





RESEARCH ARTICLE

Femicide in Honduras through Addressing Spotlight Initiative: A Study of the Implementation of the UN-EU Global Program

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Abstract

Honduras is one of the countries with the highest rates of femicide in Central America. The high rate of femicide in Honduras has prompted the United Nations and the European Union to assist Honduras in addressing the issue of femicide through the Spotlight Initiative program. This study also aims to examine the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative program in addressing femicide in Honduras from 2019 to 2023. This study is important to fill the gap in research on femicide in Latin America, particularly Honduras, and to analyze the Spotlight Initiative Program. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis. This study uses literature review as data collection. The results of the study indicate that the implementation was carried out by the United Nations and the European Union by strengthening policies and legislation, strengthening institutions, preventing gender-based violence, strengthening gender-responsive services, strengthening data, and strengthening women's movements. The conclusion of the study shows that although the program's implementation is in line with liberal feminist theory, the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in addressing femicide in Honduras has not met the indicators of gender mainstreaming.

Keywords: Spotlight Initiative, Femicide, Honduras

Abstrak

Honduras adalah salah satu negara yang memiliki tingkat femisida tertinggi di kawasan Amerika Tengah. Tingginya angka femisida di Honduras mendorong PBB dan Uni Eropa membantu Honduras dalam menyelesaikan permasalahan femisida melalui program Spotlight Initiative. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui implementasi program Spotlight Initiative dalam menangani femisida di Honduras pada tahun 2019 hingga tahun 2023. Kajian ini penting dilakukan untuk mengisi kekosongan penelitian tentang femisida di Kawasan Amerika Latin, khususnya Honduras, dan analisis terhadap Program Spotlight Initiative. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan analisis deskriptif. Penelitian ini menggunakan studi pustaka sebagai pengumpulan data. Hasil penelitian menyebutkan bahwa implementasi dilakukan oleh PBB dan Uni Eropa dengan memperkuat kebijakan dan perundang - undangan, memperkuat institusi, mencegah kekerasan berbasis gender, memperkuat layanan responsif gender, memperkuat data, dan memperkuat gerakan perempuan. Kesimpulan kajian menunjukkan meskipun pelaksanaan program sudah sesuai dengan teori feminisme liberal, tetapi Implementasi Spotlight Initiative dalam menangani femisida di Honduras belum memenuhi indikator di dalam pengarusutamaan gender (Gender Mainstreaming).

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Introduction

Femicide is an extreme form of gender-based violence conceptualized by Diana E.H. Russell in 1970 to highlight violence against women and adopted by the United Nations through Resolution 68/191 in 2013 to describe the killing of women (Pandey, 2024). The resolution is an action by the UN urging countries worldwide to take collective action to stop femicide. The UN has also made femicide a priority agenda item in its 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The issue of femicide is in line with the fifth point on Gender Equality, specifically target 5.2, which is to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private spaces, including human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and other forms of violence. In addition, the UN addresses the issue of femicide through the SDGs in the sixteenth point on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, which includes eliminating violence, murder, and improving access to inclusive justice in all aspects of society (Goals, n.d.). However, the SDGs, as a program aimed at achieving global welfare, also face major challenges in preventing femicide.

Femicide is one of the most serious human rights violations. This is evidenced by a UN report stating that 89,000 women and girls were murdered worldwide in 2022 (UN Women & UNODC, 2022, p. 3). The UN has found cases of femicide in various regions of the world, one of which is in Latin America. In 2022, 4,050 women were femicide victims (ECLAC, 2023). Although the gender equality index reached 74.3 percent in 2023, the high number of femicide cases remains a problem in Latin America (World Economic Forum, 2023). Honduras has one of the highest rates of femicide in Latin America.

According to Statista data, Honduras ranked first among Latin American countries in 2022 for the highest rate of femicides or murders of women. The high number of femicide cases in Honduras is due to weak law enforcement. Although the Honduran government ratified CEDAW in 1983 and defined femicide as a serious crime in the Código Penal de Honduras in 2013, these efforts have not been sufficient to address femicide cases in Honduras. (Rodriguez, 2023 97). This can be proven by researchers using data from the World Justice Project, which states that Honduras ranks 29th out of 32 with a score of 0.41 in relation to the enforcement of human rights in Latin America (World Justice Project, 2022). Weak law enforcement has caused Honduras to become one of the countries with the highest crime rates, reaching 74.3 points and ranking sixth in the world (World Population Review, 2024).

