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ANNEX 2

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan part 1 in favour of Ecuador for 2023

Action Document for: ‘Strengthening of inclusive Ecuadorian democratic governance and prevention of violence against women’

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

<p>1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act</p>	<p>“Strengthening of inclusive Ecuadorian democratic governance and prevention of violence against women” OPSYS number: ACT-61532 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)</p>
<p>2. Team Europe Initiative</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>3. Zone benefiting from the action</p>	<p>The action shall be carried out in Ecuador</p>
<p>4. Programming document</p>	<p>Ecuador – Multi-annual indicative programme 2021-2027 (MIP)</p>
<p>5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results</p>	<p><i>MIP Priority area 3: Good governance</i> <i>Specific objectives</i> SO3.1: Increase the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of public administration SO3.3: Enhance independent work of oversight bodies to undertake effective technical evaluations or inspections of the executive and conduct performance monitoring available to the public. SO3.4 Increase the equal participation of women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, in decision-making processes, in all spheres and at all levels of political and public life, including online, taking on leadership roles, to equally enjoy and exercise their human rights and be able seek redress if these rights are denied. <i>Expected results per specific objective</i> <i>Expected Results for SO3.1:</i> R 3.1.1 Increased budget of National Development Plan to reduce poverty, all kind of inequalities and forms of gender -based discrimination and violence , as well as social vulnerabilities.</p>

	<p>R 3.1.2 Improved trust in government accountability</p> <p><i>Expected Results for SO3.3:</i></p> <p>R 3.3.1 Increased public institutions with oversight functions counts with the adequate institutionalization and prepared and actualized public officials to perform its duties</p> <p>R 3.3.2 Reformed public accountability processes of national institutions, available to the public and CSOs.</p> <p>R 3.3.3 Increased use of new technologies for bidding processes by local governments and national institutions.</p> <p><i>Expected Result for SO3.4:</i></p> <p>R.3.4.1 Created enabling conditions for equal participation of women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, in decision-making.</p>			
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION				
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	<p>Priority: Good governance (decentralization, fiscal reforms).</p> <p>Indicative DAC sector: Government & Civil Society-general (151)..</p>			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	<p>Main SDG: SDG 16 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive and representative decision-making</p> <p>Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">SDG 5 - Gender Equality;</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">Target 5.2 End all violence against and exploitation of women and girls</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">Target 5.5: Ensure full participation in leadership and decision-making</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">SDG 10 – Reduced inequality</p>			
8 a) DAC code(s)	15150 – Democratic participation and civil society	25%		
	15151 – Elections	25%		
	15180 – Ending violence against women and girls	50 %		
8) b) Main Delivery Channel	<p>Channel 1 UNDP – 41114</p> <p>Channel 2 UN Women - 41146</p> <p>Channel 3 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOs) AND CIVIL SOCIETY – 20000</p>			
9. Targets	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Migration</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Climate</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Education</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance</p>			
10. Markers	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective

(from DAC form)	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective
Digitalisation @		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	/
digital governance		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital entrepreneurship		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital skills/literacy		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital services		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Connectivity @		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	/	
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
education and research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reduction of Inequalities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	(methodology for marker and tagging under development)			
	Covid-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): Budget Line: 14.020140 Total estimated cost: EUR 2 800 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 2 800 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Type of financing	Direct management through: - Grants Indirect management with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UN Women and other UN agencies (subject to UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNRC) internal decision)			

1.2 Summary of the Action

Ecuador is a party to the main human rights conventions and treaties including the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The country also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 3 April 2008. Ecuador is working well in terms of reporting to the concerned bodies and following their Concluding Observations even if more efforts are needed more particularly to reinforce the Gender, Human Rights and Disability/ies framework in programming. Other key international human rights and EU conventions and Plans of Action would be instrumental for that purpose.¹

Human rights and democracy are founding values of the EU. Protecting and promoting human rights and democracy is therefore a key priority of the EU's external action. It is also a precondition for sustainable development and for building more inclusive, open and resilient societies. It is worth highlighting that the EU is committed to the CRPD and its Article 29 related to *Participation in political and public life* which requires to promote persons with disabilities participation in EU development cooperation.

The current action will address two components that are part of the third priority area of the MIP. The first priority area will address the quality of public administration, in order to build a more inclusive and cohesive democratic society, and participatory civil society. The second priority area will continue combatting gender-based violence against women. Both actions build on previous work undertaken by the EU in Ecuador. The EU and its Member States have become in recent years the main supporters of civil society participation through the process called "Road Map", bringing together relevant political leaders from the public and private sectors, universities and civil society. It is important for the EU to recognise that there is an enormous human potential in civil society to positively influence political decision-making processes with the creation of active coordination mechanisms, communication strategies and to insist on the need to establish alliances with other sectors.

Component 1: Strengthening of Ecuadorian inclusive democratic participation and electoral governance

In response to an invitation from the Ecuadorian government, the EU carried out an Electoral Expert Mission in Ecuador in February and April 2021 to the last Presidential elections. The aforementioned mission made a global technical evaluation of the different phases and components of the electoral process, as well as the good practices, and provided 12 recommendations for their improvement. These recommendations include the need for improvement of internal processes inherent to the application of Ecuador's Democratic Law, as well as others related to the National Electoral Council's (CNE) capacity to ensure effective compliance with the law's provisions (e.g.

¹ The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment/CAT; The EU Istanbul Convention - A powerful tool to end gender-based violence from one part and the 1994 ICPD PoA, the 1995 Beijing Platform of Action, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, The 2030 agenda and related SDGs, the Gender Action Plan III 2020-2025 and the , the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025

electoral spending). In parallel, and as seen in the recent demonstrations of June 2022, the recommendations as well as the official responses of the electoral body submitted to the EU, cannot succeed without a meaningful empowerment of the different civil society actors that seek to build bridges between the polarising forces of the country. Hence, both public institutions and civil society need to be strengthened in tandem in order to move towards a more cohesive and inclusive society.

For the implementation of this component of the MIP on democratic participation and governance, the EU will establish a programmatic alliance with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and with a consortium of NGOs made up of the Centre for Research and Collective Action (GRUPO FARO), the Esquel Foundation, the Citizenship and Development Foundation and the Citizen Participation Corporation (hereinafter, the Consortium) ensuring that women and men and concerned people in vulnerability and/or with disability are all equally participating to both process and outcome.

The action will be carried out through two projects: the first one implemented by UNDP and the second by the Consortium. Although the execution will be carried out independently and autonomously, there will be shared themes and a space for articulation between both projects, in order to maintain the link with the European Union programme and the complementarity of the actions.

The purpose of this approach seeks to create convergences and complementarities between both projects, to maximise the impact and promote the sustainability and continuity of efforts to strengthen the electoral system of Ecuador, with an electoral cycle perspective as well as promoting inclusive women and men citizen participation. The tentative implementation period for the activities runs from the first half of 2023 to mid-2025, with the purpose of carrying out actions that strengthen the democratic processes linked to the next Presidential and legislative elections of 2025, in line with the Electoral Expert Mission EEM recommendations.

Close coordination between the present component and the FPI action Addressing socio-environmental conflicts in Ecuador² should be foreseen as both have a very relevant and complementary role, especially regarding the development-peace nexus

Component 2: Spotlight II- Reinforcing the prevention and eradication of violence against women

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) or Gender-Based-Violence (GBV) is both a cause and a consequence of inequalities between women and men, perpetuating a cycle that severely hinders development. It also results in huge direct and indirect impact to GBV survivors, their families and the societies. VAWG pervasively violate human rights of women including right to life. It is estimated that 35% of women worldwide have experienced at some point in their lives either physical and/or sexual violence by their partners. One in three women worldwide experience physical or sexualised violence at least once in their lifetimes. Many acts of violence against women and girls take place in private settings. Violence can take different forms in both private and public spaces, such as domestic and intimate partner violence, sexualised, economic and psychological violence, human trafficking and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM)³. Latin America alone is home to 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world.

According to a 2019 survey by the National Statistics and Census Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos), seven out of every ten women in Ecuador have experienced gender-based violence (GBV) at least once in their lives, mostly perpetrated by their partners or ex-partners. In fact as most societies throughout the world, and because of the social construction of gender roles and relationships, in large parts of the Ecuadorian population as well, VAWG is tolerated and perceived to a certain extent as a norm of gender dynamics whatever is the legal framework and the measures set by the State to prevent or punish GBV. Moreover, many times the survivors of intimate (ex)partner violence are blamed as if it was their fault, not the aggressors. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the situation of women has worsened. Often, they were trapped at home with their aggressors, during the month-long confinement measures. In this context, social media has become an even more important tool to reach women and provide information and assistance.⁴

In the framework of the Spotlight Initiative I, the EU and the UN invested EUR 500 million worldwide (EUR 50 million in Latin America alone) to help end violence against women. The Initiative, mobilised all efforts and actions in education, awareness raising, prevention and delivering of justice.

