 2016. The Trust Fund will continue its grant-making investment in innovative and catalytic programmes to prevent and address violence against women and girls, including through the use of technology, the media and participative community engagement to change harmful norms and attitudes that fuel violence. It will support projects that work to address the lack of ongoing national political action and adequate resources in order to bridge the gap between governments' binding commitments, laws and policies and the lived experiences of women and girls.

68. Work to prevent and end violence against women cannot be divorced from broader efforts to achieve equality between men and women. The Trust Fund will continue to support initiatives that promote specific, measurable and achievable results. In pursuit of results-based, sustainable and replicable initiatives, the Trust Fund will strive to assist governments, the United Nations system, policymakers and legislators to be both proactive and responsive in advancing the realization of women's rights, working in partnership with civil society organizations. In this way, the Trust Fund will aim to leverage its role in order to support the broadest possible expansion of choice and opportunity for all women and girls.