To address this issue, the United Nations and the European Union are working together to reduce femicides in Honduras through the Spotlight Initiative program. The Spotlight Initiative is a program to end all forms of

gender-based violence by 2030 (Mihr et al., 2022) run by the United Nations and funded by the European Union (Shrivastava et al., 2018). The Spotlight Initiative has been operating in five regions, namely Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific, with a priority on addressing various forms of gender-based violence through legislative advocacy and the promotion of gender equality (Initiative, n.d.). Latin America is one of the focus areas of the Spotlight Initiative program aimed at reducing femicide rates.

However, the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in Honduras is more interesting than in other Latin American countries because Honduras has a higher level of vulnerability for women than other countries in the region. This is also supported by the high crime rate and low law enforcement in Honduras (Medina and Castillo, 2024). Therefore, this study aims to examine the implementation of the United Nations and the European Union's Spotlight Initiative program in addressing femicide in Honduras. This study contributes to the application and development of theories on liberal feminism and the concept of gender mainstreaming through research on the implementation of the United Nations and the European Union's Spotlight Initiative program to address femicide in Honduras.

Literature Review

Previous studies have been conducted by researchers. Setyowati (2024) states that the high number of femicide cases in Honduras is caused by economic factors. This statement is in line with Turcios' (2021) research, which states that unequal economic and political access between women and men also contributes to femicides. In contrast, Habiba (2023) states that the high number of femicide cases in Honduras is a manifestation of the normalization of gender-based violence in religion, ideology, and language. Rembecki (2022) also showed a correlation between a culture of violence and femicide in Honduras. The four studies do not specifically explain the efforts and forms of intervention by international institutions in dealing with femicide in Honduras and only focus on analyzing the root causes of femicide in Honduras and not on the intervention of international actors in resolving the issue.

In addition, previous studies discussing the intervention of international institutions in handling femicides in Honduras have been conducted by researchers, such as Amarsya's (2020) study, which found that the Honduran government's poor handling of femicides encouraged international organizations to help Honduras resolve the issue of femicides. International organizations such as UN Women played a role in reducing femicide in Honduras from 2011 to 2017 by implementing a work program for the Honduran government in the form of legal protection for victims and legal sanctions for perpetrators. This study is similar to the study conducted by the author, in that it focuses on international intervention. However, Amarsya's (2020) research has a limited time frame and focus, namely from 2011 to 2017, and only focuses on UN Women. This study analyzes efforts to resolve femicide over different time frames and by international institutions. The time frame of this study was from 2019 to 2023.

In addition, Tanjung (2023) mentions that the CEDAW Committee plays a role in providing recommendations to Honduras regarding the ratification of criminal laws against women, the establishment of women's empowerment institutions, and budget allocation. This shows the involvement of international organizations in reducing femicides in Honduras. This study provides an overview of international institutions' efforts to promote policy reform in Honduras. However, this study does not focus on specific international organizations. Therefore, this study also provides an opportunity to examine the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in addressing femicide in Honduras.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis in a study entitled "Liberal Feminist Perspectives and Gender Mainstreaming in the Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program to Address Femicide in Honduras." According to John W. Creswell states that qualitative research refers to research relies on text (words) to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The purpose of this research, using qualitative methods, is to explore and analyze a phenomenon descriptively in accordance with the research questions in the study. This objective is in line with Creswell's statement regarding the fundamental characteristics of qualitative research, namely, exploring and describing phenomena selected by the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The author has also set material limitations in this study so that the research can be focused and aligned with the research objectives. This study focuses on the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program to address femicide in Honduras. The discussion in this study only discusses the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program by the United Nations and the European Union and does not address the goal of addressing the rate of femicide in Honduras. In addition, the author set time limitations for the study. The time frame of this study was from 2019 to 2023. The author chose 2019 because it was the year when the United Nations and the European Union began implementing the Spotlight Initiative in Honduras on January 1, 2019.