² C(2022)8608 adopted on 28/11/2022.

³ [A staggering one-in-three women, experience physical, sexual abuse | UN News](#)

⁴ [Ecuador: Online campaign against gender-based violence - Gender and Development \(gender-and-development.de\)](#)

The Spotlight Initiative provided a unique and unprecedented opportunity to demonstrate that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in gender equality can make a transformative difference in the lives of women and girls, as well as contribute to the achievement of all the SDGs. This evidence based on result of the Spotlight Initiative I, made visible that this type of major intervention can catalyse others to similarly invest in gender equality.

In Ecuador, the Spotlight Initiative ran between November 2020 and September 2022. It focused on the implementation of the Comprehensive General Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (LOIPEVCM). The most important results achieved were: the creation of tools for the effectiveness of public policy on violence against women; legislative proposals to reform relevant regulations; a national communication campaign for gender based violence prevention; work methodologies on new masculinities; education and awareness materials culturally adapted for Afro-descendant and indigenous women; strengthening of civil society organizations.

The second phase is intended to provide renewed investment in, and commitment to, gender equality and women's empowerment as a pre-condition and driver for the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). And it will keep the same mutually-reinforcing programming six pillars: (a) Laws and Policies, (b) Institutions, (c) Prevention, (d) Services, (e) Data, and (f) Women's Movements.

The action will achieve this objectives by supporting and strengthening civil society organisations (CSOs), feminism activists and human-rights defenders working on critical gender rights and issues. It will also cover, the implementation of the LOIPEVCM at local level, filling the technical gap in local government where relevant. A special focus will be given to the implementation of the Single Registry of Violence (RUV), to carry out pilots of the operation and maintain free, accessible and reliable data on femicide and violence, which are necessary to activate the early warning system. One of the findings by the Spotlight Initiative I, was the crucial role that the foster houses' network plays in the country. Spotlight II for Ecuador will strengthen the network capacity in its role of national counsellor of foster houses and local government protection system. The relation with the Civil Society National Group of Reference will be crucial in order to monitor the work and to address the needs of intervention and public advocacy.

This action will mainly be implemented by UN Women as leader agency of the system on gender and gender violence, so as to: (i) better respond to the country-specific gender contexts; (ii) be as close as possible to the needs of the rights holders; and (iii) promote a sense of 'ownership' of the action among local actors. However in order to brand the action as Spotlight Initiative will require at least 2 implementing recipient RUNOs. Discussion with UNRC about which agencies will implement spotlight 2.0 is ongoing.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Regulatory reforms and electoral challenges

On 22 January 2020, the National Assembly of Ecuador adopted an extensive reform of the Council of Democracy, the law governing the holding of electoral processes in Ecuador. The reform affected 180 articles, almost half of the total, governing key aspects of the process, such as the distribution of scan in the National Assembly, the type of lists (from open to close) and the quotas of candidates to be included in their lists by the political organisations, among the relevant aspects. Under the reform, as of the February 2021 elections, citizens had to cast their vote for a list or list in multi-member elections. Furthermore, in terms of quotas, 15% of the lists had to be headed by women and at least 25% of the candidates had to have between 18 and 29 each. The percentage of women should be as high as 30% in the 2023 local elections and 50% in the 2025 legislatures. In 2025, all presidential bionomes must be made up of a man and a woman. Other relevant reforms include the allocation of funds equally to all candidates, with an additional 20% for alliances, and the holding of mandatory electoral debates for all positions, from local to national level, including candidates for mayors and prefects, parliament and president.

The scale of the reforms has made it necessary to update procedures, adopt regulations and take steps to provide information not only to the National Electoral Council (CNE), but to the Electoral Tribunal, which in March 2020 adopted its Rules of Procedure to ensure timely electoral justice and legal security, as well as effective judicial protection.

The Electoral Expert Mission sent by the European Union in 2021 issued a report containing twelve recommendations for the institutional strengthening and improvement of electoral processes in Ecuador. Some of the main recommendations are in line with the electoral bodies' own diagnosis, such as: (2) developing a coherent and robust communication strategy to improve CNE's ability to share its collegiate decisions with a single voice and thus avoid disinformation and confusion; (3) expanding and strengthening the role of coordinators, through early selection and training, so that they can be better prepared to provide adequate guidance to JRV members; (7) ensuring proper compliance with the reporting on campaign financing and carrying out appropriate investigations, which should preferably be completed within the fiscal year; and (9) strengthening the gender parity requirement to specify that alternate candidates should be of the same sex as the candidate and develop awareness campaigns on gender parity.

On the other side, a UN Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) visited Ecuador in May 2022. The NAM responded to a formal request from the National Electoral Council (CNE). The NAM highlighted the achievements of the current electoral assistance project in Ecuador, co-financed by the European Union, AECID (being the main sponsor), Switzerland and UNDP, and implemented by the UNDP; and recommended working in areas such as: performance management, planning, coordination, and strategic communication, gender equality and equity, political participation of traditionally marginalised groups, gender-based political violence, disinformation and funding of political organisations.

Finally, the Delegation of the European Union set out a broad vision of strengthening the democratic and electoral process, which goes beyond election day. While elections represent a crucial moment in the political cycle of any democratic country, in Ecuador it is equally important to promote citizen participation, improved transparency in the use of public resources and accountability of elected authorities.

Violence against women and girls

The years 2021 and 2022 were marked by the increase in numbers and the perception of insecurity and violence. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Organized Crime (UNODC), the main meter is violent deaths, "According to the monthly average of cases, Ecuador closed 2021 with a rate of - at least - 13.13 homicides per 100,000 people". While that number is still below 17 cases, which is the average rate for Latin America (the most violent region in the world), it is above the rate of 5.8, which is the global average. In addition, it is Ecuador's highest rate since 2011, when the country had 15.3 murders per 100 000 inhabitants. According to the Police, more than half of the cases [in 2021] are related to organized crime and, specifically, to the struggle for territory of drug micro trafficking and international drug trafficking.

UNODC figures describe the scenario of insecurity that Ecuador is going through, and in this context, the prison crisis is one of the most serious problems faced in 2021 and that has continued in violent deaths in 2022. From December 2020 to May 2022, there have been at least 390 murders in the country's prisons. This situation has meant for the country a reordering of priorities, while citizen security and social rehabilitation came to the fore in several public institutions, affecting the speed of the actions initially proposed by the new government to eradicate violence against women and femicide.

Regarding violence against women and girls/Gender-based-Violence, the Integrated Emergency Service 911 records continued increases in the number of calls for help due to domestic violence : 2020 (102,799), 2021 (117 411), until June 2022, 58,000 calls. In 2021, 55% of calls related to psychological aggressions, 31% to domestic violence, 13% to physical violence and 0.1% correspond to sexual violence. In terms of deaths, according to data from the Special Commission on Statistics on Security, Justice, Crime and Transparency, from 2014 until July 2022, 570 femicides were officially recorded in the country, although unofficially the figure doubles. The figure has been growing in recent years. The low criminalisation of violent deaths of women as femicide is closely linked to judicial decisions that lead cases to other types of crimes.

According to ALDEA, a civil society organisation specialised in the registration of femicide cases, in the first quarter of 2022 there were already 28 femicides, transfemicides and violent deaths of women due to organised crime. Of the 28 cases registered, 14 correspond to intimate femicides (50%), 2 are transfemicides (7%) and 12 cases correspond to violent deaths of women due to organized crime.

As noted above, the government has directed its efforts in 2022 towards the fight against all types of crime. This action, in combination with the change of authorities in the governing body of the implementation of the Law on the Eradication of Violence, has slowed down certain processes for the benefit of victims of violence. However, the new authorities of the Secretariat of Human Rights have expressed their intention to provide continuity to the

actions established in the National Development Plan to achieve the goal of reducing the rate of femicide per 100 000 women from 0.87 to 0.80, in coordination with efforts made in the implementation of phase 1 of Spotlight.

Since 2020, the EU has supported Ecuador in the implementation of the Spotlight initiative. In partnership with the United Nations System in Ecuador, several actions were implemented that targeted these identified barriers. While there are positive results, actions to eliminate violence against women must be sustained and long-term. Some important results have been achieved:

✓ The justice sector has a toolkit for the judicial application of standards on human mobility, children and gender-based violence in the application of justice. These standards are based on the rulings of the Constitutional Court of Ecuador and other bodies of the International Protection Systems.

