



March 31, 2021

Dear Stakeholder,

The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. It seeks to strengthening policy and legislations to increase protection of women and girls, building capacity of state and non-state actors to respond to family violence, expanding the range of services available and addressing social norms and behaviors that promote violence against women and girls. It works with governments and civil society organizations (CSO) through the three UN Recipient Organizations (RUNOs) (UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF) with the overall vision that women and girls enjoy their right to a life free of violence, within an inclusive and gender equitable Belize.

The National Women's Commission (NWC), in partnership with UNFPA (Spotlight Recipient UN Organization) is responsible to work with relevant stakeholders to have strengthened knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services, including sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and access to justice, for women and girls' survivors of violence, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination ensuring greater access to a coordinated set of essential and quality multi-sectoral services. As a result, in 2020, NWC through the support of a technical consultant and utilizing the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence Programme, initiated the process to define Belize's set of essential services (ESP) that need to be provided by the health, social services, police, and justice sectors as well as guidelines for the coordination of essential services and the governance of coordination and mechanisms.

As a foundation to this process is the use of a capacity development approach involving relevant government authorities, women's rights organizations, and other civil society partners at national and sub-national levels with opportunities to understand, inform and validate the essential package of services, and establish an effective referral pathway (including in emergency settings) for Belize. Your organization was, therefore, identified as a crucial partner in the coordination to advance a multi-sectoral approach and are inviting you to identify and nominate persons within your organization to participate in the capacity building process being undertaking by the National Women's Commission in partnership with UNFPA. This participation is two-fold; **complete an online course (strongly encouraged) and attend a workshop to be conducted over two half-day sessions.**

The first step would be for persons to a complete a free online course, the **Essential Services Package (ESP)/Violence Against Women**, preferably prior to the virtual workshop and which can be accessed from the link at <https://extranet.unfpa.org/Apps/VAW>. Those who complete the online course will be given certificates formalizing their participation. **The two half-day virtual sessions will be held on Wednesday, April 21 and Friday, April 23, 2021 from 8:45 a.m. to 12:00 noon.** Kindly note that completion of the online short course is not a requirement to attend

the virtual session, but we strongly encourage it. We have also attached a short description of the ESP Course for you to review.

We request that you nominate at least one person from your key units/departments to attend the capacity building sessions and request that you confirm their participation by **April 16, 2021**.

We look forward to your support and collaboration in the efforts to strengthen the national response to gender-based violence.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cynthia Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "C".

Cynthia Williams
Executive Director