Furthermore, 2023 is the last year that the United Nations and the European Union will implement the Spotlight Initiative program to address femicide in Honduras on June 30, 2023. The author also determined the data collection technique for this study. The data collection technique used in this study was a literature review. According to Creswell, qualitative research can collect data using qualitative document types, including public documents such as diplomas, newspapers, journals, and letters (Creswell, 2018). This study collected data using documents from the annual report of the Spotlight Initiative in Honduras, journal articles, news, Honduran government media, non-governmental organizations in Honduras, and the Spotlight Initiative.Furthermore, the validity of the data has also been determined in this study. According to John W. According to Creswell, data validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research in determining whether the findings are accurate from the perspective of the researcher, participants, or readers (Creswell, 2018, p. 331). The way to ensure data validity in this study was by comparing the data using primary sources derived from qualitative document data collection and multiplying the data sources.

The data analysis technique used by the researcher was qualitative descriptive analysis. Referring to Creswell's statement, the data analysis process is a major step in qualitative research, with the aim of understanding the meaning of the data obtained by the author. The data analysis technique in this study refers to the five procedures mentioned by John W. Creswell, namely: Processing and preparing data by collecting and compiling data from various documents, reading all data to identify and understand important aspects relevant to research on the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program by the United Nations and the European Union in addressing femicide in Honduras, and beginning to code

all data. According to John. W. According to Creswell, coding is the process of grouping data by collecting text and image fragments and writing labels or codes on meaningful parts of the data (Creswell, 2018).

Result

Honduras is considered dangerous for women. According to the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security (2023), Honduras ranks 122nd out of 177 countries with a score of 0.61. Along with Guatemala and El Salvador, Honduras is also located in the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA), a region with high levels of social conflict in all three countries, as mentioned by CSIS (Perkins et al., 2016). This region also has the most dangerous levels of violence globally (Medrano, 2017). Honduras had the highest femicide rate among the three countries from 2019 to 2023 (Meeker et al., 2024). Gender-based violence greatly affects women's lives (Obinna, 2021). This is evidenced by the data presented below.

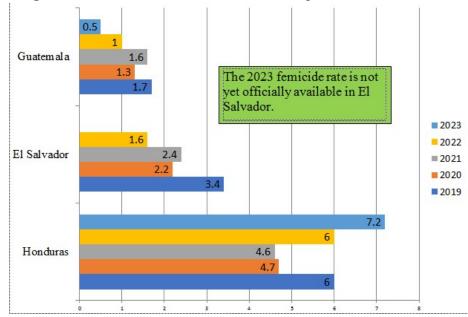


Figure 1. Femicide rates in the NTCA region from 2019–2023.

Source: data processed by the authors

Figure 1 shows the rate of femicide in Latin America, particularly in the NTCA from 2019 to 2023. The data show that Honduras ranks first with the highest number of femicide cases compared to Guatemala and El Salvador (United Nations, 2023). The fluctuating trend in the graph indicates that Honduras still faces serious challenges in preventing femicides. This situation prompted intervention by the United Nations and the European Union through the Spotlight Initiative, a program that aims to address gender-based violence

by encouraging political reform through six main pillars, as political institutional inequality contributes to high levels of gender-based violence (Zhou, 2023).

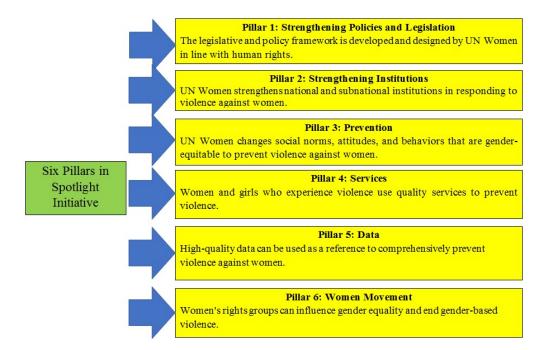


Figure 2. Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative Program

Source: data processed by the author

Figure 2 shows the six elements of the Spotlight Initiative programme to end gender-based violence, specifically to reduce femicide in Honduras: Pillar 1. Strengthening policies and legislation; Pillar 2. Strengthening institutions; Pillar 3. Preventing gender-based violence; Pillar 4. Strengthening services; Pillar 5. Data management: Pillar 6. Women's movements. The United Nations and the European Union implemented the Spotlight Initiative program in Honduras in 2023 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). The program seeks to encourage the involvement of women's and men's groups in each of the six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative program. This is done to end violence against women in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program in the First Pillar: Policy and Legislation