✓ The production, systematisation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and information on violence against women was improved through the development of the National Violence Observatory, with the Secretariat for Human Rights and the National Council for Gender Equality support.

✓ Officials from the municipalities of Morona, Azogues, Pastaza, Chone and Portoviejo have increased their capacity to use the gender classifier in the public expenditure catalog to report investment in the prevention and elimination of VAWG at the local level.

✓ Local universities in Cuenca, Portoviejo and Pastaza have strengthened protocols for prevention and action in cases of harassment, discrimination and violence based on gender and sexual orientation and to ensure safety in educational spaces.

✓ In Azuay, Pastaza and Manabí, 35 civil society organisations, grassroots organisations and collectives formed 3 civil society clusters to strengthen local capacities and to articulate joint advocacy actions. The 3 clusters developed collaborative agendas and advocacy strategies, including 3 plans for the eradication and prevention of VAWG and femicide (1 per territory of intervention).

2.2 Problem Analysis

In recent years, Ecuador's socio-economic situation has deteriorated considerably, in particular, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately affected vulnerable groups such as women, young people, sexual minorities, indigenous peoples and migrants. The current crisis situation in coastal areas caused by the drug traffickers adds-up and social unrest during 2022 contribute to fragile situation. In this context, the quality of public administration is ever more relevant when it comes to finding solutions for social welfare, economic recovery and inclusion. However, Ecuador's institutions remain fragile, situation which was exacerbated during the pandemic, due to corruption scandals in institutions at both national and local level and the lack of an adequate response for the population during the crisis. This fragile institutional scenario continues today, despite the taking office of a new administration in 2021, which has seen been generally unable to maintain programmatic and sustained agreements with the legislature. These governance problems have led to citizens' dissatisfaction with the National Assembly, which 83% of Ecuadorians see as badly or very badly managed (March 2022).

According to the World Bank's set of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources, gender equality in Ecuador is reported at 1% in 2020⁵. In 2022, ranking 10th out of the 22 countries of Latin America and 41st of the 146 countries covered by the 2022 Gender Gap report, Ecuador scored 0.743 in the Gender Gap Index/GDI which shows a gap of approximately 26 percent. That means women are 26 percent less likely than men to have equal opportunities⁶. Just to quote political participation, in 2014, Ecuador was the country with second largest number of congresswomen in the region, reaching a total of 57 out of 137 Representatives. By January 2014, Ecuador ranked 39th in the world with respect to Ministries, with 8/36 of them lead by women. Yet, despite the guidelines calling for parity in the party ballots, only 2 out of 23 municipalities are presided by women, while 21 women are deputy mayors. During the February 2014 elections, only 16 out of 147 candidates were elected to the 221 municipalities in the country⁷. In 2022, despite its relative achievements and as most countries in the world, political empowerment is the gender gap index area where Ecuador scores the worst being 41st with a score of

⁵ [Ecuador - Gender Equality - 2022 Data 2023 Forecast 1990-2020 Historical \(tradingeconomics.com\)](https://tradingeconomics.com/ecuador/gender-equality)

⁶ [WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org/publications/gender-gap-report-2022/), yearly published since 2006 by the World Economic Forum

⁷ [Ecuador | UN Women – Americas and the Caribbean](https://www.unwomen.org/en/regions/americas)

0.312 but being relatively well ranked comparatively to the rest of the world. The country stands at the 32nd rank for presence of women in parliament and 29th for women in ministerial positions with respectively a score of 0.631 and 0.471 for the GDI⁸.

In March 2020, in Ecuador, there were 485 325 persons in the National Disability Register, of whom 213 263 were women (43.94%). According to the Tenth periodic report of Ecuador presented to the CEDAW body, many interventions contributed to improving life of persons with disabilities to only quote Education and Health sectors. However, no initiative is noted among those taken by the National Council for Gender Equality with the National Electoral Council and the Democracy Institute is recorded that guarantee to persons with disability/ies and more particularly women, the right to political participation pursuant to the principle of equality and non-discrimination either in terms of accessibility and/or participation⁹.

Recent elections have shown a deepening of political fragmentation in the country, with more than 280 participating organisations and a disproportionate number of candidates for equal dignity, which not only increases operational complexity in elections, but also challenges the legitimacy and stability of democratic processes. The consolidation of political organisations, citizen participation and the promotion of an inclusive civil society are thus key factors in ensuring quality democracy. In this context, electoral institutional strengthening should be seen as contributing to trust and social cohesion and democratic governance.

Ecuador has a solid legal framework that enforces the validity, application and claiming of women's rights supported by the Ecuadorean Constitution, which specifically addresses gender equality under its chapters 1 and 2; and the international binding instruments ratified by the Ecuadorean State as well as a few initiated legal reforms. However, Gender Equality is not yet considered as a priority in the National Development Framework and objectives with no specific targets to reduce the gender gap. The country has a national policy on gender equality (The Equality Agenda) but the investment on gender equality policies, as registered by the Bench marker of Expenditures on Gender Equality Policies, represents less than 2% of the government's budget with no institutional mechanisms that can monitor and measure this investment. It is worth however to highlight that country wise, several surveillance and monitoring projects of local government's investments have shown better levels of communication between women organizations and authorities; the creation and institutionalization of specialized instances on gender equality at local level; and the budgeting of public funds to women driven demands. However, these are pilot experiences not picked up by most territories¹⁰.

Hence, institutional strengthening, including the respect for the rule of law and the separation of powers, is ever more necessary to increase citizens' trust and political stability in the country. In this sense, the EU sees the strengthening of political organisations, citizen participation and the consolidation of an inclusive civil society throughout the electoral cycle, as programmatic priorities.

In June 2022, the national demonstrations evidenced the general disaffection with both the Executive and the Legislature, which they see as unable to consider, channel and address the most pressing social demands of great parts of the population. In this regard, the upcoming 2023 local elections will be central to the country's democracy. On the one hand, elected local duty-bearers have a direct impact on the lives of citizens as they have key competences such as the provision of basic services, productive promotion, and rural development, among others. On the other hand, the representatives will also vote for the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control (CPCCS), a key institution for the designation of authorities such as the Ombudsman, the Comptroller General of the State and Superintendents, as well as having an influence on the appointment of certain authorities in the electoral and judicial function. Finally, there is a possibility for the executive to call for a popular consultation during these elections, inter alia, to reform the judicial system and the existence of the CPCCS.

Elections are a crucial moment for the political life of any democratic country, therefore it is important for the international cooperation to continue supporting the democratic strengthening of the country, including actions at post-electoral and pre-electoral times. In these phases, organised civil society and other international stakeholders can play a key role in promoting citizen participation, improving transparency in the use of public resources and accountability of elected authorities.

⁸ [WEF GGGR 2022.pdf \(weforum.org\)](#) , yearly published since 2006 by the World Economic Forum

⁹ Thanks to the 140 district inclusion support units, 1,318 persons with disabilities were integrated into the national education system in 2017.

¹⁰ [Ecuador | UN Women – Americas and the Caribbean](#)

Gender based violence

In Ecuador, 50.4% of the population are women; almost 4 million of them are of reproductive age (15 to 49) and just over 2 million are in the Economically Active Population. Those belonging to indigenous peoples and nationalities, Afro-descendant and montubio people are generally living in conditions of greater vulnerability to gender-based violence. Regrettably, 65 out of every 100 women from 15 to 49 years of age have experienced some form of violence during their lives. The worst affected sectors include women with the lowest degree of literacy or only basic education, age 18 to 44, afro-descendants and indigenous peoples and nationalities.

In addition, humanitarian emergencies, natural disasters and global pandemics put women and girls at increased risk of violence. The current COVID-19 crisis was no exception. Increased stress levels, economic and food insecurity, unemployment, and movement restrictions all contributed to increases in reported levels of domestic violence.

Moreover, femicides, defined in the Comprehensive General Criminal-law Code (COIP) in 2014, according to official figures (INEC), reached 549 cases from August 2014 to May 2022; whereas the ‘Alliance to map femicides’ (civil society) reports 1 075 cases, almost twice as many, in that same time period.

Expectedly, these worrying figures are underpinned by societal values, which have naturalised violence against women and girls. According to the 2019 national survey on violence against women, 57.3% of respondents believe that women should act and dress demurely so as not to provoke a man; 44.9% believe that women should be responsible for household chores; and 26.8% think that a wife should obey her husband in everything he orders. These gender stereotypes demonstrate the structural nature of the problem, which requires a comprehensive and sustained intervention strategy over time.