The first pillar of the Spotlight Initiative focuses on policy and legislative reforms to address femicide in Honduras. In 2019, the United Nations and the European Union facilitated the drafting of a Comprehensive Anti-Violence Against Women Bill with an intersectional approach, together with civil society groups that are members of the Grupo Nacional de Referencia de la Sociedad Civil (GNRSC). and opened up space for women's participation in the revision

of the Criminal Code (Spotlight Initiative, 2019 p. 26). Furthermore, from 2020 to 2021, the UN and EU facilitated coordination and discussions between community groups and the Bill Monitoring Commission regarding the drafting of the law. In 2022, the strengthening of this pillar continued through the drafting of the Purple Alert Bill for Missing Women, which consists of 92 articles and involves various stakeholders (Spotlight Initiative, 2020, p. 9; Spotlight Initiative, 2021, pp. 41–42). These efforts continued in 2023 with the drafting of the Sexual Harassment and Rape Law, which reaffirms the Spotlight Initiative's focus on policy and legal reform to protect women from the threat of femicide in Honduras (Spotlight Initiative, 2023, pp. 39–41).

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program in the Second Pillar: Institutional Strengthening

The second pillar of the Spotlight Initiative focuses on strengthening the capacity of state institutions to respond to and prevent violence against women, particularly femicides in Honduras. In 2019, the United Nations and the European Union organized virtual and face-to-face training on Gender-Responsive Budgeting (Presupuestos Sensibles al Género) for central and local officials and civil society organizations, including training for the police on developing gender-responsive strategies (Spotlight Initiative, 2019, p. 7). These efforts continued in 2020 through training on gender-responsive budgeting in collaboration with the Secretaria de Asuntos de la Mujer Honduras (SEMUJER), which also resulted in a formal training program for government institutions and civil society (Spotlight Initiative, 2020). 9).

In 2021, the UN and the European Union designed the establishment of a Gender School to train public officials on women's rights and Gender-Responsive Budgeting, initiated by SEMUJER and the Asociación de Municipios de Honduras (AMHON) (Spotlight Initiative, 2021, pp. 43–44). Furthermore, in 2022, this pillar was strengthened through training for the Honduran Judicial Commission and improved inter-agency coordination at the local level, including the integration of gender and intersectionality perspectives into judicial practice (Spotlight Initiative, 2022, p. 36). In 2023, the UN and the European Union developed a WhatsApp-based course with a hybrid approach to reach hard-to-reach areas, emphasizing the second pillar's focus on institutional reform and institutional change with a gender perspective (Spotlight Initiative, 2023, p. 47).

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program in the Third Pillar: Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls

The third pillar of the Spotlight Initiative focuses on changing social norms and attitudes that encourage violence against women, particularly femicide, in Honduras. In 2019, the United Nations and the European Union collaborated with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras and the Ministry of Education to provide education and prevent gender-based violence

in universities, schools, and through family training in 185 cities (Spotlight Initiative, 2019, pp. 8–9). These efforts continued in 2020 with the development of a gender-based violence prevention curriculum implemented in educational institutions, the involvement of men in gender role awareness training, and collaboration with religious groups (Spotlight Initiative, 2020, p. 10).

In 2021, the implementation of the third pillar emphasized changing attitudes and behaviors through the development of a Media Observatory, gender-sensitive journalist training, the launch of sexuality education, and a gender equality campaign through the CREARTE project in collaboration with Women in the Arts (Spotlight Initiative, 2021, p. 49). Furthermore, in 2022, the UN and the European Union developed a development communication strategy, including Contas Conmigo materials, which focused on sexuality education and gender equality for families and educational institutions (Spotlight Initiative, 2022, pp. 37–38). The strengthening of this pillar continued in 2023 through the development of a protocol for the prevention of gender-based harassment and violence and a joint campaign with civil society organizations in commemoration of Women's Day in Honduras (Spotlight Initiative, 2023, p. 51).