The 2018 Comprehensive General Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (LOIPEVCM) targets ‘girls, adolescents, youth, adult women and elderly adult women, in all their diversity, in both public and private settings’, especially those in situations of vulnerability or at risk. The Law: i) urges the approval of holistic policies and actions for prevention, support, protection and reparations for victims; ii) promotes work on new masculinities; and, iii) establishes, as priority, actions to transform the ‘socio-cultural patterns and stereotypes that treat as natural, reproduce, perpetuate, and sustain inequality between men and women’.

This new public policy framework requires support to achieve its objectives. Systems in need of strengthening include the Comprehensive System to Prevent and Eradicate Violence, the Observatory of Violence, the Single Registry of Victims, the Early Warning System, administrative protection measures, and others. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen capacities in the competent institutions, provide additional resources, and develop secondary regulation or instruments in order to make these measures effective.

On the other hand, local governments must implement the above-mentioned Law within the scope of their competences, especially in the prevention and attention of violence. However, in some cases they do not have the normative conditions (ordinances), resources and human talent to implement actions that have an impact on the reduction of violence against women. This, together with a weakened women’s movements, which do not have the resources to sustain themselves, weakens the actions of civil society.

In 2019, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Dubravka Šimonović reported at the 44th session of the Human Rights Council on her visit to Ecuador (29 November to 9 December 2019), and examines the gaps and challenges in preventing and combating gender-based violence against women in the country, and recommends measures for addressing these challenges. She recognised that the country has experienced a few political, institutional and economic changes with yet a considerable progress towards bringing domestic legislation into line with international human rights standards including through the enactment of the Comprehensive Organic Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women in 2018. Yet she ‘encouraged to continue with the ongoing legal reform process and to address legal shortcomings of the Criminal Code and the Health Code as well as to ensure the full implementation of the Law on eliminating violence against women, by ensuring that any proposed budget cuts do not negatively impact its application’¹¹.

In relation to persons with disabilities, the National Council for Gender Equality developed research on gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and pregnancy in adolescents with disabilities, as well as training for public officials. Moreover, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities published the “Guidelines and Protocols for Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities”. In total, 10,298 persons with disabilities

¹¹ [OHCHR | Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls](#)

and their families have been trained in the use of the guidelines and protocols. The ‘Guide for the Empowerment and Participation of Women with Disabilities’ (2020) was also developed. It should be noted, however, that the provisions of the Civil Code relating to the legal capacity of persons with disabilities at the time of the presentation of the 10th report were still under discussion at the level of the National Assembly. According to the treaty body at that time, as the oldest law in the statute book, the Civil Code certainly in need of reform¹².

According to the same source, persons with disabilities have access to a range of benefits, services – especially medical services and treatment – and exemptions. Yet more efforts are needed as regard to access to specialised and adapted GBV services such as psychologic counselling, health and Reproductive health services starting with emergency units as well as legal orientation and assistance¹³.

Last to be noted is that if forced sterilization of women with disabilities is prohibited under the Criminal Code and even if it is rare, this practice continues to occur in certain provinces. Such cases are then taken care by the Office of the Ombudsman, investigated by the Attorney General’s Office, and reparations are provided to victims. Yet, among the Concluding Observations¹⁴ of the CEDAW Treaty Body, it was recommended to consider amending prohibit the forced sterilization of women with disabilities and more specifically the Organic Act on Health, as forced sterilization to update the relevant legal provisions is now classified as a crime against humanity. The necessity to ensure that a human-rights based approach is taken to the treatment of all persons with disabilities was also stressed.

With this second phase of Spotlight, the EU will consolidate results framed in the 6 pillars of the initiative: (i) implementing the public policy on the elimination of rape at the local level (Pillar 1 and 2); ii) strengthening public service providers, organised women, CSOs and other key stakeholders so as to allow them to provide quality services (Pillars 3, 4, 6); iii) socialisation of the prevention campaign and work on masculinities (Pillars 3 and 6); and v) analysing and generating data (Pillar 5). Among these six pillars, a connecting thread will make it possible to put the theory of change into practice individually and more broadly. The programmatic integration will be enhanced by the diverse participation of sectors and stakeholders, opening greater possibilities for sustainability. The intervention will also foster national and local articulation and the implementation of context-specific and relevant interventions to ensure they are accessible and sustainable for the most vulnerable women in remote and de-concentrated zones.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

Key stakeholders:

Congress of the Republic / Parliamentary Groups and Committees, National Electoral Council (CNE), Contentious Electoral Court (TCE), Political parties, Journalists, Civil Society Organisations/Secretary of Human Rights, Local Governments, Cantonal Boards for the Protection of Rights, RUV Coordination Board.

Main stakeholders include i) duty bearers, ii) rights holders and iii) secondary stakeholders. The level of interest to participate and action of each stakeholder are described in the table:

Women and girls survivors are the primary right holders and the CSOs that provide to them protection, health and security services have also to be identified as priority. In this perspective, Women/Gender Mechanism/s, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior and security bodies (e.g. Police and any other concerned entity) and Ministry of Justice are among the primary duty bearers.

¹² CEDAW/C/ECU/10 of October 16, 2020, [Treaty bodies Download \(ohchr.org\)](https://www.ohchr.org/Treaty_bodies_Download)

¹³ IDEM

¹⁴ Summary record of the 1830th meeting held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 29 October 2021

Stakeholders	Main interest of the project in relation to stakeholder	Level of Interest	Power
Duty bearers			
National Assembly / Parliamentary Groups and Committees	Increase capabilities to debate and adopted legal reform on political representation	Medium	High
National Electoral Council (CNE)	Increase capabilities to propose legal reforms on political representation Strengthen capabilities to implement new rules on political representation	High	High
Contentious Electoral Court (TCE)	Strengthen capabilities to implement new rules on political representation	High	High
Secretary of Human Rights	Strengthen capacity to implement the Organic Law for the prevention of gender violence	High	High
Local Governments	Increase capabilities to prevent and protect women	High	High
Cantonal Boards for the Protection of Rights	Strengthen capacity for the issuance of protective measures	High	Low
Political parties	Increase capabilities to generate dialogue spaces to debate new rules on political representation	Medium	High
Journalists and media	Receive technical support to spread information on political representation reform	High	High
Civil Society Organisations	Receive technical support to spread information on political representation reform and to prevent and respond to GBV	High	Medium
Right holders			
Women participating in participation in the value chain	Technical assistance and training for women organisations to strengthen their technical capacity in planning and managing cooperation and advocacy projects.	High	Medium
Under-represented groups: women, youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, Afro-Ecuadorians and LGBTI	Technical assistance Creation of synergies to improve political participation	High	Low
Women Foster Houses Network	Coordination of protection system	High	Low
Secondary stakeholders			
Consultants, experts	Provide technical assistance	Medium	Low
Embassies of EU Member States in Ecuador	Exchange of knowledge and sharing of good practices	Low	Medium
International Cooperation	Coordinate support	High	Medium

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is **to strengthen and promote Ecuador’s democracy and inclusive democratic processes while promoting women rights and safety**

The Specific Objectives (Outcomes) of this action are:

1. To strengthen integrity, transparency, accountability and efficiency of the electoral processes and institutions while ensuring a fair and transparent campaign environment;
2. More inclusive political participation of women and underrepresented groups throughout the electoral cycle;
3. To enhance effectiveness of measures for prevention of and response to violence against women and girls.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

Specific objective 1:

Output 1.1 Enhanced capacities of bodies in charge of the electoral processes related to electoral services, transparent communication and coordination in the electoral cycle and supervision of the financing of political organisations;

Output 1.2 Strengthened capacities of civil society organisations to participate in the electoral cycle in coordination with electoral institutions, UN agencies and international NGOs, as well as to monitor spending of political organisations during the 2025 national election campaign.

Specific objective 2:

Output 2.1 Enhanced access to opportunities for political participation for women and underrepresented groups, such as youth and indigenous peoples;

Output 2.2 Enhanced capacity and internal mechanism of political organisations for development and implementation of transparent and inclusive rules for the selection of their candidates in the 2025 elections.

Specific objective 3:

Output 3.1. Public policies and legal frameworks for all forms of violence against women and girls are aligned with international human rights standards;

Output 3.2. National and subnational systems and institutions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls are strengthened;

Output 3.3. Prevention platforms established/strengthened to promote strategies and programs (community dialogues, public information and promotion campaigns together with men, religious and community leaders and other relevant actors) about knowledge, attitudes, and practices with gender equality, self-esteem and transformation of harmful masculinities;

Output 3.4. Women and girls are survivors of GBV, including Domestic Violence (DV) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), and their families are informed and have access to quality essential services, including services and opportunities for recovery in the longer term;

Output 3.5. Key partners, including the technical players who are responsible for relevant statistics, service providers in the different ministries and under-secretariats of the State and women’s rights advocates, have strengthened their capacities to regularly gather data regarding VAWG in line with international and regional standards;

Outcome 3.6. Relevant women’s rights groups and CSOs, including those representing young people and groups facing multiple interrelated forms of discrimination and vulnerability, have been strengthened to influence and advance more effectively in the elimination of violence against women and girls.

3.2 Indicative Activities

Specific objective 1: To strengthen integrity, transparency, accountability and efficiency of the electoral processes and institutions while ensuring a fair and transparent campaign environment.

Activities related to **Output 1.1: Enhanced capacities of bodies in charge of the electoral processes related to electoral services, transparent communication and coordination in the electoral cycle and supervision of the financing of political organisations:**

1.1.1 Provide technical assistance for the improvement of electoral services and bodies in charge of the electoral process, including the strengthening of communication capacities throughout the electoral cycle.

1.1.3 Provide training and capacity building for electoral institutions to strengthen the control of political and electoral financing, involving political organisations, the media and civil society organisations.

Activities related to **Output 1.2: Strengthened capacities of civil society organisations to participate in the electoral cycle in coordination with electoral institutions, UN agencies and international NGOs, as well as to monitor spending of political organisations during the 2025 national election campaign:**

1.2.1 Convene an Articulation Table for Electoral Democratic Strengthening with electoral institutions, consortium of CSOs, UN agencies and international NGOs working on electoral issues, taking into account the democratic values and principles established by the European Union to establish potential lines of cooperation and synergies among the participating entities.

1.2.2 Monitor the financing of political organisations, including the oversight of electoral expenditure in social networks during the 2025 electoral campaign by civil society organisations.

1.2.3 Develop technological and information tools for citizens, journalists, media, and opinion makers to strengthen informed voting, reducing fake news and disinformation during the 2025 elections.

Specific objective 2: More inclusive political participation of women and underrepresented groups throughout the electoral cycle.

Activities related to **Output 2.1: Enhanced access to opportunities for political participation for women and underrepresented groups, such as youth and indigenous peoples:**

2.1.1 Develop and adjust the methodology for monitoring gender-based political violence in social networks and elaborate monthly reports and dissemination of the findings of violence monitoring.

2.1.2 Develop information and training tools for electoral officials, including judges and the general public, on political violence, with special emphasis on gender-based political violence.

Activities related to **Output 2.2: Enhanced capacity and internal mechanism of political organisations for development and implementation of transparent and inclusive rules for the selection of their candidates in the 2025 elections:**

2.2.1 Implement a capacity building process for new leadership for the political participation of women and underrepresented groups such as youth, indigenous peoples and nationalities, LGBTI and people with disabilities.

2.2.2 Provide technical assistance to five national political organisations to strengthen internal democratic mechanisms with transparent and inclusive rules for the selection of their candidates in the 2025 elections.

Specific objective 3: To enhance effectiveness of measures for prevention of and response to violence against women and girls.

Activities related to **Output 3.1: Alignment of public policies and legal frameworks to human rights standards**

3.1.1 Provide technical assistance in the three prioritised municipalities, to articulate planning and budgets with the National Plan to Prevent and EVAW. This includes reviewing their Development and Land Management Plans (PDOT) and linking them with the reporting of the Plan's indicators.

3.1.2 Deploy technical assistance to strengthen capacities in local government for the use of the Gender Classifier in the Public Expenditure Catalogue, so as to verify the use of resources for the eradication of VAWG.

3.1.3 Build the capacity of women's organisations for the social control of the budget of local governments for gender equality policies and the eradication of violence against women, through the tools generated in phase 1.

Activities related to **Output 3.2: Systems to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls**

3.2.1 Strengthen the Cantonal Boards for the Protection of Rights (JCPD) with the guidelines built in phase 1 for the delivery of administrative measures to protect women. This implies the articulation with the Secretariat of Human Rights for the follow-up of the Boards.

3.2.2 Deliver technical assistance to the SDH to activate the protection systems in the prioritised cantons, once the management model generated in the Spotlight phase 1 is in place.

Activities related to **Output 3.3: Shifting of knowledge, attitudes and practices in communities**

3.3.1 Disseminate the prevention campaign #EseTipoNo al local level.

3.3.2 Follow-up and accompany the implementation of the local proposals generated in healthy masculinities.

Activities related to **Output 3.4: Delivery of essential services to vulnerable women and girls**

3.4.1: Strengthen the social services provided by civil society organisations, especially to provide material assistance to women who are in shelters and who must begin their process of emancipation.

3.4.2: Support for the improvement of a women foster service in Morona.

3.4.3. Continue capacity building for the Attorney General's Office, including judges to implement the protocol for investigating violent deaths of women.

3.4.4 Support the emergency green line to prevent femicide and escalation of violence in collaboration with police, foster houses and ministry of health.

3.4.5 Support and monitoring access to health, reproductive health services and emergency, counselling and legal assistance(CSOs)-, police stations, courts , shelters in the selected provinces.

3.4.6 Training to essential services provider for medical, security or legal attention to women with with disability or in vulnerable situation.

3.4.7 Strengthen the referral system from the essential services establishment to foster houses to ensure accompaniment of GBV survivors.

Activities related to **Output 3.5: Compilation, analysing and use of data**

3.5.1 Expand the Single Registry of Violence (RUV) system to include all institutions that participate in the standardisation and evaluation of variables. The information registry becomes a tool for the prevention and comprehensive protection of victims and for permanent technical support to the SDH and the RUV Technical Committee;

3.5.2 Deliver technical assistance for the proper linkage of the Single Registry of Violence with the Early Warning System of femicide (SAT).

Activities related to **Output 3.6: Strengthening of women's rights groups and CSOs**

3.6.1 Strengthen the capacities of grassroots civil society organisations for access to resources and generation of proposals to prevent and address violence against women.

3.6.2. Strengthen the capacities of civil society organisations for advocacy by presenting the oversight reports of the committees of users of the services proposed in the law.

3.6.3. Exchange of experiences and good practices among civil society organisations to prevent and address violence against women and girls.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

The Action focuses exclusively on improving the quality of democracy and the protection of the most vulnerable groups. No environmental hazards are expected. It will be seen how far it is feasible to exclude political actors with questionable environmental projects from the support activities.

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action Category C (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes, the component 1 is labelled G1 whereas the component 2 is labelled as G2.

This implies that Gender equality is the main objective of the project/programme and is fundamental in its design and expected results. The project/programme would not have been undertaken without this gender equality objective. The gender perspective in the electoral action will be reinforced by supporting initiatives led by women, providing trainings for gender equality and creating spaces of dialogue aiming to increase participation of women in political positions and combating discrimination. Monitoring and evaluation of the project will be centred on indicators with gender perspective. Increasing women's representation in politics and obtaining a higher share of women elected in public offices is a concrete objective of the programme.

In addition, it is not possible to contribute to gender equality in all areas without contributing to the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, since it is one of the most important barriers in the development of women's life projects.

Human Rights

The principles of good governance, participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability will be at the core of the Action. This project will support the implementation of right-based actions; including by promoting the political participation and representation of civil society organisations who represent minority groups of people or people living in vulnerable situation. A core element of the project is the incorporation of a gender perspective in the electoral reform and political participation.

Disability

As per the OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that while persons with disabilities figure among the identified vulnerable groups, specific support is considered too marginal to be qualified higher.

The approach to the elimination of violence against women will include elements of access to women with different forms of disability. While it will not be possible to direct a particular action to women with disabilities, an adaptation of the tools will be made to be accessible to women with disabilities. However in the civil society reference group there is a member with disability who monitor the inclusion of women with disability and the specific attention we have to pay to.