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program in the Fourth Pillar: Strengthening Services

The fourth pillar of the Spotlight Initiative focuses on strengthening services for victims of gender-based violence so that access to health, psychological, and legal services is fulfilled. In 2019, the United Nations and the European Union revised the joint service protocol for the health, justice, and police sectors, provided integrated service vehicles to reach remote areas, and mapped service gaps with civil society (Spotlight Initiative, 2019, p. 9). These efforts continued in 2020 through collaboration with FLACSO Argentina to train judicial institutions and distribute aid to civil society affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters (Spotlight Initiative, 2020, p. 11).

In 2021, the United Nations and the European Union strengthened the capacity of service institutions through training for psychologists and social workers, providing small business capital support for women's groups, and providing access to technology for online education and training (Spotlight Initiative, 2021). 54). Furthermore, in 2022, the implementation of the fourth pillar focused on meeting the needs of victims through legal, medical, and psychological assistance (Spotlight Initiative, 2022, pp. 43–44). Meanwhile, the 2023 Spotlight Initiative report does not specifically describe the implementation of the fourth pillar but rather presents an accumulation of program implementation from 2019 to 2022.

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program in the Fifth Pillar: Data

The fifth pillar of the Spotlight Initiative focuses on strengthening the system for collecting and managing data on gender-based violence, particularly femicides, in Honduras. In 2019, the UN and the EU identified issues, together with government actors, to address the lack of specific recording of femicide in national statistics and collaborated with SEMUJER and judicial institutions to develop a data management system from the local to the national level (Spotlight Initiative, 2019, pp. 9–10). These efforts continued in 2020 with the development of a Gender-Based Violence Index with SEMUJER, which was launched in 2021 to monitor the national situation and support the formulation of femicide prevention strategies (Spotlight Initiative, 2020, p. 11).

In 2021, the United Nations and the European Union provided training to government institutions such as the Central Statistics Agency, the Ministry of Security, and legal institutions to increase their capacity to develop data on gender-based violence (Spotlight Initiative, 2021, p. 58). Furthermore, in 2022, research authority was given to groups of women and men to develop studies on various forms of gender-based violence at the community level (Spotlight Initiative, 2022, p. 46). The strengthening of the fifth pillar continued in 2023 through joint training with IUDPAS involving government officials and civil society, as well as collaboration in organizing seminars on gender-based violence in Honduras (Spotlight Initiative 2023, p. 57).

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Program in the Sixth Pillar: Women's Movement

The sixth pillar of the Spotlight Initiative focuses on strengthening the capacity and influence of civil society to advocate, design, and develop policies and actions to eliminate gender-based violence, particularly femicide, in Honduras. In 2019, the United Nations and the European Union formed the Grupo Nacional de Referencia de la Sociedad Civil (GNRSC), which involves Indigenous and Afro-Honduran women's groups, LGBT communities, and women with disabilities, and collaborated with OXFAM Honduras in community movement training and grant disbursement for gender-based violence prevention projects (Spotlight Initiative, 2019, p. 10). These efforts continued in 2020 through the development of a curriculum, a virtual training platform, and training for dozens of civil society organizations, as well as partnerships with 31 organizations and the distribution of feminist grants that encouraged collaboration between groups (Spotlight Initiative, 2020, p. 11).

The strengthening of the sixth pillar continued in 2022 through a feminist grant scheme for the development of gender equality projects (Spotlight Initiative, 2022, p. 47). Meanwhile, the 2023 report only presents the accumulated implementation of activities from 2019–2022. Overall, the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in 2023 demonstrates the focus of the UN and the EU on socio-political reform and women's empowerment

through six pillars, in line with the liberal feminist perspective that emphasizes the role of the state in guaranteeing civil liberties, gender equality, and protection from discrimination and violence (Tong, 2009).

Discussion

The Liberal Feminist Perspective in the Spotlight Initiative Program

The Spotlight Initiative program implemented by the United Nations and the European Union is in line with liberal feminism theory because it emphasizes social and political reform to ensure equal rights for women and men in addressing femicide in Honduras. This is reflected in six main pillars: strengthening policies and legislation, institutions, preventing gender-based violence, gender-responsive services, data, and women's movements. The first pillar emphasizes the importance of legal reform as the foundation of formal equality, in line with liberal feminism's commitment to equality of legal rights (Wendell, 1987) and the view that gender inequality stems from unfair policies and laws (Enyew & Mihrete, 2018).

Furthermore, liberal feminism views that fair laws must be supported by competent and ethical institutions. Therefore, the strengthening of institutions (second pillar) and public services (fourth pillar) in the Spotlight Initiative are interrelated and reflect efforts to ensure real access to women's rights, as emphasized in the literature on institutional reform and the quality of public services (Raina, 2020; Ahrens & Palmieri, 2024; Mayasari et al., 2025; Saputra, 2024). The third pillar shows that the prevention of gender-based violence from a liberal feminist perspective is carried out through education, the provision of information, and the internalization of the values of equality, in contrast to radical feminism, which emphasizes a complete cultural overhaul (Eriyanti, 2018; Yashinta & Nurhayati, 2024).

Strengthening data in the fifth pillar is also relevant to liberal feminism because it places valid, representative, and systematic data as the basis for formulating policies that are fair and free from gender bias (Escot et al., 2023; Samman et al., 2025). Finally, the sixth pillar affirms the central role of women's movements as agents of social reform, which is in line with the reformist approach of liberal feminism through education, policy, law and public advocacy (Soesantari et al., 2023; Clark et al., 2023). Thus, the Spotlight Initiative reflects the logic of liberal feminism in its efforts to end violence against women in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

Gender Mainstreaming in the Spotlight Initiative Program Access Indicators in the Spotlight Initiative Program

Access is an indicator that shows the extent to which development programs provide equal space for women and men to engage, obtain resources and information, and participate actively, while also serving as an initial marker of the fulfillment of human rights (Esariti et al., 2020; Oktari et

al., 2021). The Spotlight Initiative program normatively opens up inclusive access through the Grassroots Action Plan mechanism, specifically Joint Calls for Proposals, with flexible, non-discriminatory, and easily accessible requirements for various civil society groups, including small organizations, without the need for prior experience with the UN, and allowing the use of local languages and media (Spotlight Initiative 2020). In addition, the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle is realized through a multi-channel dissemination strategy—both digital and conventional—to reach groups with limited connectivity, demonstrating the commitment of the UN and the European Union to ensure broad and inclusive access.

However, the results of this study show that this commitment was not consistently implemented across all pillars of the Spotlight Initiative from 2019 to 2023. The first pillar (policy and legislation) was the only pillar that consistently met access indicators by inclusively involving women and men in all stages of implementation. In contrast, the third pillar (prevention), fourth pillar (service strengthening), fifth pillar (data), and sixth pillar (women's movements) only provided partial and uneven access, either due to limited civil society involvement in certain years, the dominance of government partners, or the absence of specific data that made it difficult to measure access indicators. The second pillar was even identified as a pillar that did not open up inclusive access for women and men at all because it focused almost exclusively on government actors' participation. Overall, this study concludes that although the UN and the EU are normatively committed to inclusive access in the Spotlight Initiative, its implementation is inconsistent across the pillars. This inequality in access shows that the principle of inclusivity—as the main foundation of gender mainstreaming—has not been fully and optimally implemented in efforts to address femicide in Honduras.

Indicators of Participation in the Spotlight Initiative Program

Indicators of participation in gender mainstreaming in the Spotlight Initiative Program are demonstrated through the provision of sex-disaggregated data by the United Nations and the European Union. However, this study found limited specific data on the number of participants in each pillar during the 2019–2023 period, as the available data were only aggregate. Overall, 295,157 women participated, of whom 14,186 were involved in the recovery and protection of victims and 280,971 in the prevention of gender-based violence. Meanwhile, 26,315 men participated in the prevention of violence and the promotion of healthy masculinity (Spotlight Initiative, 2023).

Control Indicators in the Spotlight Initiative Program

This study identified that the control indicators in the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Project were not evenly met across all pillars. The first pillar (policy and legislation) is the only pillar that consistently meets control indicators throughout 2019–2023, as it provides substantive authority to

women's and men's groups in the design and development of policies and regulations, not merely opening up access to participation. This pillar demonstrates the real authority of the target group in driving policy reform.