Democracy

The principles of good governance, participation, non-discrimination, equality, transparency and accountability will be at the core of the Action. This project will support the implementation of right-based actions; including by promoting the political participation and representation of civil society organisations who represent women, minority groups of people or people living in vulnerable situation. A core element of the project is the incorporation of a gender perspective in the electoral reform and political participation.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

By supporting the consolidation of a political culture of democracy, the Action aims to contribute to the prevention of potential conflict. However, due to the recent political crisis the country underwent, special attention will need to be paid to the evolving negotiations and agreements reached.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Not applicable

Other considerations if relevant

Not applicable

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
1.2.Political decisions outside the Commission	There are changes in the management of the CNE and as a consequence there is a change of focus and priorities.	H	M	Direct project management maintains an unbiased approach to internal CNE issues, while maintaining dialogue with all relevant electoral stakeholders.
1.1.Macro environment	Civil unrest, for political or economic reasons, in the country creates difficulties to carry out the electoral process and/or as a consequence the elections are moved up.	M	M	The CNE, as the primary electoral body, will continue to operate, although the pace of work may be affected: introducing flexibility in the project implementation schedule.
1.2.Political decisions outside the Commission	The economic situation of the country, including government austerity measures, may create difficulties (e.g. insufficient funds for electoral bodies, reduction of personnel, etc.) for the development of project activities.	M	H	The CNE would have a constitutional obligation to continue to function and the right to receive funding. While ensuring its independence, lines of communication with the government and opposition parties should be kept open to ensure commitment to the CNE's financial needs. Introduce flexibility in the project implementation schedule and in the allocation of funds for actions to compensate for possible shortfalls.
1.2.Political decisions outside the Commission	Openness of the political organisations' authorities for the implementation of technical assistance throughout the electoral cycle.	H	L	Develop a strategy to approach and liaise with the authorities of the political organisations. Generate medium-term labour agreements for the execution of the project's activities.
1.1.Macro environment	Dissatisfaction and clientelistic attitude of some grassroots CSO for not receiving direct resources for specific activities of their organisations.	M	M	Information meetings on the scope of the initiative and also to inform about participatory budgeting in local governments. Coordinated action with other cooperation agencies

				in order to strengthen CSO's capacities
1.2.Political decisions outside the Commission	There are new changes of SDH authorities and as a consequence there is a change of strategy and priorities.	H	M	An induction phase for new Ministry and Subsecretary on Spotlight II objectives. Technical support will be ensured by the implementing partner.
1.2.Political decisions outside the Commission	The economic situation of the country, including government austerity measures, may create difficulties (e.g. insufficient funds for human right secretary –SDH-and in particular gender subsecretary, reduction of personnel, etc.) for the development of project activities.	M	H	The SDH would have a constitutional obligation to continue to function and the right to receive funding. Foresee a risk marker in the project for actions to compensate for possible shortfalls.

Lessons Learnt:

- The technical and impartial assistance offered by UNDP and other international cooperation bodies, through the transfer of experiences or resources, was positively valued by the Electoral Bodies during the 2021 presidential elections.
- There was a lack of coordination between the CNE and the TCE in some stages of the process, which hindered processes such as the registration of candidacies, as well as the interference of State agencies that, according to the Constitution, would not be empowered to intervene in the administration of elections (such as the Comptroller's Office, the Prosecutor's Office and even some courts without competence in electoral matters).
- The high rate of temporary contracts of the personnel involved in the management of the electoral process was identified as a cause for concern, since they are hired only during the electoral stage and do not continue after the election results are proclaimed.
- Post-electoral activities for the analysis of good practices were identified as important.
- In terms of training, the CNE's communication area considers the study of disinformation monitoring tools to be important, for permanent use, not only restricted to the electoral campaign period.
- In order to prevent disinformation and the dissemination of fake news, it is important to work with traditional media, but also with non-traditional digital media, journalists and opinion makers, to promote a responsible role during election time.
- On the Spotlight I, the involvement of civil society and, more specifically, of Civil Society National Reference Group, has demonstrated the importance of generating processes of effective participation.
- As violence is a multicausal phenomenon, the Spotlight joint-up approach tightened relation and coordination mechanism which helped the holistic and shared analysis of the root causes and the possible solutions.
- A major achievement and contribution from Spotlight was the data collection integrated system through the design of the National Gender Violence digital Observatory. This result showed the importance of the coordination between State and civil society to contribute to a transparent and accountable system.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The articulation of this Action seeks areas of convergence and complementarity by the two initiatives financed by the European Union aimed at promoting electoral democratic strengthening, and the prevention and eradication of gender violence.

Democracy support

This first component will seek to i) strengthen the regulatory and institutional framework of the electoral institutions, ii) foster transparency and truthfulness in the treatment of public information to support a well-informed citizenry and iii) encourage democratic values and support the participation of traditionally excluded groups as well as prevent any type of violence during electoral processes. It will benefit from the strong institutional setup between the most experienced UN institution in electoral support, as it is the case of UNDP, as well as with the four more specialised CSOs in electoral matters in the country.

The project implemented by the UNDP will aim to continue strengthening the electoral and democratic process in Ecuador with an emphasis on the Electoral Organisations. Meanwhile, the project implemented by the Consortium will focus on democratic strengthening of civil society, taking into account the experience and the fundamental role in promoting active citizenship throughout the electoral cycle.

The Action takes into consideration the recommendations of the EU Electoral Observation Mission for the Extraordinary Congressional Elections of 2020, and the Mission of Electoral Experts deployed by the EU for the General Elections of 2021. It will also complement the FPI action (contract signature expected in March 2023) aiming to contribute the prevention and peaceful handling of socio-environmental conflicts due to natural resource extraction in Ecuador. Close coordination between actions shall be ensured, especially regarding the development-peace nexus. In this regard, the FPI action can effectively contribute to mitigating some of the risks identified in the AAP (in particular, issues concerning Free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples as dialogue and peaceful consultation processes among communities and between communities and authorities are specifically addressed through the FPI action.

Spotlight II

The objective of this second component it is to contribute to women and girls living lives free from violence, especially femicide. It will keep the ecological approach through the holistic strategies developed during phase I, with community, family and individual participation. The action will seek to complement capacity-building (pillars 2, 3, 4, and 6), institution building (pillar 2) and service provision (pillar 4); and, will also respond to the requirements for new normative and policy frameworks pursuant to LOIPEVCM (pillar 1).

- IF it achieves a strong legal framework on gender based violence at national level, THEN the regulatory framework at local level will be strengthened and institutional conditions for compliance are more favourable.
- IF the capacities of the human right bodies and authorities, and political parties are strengthened, combined with measures to combat disinformation and promote consistency, THEN these institutions will be better prepared to comply with the policy framework.
- IF a proper dissemination of prevention mechanism and shifting of THEN we can generate a new generation of healthy masculinities.
- IF the delivery and essential services are strengthened THEN the response or prevention system will be the better quality, more accessible and accountable.
- IF mechanisms for verifying and monitoring information on violence and femicide are installed and/or reinforced, via a unified register platform combining national statistic system and CSO system, THEN better and more truthful information, a key input for a well-informed institutional bodies and an efficient response to violence.
- IF communication media is strengthened, jointly with citizen information campaigns on gender based violence in all its aspects, THEN media can better report without victimization and citizens are better informed in order to advocate and prevent.
- IF grassroots civil society organization are strengthened THEN they will have access to resources and generation of proposals to prevent and address violence against women.

Based on the results achieved through the phase I the action will focus on relevant processes that are considered in the law, but that had not yet begun its implementation, such as the articulation of local plans to the national plan for the eradication of violence, the generation of national and local protection systems, the Single Registry of Violence, the Early Warning System, the observatory of violence, the committees of users to monitor the law, among others.

More attention will be paid to the 6th pillar on strengthening women's organisations to ensure the sustainability of the processes initiated, specifically to translate into practice the mechanisms for oversight and social control by women and CSOs, based on a solid foundation of capacity building (with emphasis on grassroots organisations, 12 user committees formed in the first period of implementation, among others).

This action fits within the priorities of the Gender Country Strategy, which started on 2022 with the selection of the Head of Delegation as Co-president of the Gender International Cooperation Working Group (MEGECI) together with the Ambassador of Mexico. One of the first recommendations of the Presidency was to build on the impactful work achieved through Spotlight Initiative opening the concept and the unique structure to other donors keeping the EU leadership.

The Action takes into consideration the recommendations made by the external evaluation team and the internal monitoring and evaluation process of EU and UN technical committee.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention. On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action. The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values / years)	Targets (values / years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Strengthening and promote Ecuador's democracy and inclusive democratic processes while promoting women rights and safety	1. % of citizens who support democracy 2. % of citizens who are [very/fairly] satisfied with the way democracy works in their country 3. % of women who have experienced violence throughout their lives 4. % of women who have experienced violence in the last 12 months	1. 33% (2020) 2. 10% (2020) 3. 65% (2019) 4. 32% (2019)	1. 40% (2025) 2. 20% (2025) 3. 61% (2025) 4. 28% (2025)	1. Latino barometric Report 2. Latino barometric Report 3. National Survey on Family Relations and Violence against Women 2019 4. National Survey on Family Relations and Violence against Women 2019	
Specific Objective 1	Strengthen integrity, transparency, accountability and efficiency of the electoral processes and institutions while ensuring a fair and transparent campaign environment	1.1 Status of the 12 measures for the improvement and innovation of the processes and services of the Electoral Function within the framework of the recommendations of the EU Technical Mission	1.1 2 measures adopted (2022)	1.1. 4 measures adopted (2025)	1.1. EU Final Report Expert Mission, Ecuador (2021)	The CNE and the ECA maintain their willingness to work with the UN and the EU on the implementation of recommendations