In contrast, the third pillar (prevention), fourth pillar (strengthening services), fifth pillar (strengthening data), and sixth pillar (women's movements) were assessed as not fully meeting the control indicators because the authority of women's and men's groups was only fulfilled in certain years and was not consistent. In the third pillar, control indicators were only met in 2021–2022, when women's and men's groups had the authority to design gender equality campaigns and educational materials. In 2019–2020 and 2023, authority was mostly given to government agencies or not supported by specific data. The fourth pillar only met the control indicator in 2019, when civil society had full authority to design services for victims, but in 2020–2023, control was again dominated by government partners with limited reporting data.

The fifth pillar also shows a similar pattern, where the control indicator was only met in 2022 when women's and men's groups were given full authority to design and develop research, while in other years, authority was mostly in the hands of the government. The sixth pillar, despite providing feminist grants that give civil society control, lacked clarity in its implementation in 2023 and generally still showed dependence on government institutional authority. The second pillar (institutional strengthening) completely fails to meet the control indicator because, from 2019 to 2023, the authority to design and implement programs is dominated by government partners without the substantive involvement of women's and men's groups. Overall, the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative by the United Nations and the European Union does not yet fully guarantee the control indicator of gender mainstreaming. Although control is a fundamental aspect of influencing gender-just decision-making (Munive et al., 2023), the research findings show inconsistencies in granting authority to women's and men's groups. The dominance of government institutions indicates that this program still tends to use a top-down approach and relies on elite actors, so that the claim of civil society empowerment has not been fully realized in a substantive manner.

Benefit Indicators in the Spotlight Initiative Program

This study identified benefit indicators in each pillar related to the implementation process of the UN and EU's Spotlight Initiative program to address femicide in Honduras. Based on the results of this study, the first pillar (Policy and Legislation) is the pillar that can provide full benefits to both women and men. The first pillar is one of the pillars that guarantees inclusive access for women and men from 2019 to 2023 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). In addition, women and men have full authority to design and develop draft laws

on the prevention of gender-based violence from 2019 to 2023 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.).

The inclusive implementation process of this pillar from 2019 to 2023 can bring practical and non-practical benefits to women and men (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). The practical benefits obtained by women and men are as follows: 1) women and men integrated through GNRSC groups within this pillar are able to accommodate their interests in an effort to fulfill human rights, especially the real needs of the community; 2) the process of formulating and developing inclusive policies is able to strengthen public recognition of the law on the prevention of gender-based violence, thereby encouraging the effective implementation of policies to deal with femicide in Honduras. In addition, the non-practical benefits obtained by women's and men's groups in the first pillar, namely, marginalized groups that are members of the GNRSC, are gaining legitimacy as political actors in the legislative process.

The third pillar is one of the pillars that does not fully meet the benefit indicators in gender mainstreaming. Women's and men's groups were only able to reap the full benefits in 2021, 2022, and 2023 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). The benefits obtained by women's and men's groups in the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative's third pillar program are practical and non-practical. Women's and men's groups in Honduras obtained practical benefits, namely, that the advocacy of gender-based violence prevention programs in the third pillar was able to create sustainable activities to promote gender equality in Honduras. In addition, the non-practical benefits obtained by women's and men's groups were that women's and men's groups involved in the advocacy movement were able to learn about and understand the roots of gender-based violence, particularly femicide in Honduras. Meanwhile, the women's and men's groups tended to obtain benefits outside the implementation process of activities in 2019 and 2020 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). The women's and men's groups were the only recipients of information because they were the only training participants.

The fourth pillar is one of the pillars that did not fully meet the benefit indicators in gender mainstreaming. The benefit indicators were only met when the women's and men's groups identified problems and designed and developed appropriate service strategies for victims of gender-based violence, particularly femicide, in Honduras in 2019. The practical benefits obtained by women's and men's groups are as follows: 1) they are able to become subjects in initiating, creating, and realizing service strengthening, and 2) women's and men's groups are able to design a model of gender-based violence prevention services that are easily accessible to victims of gender-based violence. The non-practical benefits gained by the women's and men's groups were that they collaborated in designing and developing gender-based violence prevention service programs. Meanwhile, from 2020 to 2022, the

benefit indicators tended to be less fully met because the UN and the EU tended to rely on government partners, so that women's and men's groups were only passive beneficiaries, meaning that they were able to access comprehensive gender-based violence prevention services (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.).