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values / years)	Targets (values / years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
		1.2. Number of countries supported by the EU to conduct elections and/or improve their electoral process (GERF 2.26)	1.2 1 country (2020)	1.2 1 country (2025)	1.2 EU Final Report Expert Mission, Ecuador (2021)	
Output 1 related to specific objective 1	The bodies in charge of the electoral processes related to electoral enhance their services, transparent communication and coordination in the electoral cycle and supervision of the financing of political organisations	1.1.1 Number of electoral services and bodies in charge of the electoral process strengthened, including the strengthening of communication capacities throughout the electoral cycle. 1.1.2 Number of reports on capacity building for electoral institutions, including monitoring of electoral expenditure complaints investigated by the competent authorities during the electoral process	1.1.1 2 CNE and TCE electoral services strengthened, including communication strategies (2022) 1.1.2 1 A report with 1311 Complaints, including those of electoral expenditure, investigated by the TCE (2021)	1.1.1 1 Updated, electoral services and communication strategy in 2023 1 strategy developed by 2024 1.1.2 1 A report on capacity building of the electoral institution including monitoring of complaints, those of electoral expenditure, investigated by the TCE (2025)	1.1.1 Institutional Progress Reports/International Technical Assistance Reports 1.1.2 2021 Election Contentious Electoral Tribunal Accountability Report	The CNE and TCE maintain as a priority to improve institutional strategic communication Increasing the capacity to supervise the financing of political organisations will generate a more transparent environment
Output 2 related to specific objective 1	Capacity of civil society organisations to participate in the electoral cycle in coordination with electoral institutions, UN agencies and international NGOs, as well as to monitor spending of political organisations during the 2025 national election campaign, are strengthened.	1.2.1 Level of coordination and articulation through technical working sessions among different actors working on electoral issues. 1.2.2 Number of reports on social media spending during the 2025 election campaign developed with support of the EU-funded intervention. 1.2.3 Number of monitoring reports on the use of public resources in official advertising developed with support of the EU-funded intervention. 1.2.4 Number of journalists, media, and opinion formers trained by the EU-funded intervention	1.1.1 0 (2022) There are no formal spaces for articulation among the aforementioned actors 1.2.1 1 preliminary report (2019) 1 preliminary report (2021) 1.2.3 1 preliminary report (2021) 1.2.4 The baseline is 0 (2022)	1.1.1 Institutional platform established and operating regularly 1.2.1 1 full report (2025) 1.2.3 1 full report (2025) 1.2.4 40 journalists, media, and opinion formers trained	1.2.1 Institutional Progress Reports/International Technical Assistance Reports on electoral matters. 1.2.2 Reports on social media spending, FARO, 2021 1.2.3 Monitoring Report, PC, 2021 1.2.4 Pre- and post-training test reports	Electoral institutions, UN agencies, civil society and international cooperation organisations commit to participating Successful electoral processes require an improvement in the transmission of information about the electoral process to citizens. Fake news monitoring is necessary for a clean,

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values / years)	Targets (values / years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
		with improved knowledge and/or skills in fake news and disinformation, disaggregated by sex 1.2.5 Number of informed voting tools developed with support of the EU-funded intervention	1.2.5 1 preliminary tool (2021)	1.2.5 1 fully-developed tool (2025)	1.2.5 Institutional Progress Reports/International Technical Assistance Reports on electoral matters	transparent and inclusive electoral process. The transmission of information about the electoral process to citizens will be strengthened
Specific Objective 2	More inclusive political participation of women and underrepresented groups throughout the electoral cycle	2.1. Extent to which laws/policies in relation to preventing and combating gender-based political violence drafted with support of the EU-funded intervention have incorporated international standards.	2.1. 1 Electoral Law reform (2020)	2.1 1 proposal to reform the Electoral Law by (2025)	2.1. National Electoral Laws and Reports of electoral bodies	Successful electoral processes require that electoral bodies improve their capacity to prevent and combat political violence
Output 1 related to specific objective 2	Women and underrepresented groups, such as youth and indigenous peoples enhanced access to opportunities for political participation in the 2025 elections.	2.1.1 Number of policies or actions contributing at increasing the number of women in decision-making positions in municipal, cantonal or provincial GADs* 2.1.1 % of cases of gender-based political violence identified by monitoring	2.1.1 Electoral Law Reform (2020) 2.1.2 100% of the cases investigated (2021)	2.1.1 1 proposal to reform the Electoral Law by (2025) 2.1.2 100% of the cases investigated (2025)	2.1.1 National Electoral Laws and EU Final Report Expert Mission, Ecuador (2021) 2.1.2 Reports from the Electoral Management Bodies, TCE 2021 and Progress reports generated during monitoring	Gender-based political violence monitoring identifies vulnerabilities to an open and inclusive electoral process

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values / years)	Targets (values / years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Output 2 related to specific objective 2	Internal mechanism of political organisations for development and implementation of transparent and inclusive rules for the selection of their candidates in the 2025 elections are enhanced	2.2.1 # of processes to strengthen the capacities of new leaders for political participation (priority groups) developed with support of the EU-funded intervention 2.2.2 # of political organisations that strengthen their capacities building to ensure broader participation.	2.2.1 1 Women’s Political School (2022) 2.2.2 0 (2022)	2.2.1 3 Schools (2025) 2.2.2 5 (2025)	2.2.1 Institutional technical reports / Technical assistance reports 2.2.2 Baseline and endline studies conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention	The political participation of priority groups is key to strengthening electoral democracy in Ecuador The primary processes of candidate selection influence the actions of the candidates
Specific objective 3	To enhance effectiveness of measures for prevention of and response to violence against women and girls	Number of National and/or sub-national evidence-based and costed action plans and M&E frameworks on VAWG that respond to the rights of all women and girls Extent to which change of behaviour to prevent VAWG is evident Status of availability of data, reported on a regular basis, on various forms of VAWG (at least on intimate partner violence) at country level Level of coordination of Women’s rights organisations, autonomous social movements and relevant CSOs, to jointly advocate on ending VAWG Number of people benefitting from EU-funded interventions to counter sexual and gender-based violence (GERF 2.37)	0 National Plan to Eradicate Violence, Action Plan against Trafficking, Cantonal Plan 0 0 52 women’s CSOs Mapped.	1 Subnational plan linked to national plan per canton 1 research with evidence 1 report with data published 30 CSO increase coordination	Secretary of Human Rights reports, and Local government reports Focal groups RUV Reports of implementation	The SDH and the local authorities maintain their willingness to work with the UN and the EU on the implementation of Spotlight I recommendations The SDH maintains institutional strengthening plans on gender as a priority.

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values / years)	Targets (values / years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Output 1 related to specific objective 3	Public policies and legal frameworks for all forms of violence against women and girls, aligned with international human rights standards	# of draft evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending VAWG with M&E frameworks and proposed budgets, developed with support of the EU-funded intervention	0 municipality has a sub-national action plan on ending VAWG developed, with M&E frameworks and proposed budgets	3 municipalities with PNEV indicator systems incorporated into PDOTS (2025)	Annual implementation reports	The new local authorities maintain their willingness to work with the UN and the EU on the implementation of Spotlight II
Output 2 related to specific objective 3	National and subnational systems and institutions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls are strengthened.	# of government officials trained by the EU-funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skills on human rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviors towards women and girls, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, disaggregated by sex	10 officials of cantonal boards and SDH capacitated	30 officials of cantonal boards and SDH capacitated	Annual implementation report Capacity building manual Pre- and post training test reports	
Output 3 related to specific objective 3	Prevention platforms established/strengthened to promote strategies and programs (community dialogues, public information and promotion campaigns together with men, religious and community leaders and other relevant actors) about knowledge, attitudes, and practices with gender equality, self-esteem and transformation of harmful masculinities.	Number of campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, including of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination disseminated with support of the EU-funded intervention	1 Campaign #EseTupoNo materials developed in phase 1 (2022)	3 proposals implemented in the localities by men's groups (2025)	Number of audience reached by campaign	There is a willingness of local counterparts to adapt to the local reality the products developed in the phase I
Output 4 related to specific objective 3	Women and girls are survivors of GBV, including DV and VP, and their families are informed and have access to quality essential services, including services	Number of organisations who look after women and girls' survivors/victims and their families, that have increased knowledge of and access to support initiatives	Protocols and tools for shelters center on protection for GBV victims developed in phase 1	4 services provided by organisations strengthened	Annual intermediate report on quality services	

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results	Indicators (@):	Baselines (values / years)	Targets (values / years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
	and opportunities for recovery in the longer term.					
Output 5 related to specific objective 3	Key partners, including the technical players who are responsible for relevant statistics, service providers in the different ministries and under-secretariats of the State and women's rights advocates, have strengthened their capacities to regularly gather data regarding VAWG in line with international and regional standards.	Number of institutions with a system to collect administrative data on VAWG/HP, in line with international standards, across different sectors, linked to RUV with support of the EU-funded intervention	1 RUV system developed in phase 1	3 additional RUV systems developed in relevant institutions	Institutions annual reports on RUV systems implementation	There is political will and agreement among the institutions to implement the data system
Output 6 related to specific objective 3	Relevant women's rights groups and CSOs, including those representing young people and groups facing multiple interrelated forms of discrimination and vulnerability, have been strengthened to influence and advance more effectively in the elimination of violence against women and girls.	Number of women's rights groups, networks and relevant CSOs with strengthened capacities to network, partner and jointly advocate for progress on ending VAWG at local and national levels	5 organisations strengthened through phase I	9 additional organisations strengthened	Annual report by implementing partner	There is openness on the part of social organizations to share good practices

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with Ecuador.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 40 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Grants)

Grants: (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant

This grant seeks to contribute to (mainly Specific Objective 2) the strengthening the quality of democracy by promoting citizen's participation throughout the entire electoral cycle, as well as transparency as a permanent exercise.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Certain areas have been identified in which the implementation of this action could achieve better results as well as guarantee complementary results, if they are implemented through highly specialised local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with proven experience, strengths and results on the following areas:

- Grupo FARO (lead agency): on the issues of electoral debates, regulatory development and transparency in spending on social networks in electoral campaigns.
- Esquel Foundation: on the issues of participation and equality approaches.
- Citizen Participation Corporation: on issues of social accompaniment and monitoring of gender-based political violence.
- Citizenship and Development Foundation: on the issues of monitoring financing for political parties and monitoring fake news.

All these NGOs are established in Quito, however through their respective networks and past project's implementation, they have also territorial presence in several provinces of the country. Through this strong network, the project can guarantee to be implemented nationwide.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

In view of the expertise of the four specialised institutions that are active in promoting the democracy sector in the country, the Delegation proposes to give a consortium of NGOs a direct grant, allowing an intervention that will pursue a common objective, with each institution specialising in their specific area of knowledge, applying and strengthening already developed tools, without duplicating activities. This grant is justified because these entities are the only ones with experience in the implementation of initiatives towards strengthening the democratic system. Based on their past projects, they have generated actions to strengthen the electoral system and its institutions, to incentivize the active role of citizens throughout the entire electoral cycle, and to promote the transparency

throughout the electoral cycle. In addition, they have permanent spaces for dialogue with active political actors, both in the National Assembly, political parties, local governments, and public institutions.

The latter is justified according to art. 195 (f) “Exceptions to Calls for Proposals” which states that Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals following literal (f) for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals.

4.3.2 Indirect Management with a pillar assessed entities

A part of this action will be implemented in indirect management with the United Nations Development Program– UNDP (focusing mainly to Specific Objective 1). This implementation entails providing technical support to different stakeholders involved in the action, in particular designing and conducting ongoing legal and future electoral reforms, as well as accompanying their effective implementation; supporting inter-party dialogues initiatives; and strengthening capacities of duty bearers and right holders so as to integrate the principles of integrity, inclusion, transparency and accountability in their respective fields of activity.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- A specific mandate to strengthen democracy and institutionality worldwide, as a an enabler of sustainable development;
- Recognised political neutrality;
- Broad worldwide expertise and experience in electoral issues;
- Strong presence and specific experience in Ecuador;
- Technical, administrative and financial capacities;
- Capacity to channel funding to civil society and grassroots organisations;
- Satisfactory visibility of EU funding.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission’s services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

A part of this action will be implemented in indirect management with the UN Women (focusing on Specific Objective 3).

This implementation entails providing technical support to implement the second phase of Spotlight Initiative in Ecuador, thereby reinforcing and monitoring the ongoing legal framework and local reforms to be launched, as well as accompanying their effective implementation.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- The international UN mandate on gender and in particular on gender violence;
- Local presence and specific experience in Ecuador, including successfully implementing the previous EU-funded Spotlight Initiative;
- Recognised as political and technical level by the government and CSO organisation;
- Political neutrality;
- Strong presence and specific experience in the provinces selected;
- Technical, administrative and financial capacities;
- Capacity to channel funding to civil society and grassroots organisations;
- Co-president of International Cooperation Working Group on Gender with European Union Delegation;
- Satisfactory visibility of EU funding.

Moreover UN Women has worked in close collaboration with the Ecuadorian Government and with civil society in preparing and approving the national norms for gender equality, has provided technical assistance to prepare

and approve the *General Comprehensive Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women* (LOIPEVCM, February 2018). In this area, the Agency has also supported and coordinated work among public, private, and civil-society entities.

Among others, UN Women has implemented the project called ‘**The Safe Cities and Public Spaces for Women and Girls Programme**’ in Quito, currently under way in Cuenca, and to be integrated in Guayaquil. Local governments and women’s organisations are the main partners for this program’s implementation.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission’s services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

4.3.3 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances

If due to exceptional circumstances, implementation in indirect management under 4.3.2 can no longer be envisaged, the foreseen activities can instead be implemented in direct management mode: grants awarded following a Call for Proposals.

This applies vice versa for activities foreseen under 4.3.1, which could alternatively be implemented under indirect management, as described under 4.3.2.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission’s authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Indirect management with United Nations Development Programme - UNDP section 4.3.2	800 000
Indirect management with United Nations for Women- UN Women section 4.3.2	1 000 000
Grants – total envelope under section 4.3.1	1 000 000
Totals	2 800 000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

Democracy support Component

The European Union and the UNDP will establish a programme Steering Committee to provide the political steer of the Action, which will meet at least once per year, and more often as the 2025 Presidential elections approach. It will be composed of the European Union Head of Delegation, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the

UNDP Resident Representative, the President of the National Electoral Council (CNE), and the President of the Tribunal on Electoral Disputes (TCE).

In addition, a programme Technical Committee will ensure the day-to-day running of the operation, and will meet at least three times per year and more often as the 2025 Presidential elections approach. It will be composed by the European Union programme officer in charge, the Chief Technical Advisor of the programme (UNDP), and representatives from the CNE and TCE. Other stakeholders will be invited on a needs basis.

Spotlight II Component

Spotlight II will follow the same scheme of the first phase through a two-tier governance system. First, a Steering Committee will meet twice per year and will be composed by the European Union Head of Delegation, the UN Women Country Representative, the Secretary of Human Rights, and a Representative from Civil Society.

In addition, a programme Technical Committee will ensure the day-to-day running of the operation, composed by the European Union programme officer in charge, the national Spotlight Coordinator, the technical advisor on gender issues at the Human Rights Secretary. Other stakeholders will be invited on a needs basis.

4.7 Pre-conditions [Only for project modality]

Not applicable

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of both actions will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partners shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews). A ROM monitoring will be necessary of both projects.

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

The consortium as well as UNDP will be responsible for collecting all data required to define both the baseline, monitor progress and results achieved.

On the other side and UN Women will use all the data collected during Spotlight I as a baseline for design this new phase of the programme. The progress monitoring will be one of the main activities of UNRC in order to rapidly assess the situation and re-orient the activities if needed.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the actions, a mid-term or final evaluation may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission or via the implementing partners.

A mid-term or final evaluation would be carried out for problem-solving and/or learning purposes, in particular with respect to analyse the feasibility to achieve results and adapt the design if necessary.

If an evaluation is to be contracted by the Commission, the Commission shall inform the implementing partners at least 2 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle has adopted a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted, or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: ‘a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one’. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a ‘support entities’. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention is defined in the related Action Document and it is revisable; it can be a(n) (group of) action(s) or a (group of) contract(s).

Tick in the left side column one of the three possible options for the level of definition of the Primary Intervention(s) identified in this action.

In the case of ‘Group of actions’ level, add references to the present action and other action concerning the same Primary Intervention.

In the case of ‘Contract level’, add the reference to the corresponding budgetary items in point 4.5, Indicative Budget.

Option 1: Action level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
Option 2: Group of actions level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Action reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#): Strengthening of inclusive Ecuadorian democratic governance and prevention of violence against women - OPSYS number: ACT-61532
Option 3: Contract level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	Strengthening electoral processes and institutions and transparent campaign environment: Contract with UNDP, regarding specific objective 1.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	Participation of women and underrepresented groups: Contract with Consortium of NGOs, regarding specific objective 2.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 3	Spotlight II- Reinforcing the prevention and eradication of violence against women: Contract with UN Women, regarding specific objective 3.