The fifth pillar is one of the pillars that did not fully meet the benefit indicators in gender mainstreaming. The benefit indicators in the fifth pillar were only met in 2022 (Spotlight Initiative, 2022, p. 45). Women and men in Honduras who participated in the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative program in the fifth pillar received practical and non-practical benefits. The practical benefits obtained by the female and male groups were that they were able to collaborate to become a research group in obtaining comprehensive data, enabling them to accurately and comprehensively capture the phenomenon of femicide in Honduras. In addition, the non-practical benefits that women and men could obtain were that they were able to become producers of knowledge through research on femicide in Honduras.

However, women and men did not receive comprehensive benefits in 2019, 2020, 2021, or 2023 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). This occurred because 1) in 2019, the implementation process relied solely on government partners rather than women's and men's groups, so that the benefits were fully obtained by government agencies, and 2) in 2021, the UN and the European Union conducted training for government agencies. The benefits were also fully obtained by the government agencies. In 2020 and 2023, the women's and men's groups only received passive benefits, namely information about gender-based violence in Honduras (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). The women's and men's groups did not receive significant benefits from the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative programme.

The sixth pillar is one of the pillars that does not fully meet the benefit indicators in gender mainstreaming. These benefits are not fully met because, even though women's and men's groups are integrated into civil society movements, their activities are not fully consistent across all pillars. Only the first pillar encourages women's and men's groups to be active in the Spotlight Initiative programme. Meanwhile, in the other pillars, women and men are not fully active every year; therefore, the benefits provided in the sixth pillar are not fully distributed across all pillars. Nevertheless, this pillar provides both practical and non-practical benefits to women and men. The practical benefit obtained by women and men is that they are able to formulate and develop social projects to address femicide in Honduras. In addition, the non-practical benefits obtained by women's groups are that they are able to encourage other women's groups to speak up, lead, and participate actively in the community. Furthermore, women's groups can provide solidarity support to other women's groups that are victims of gender-based violence, especially

femicide in Honduras. In addition, this pillar also provides non-practical benefits to men's groups, namely that they are able to know, understand, and apply gender equality to support equal rights with women's groups.

The second pillar is one of the pillars that did not meet the benefit indicators for gender mainstreaming from 2019 to 2023 (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.). The women's and men's groups in Honduras did not receive comprehensive benefits. The benefits are only fulfilled by the UN and European Union partner groups, namely, government agencies in Honduras. The benefits obtained by Honduran government agencies are that they are able to implement and develop a framework in accordance with a gender perspective to address femicide in Honduras. Meanwhile, women and men only receive passive benefits as beneficiaries of institutions strengthened by the UN and the European Union.

Conclusion

The implementation of the United Nations and European Union's Spotlight Initiative program to address femicide in Honduras was carried out by 1) strengthening policies and legislation, 2) strengthening institutions, 3) preventing gender-based violence, 4) strengthening gender-responsive services, 5) strengthening data, and 6) strengthening women's movements. However, these efforts did not fully comply with the gender mainstreaming indicators of access, participation, control and benefits. The first pillar to meet the indicators of access, control, and benefits was policies and legislation.

The first pillar meets all three indicators because, during the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative program by the United Nations and the European Union to address femicide in Honduras, the first pillar guarantees inclusive access, control, and benefits to women and men. Meanwhile, the other pillars, such as 1) the third pillar (preventing gender-based violence), 2) the fourth pillar (strengthening services), 3) the fifth pillar (strengthening data), and 4) the sixth pillar (women's movements), do not fully meet the indicators of gender mainstreaming because in their implementation from 2019 to 2023, these pillars were less consistent in ensuring access, control, and inclusive benefits for women and men.

In addition, the second pillar (strengthening institutions) does not meet all gender mainstreaming indicators. The United Nations and European Union, in implementing programs through the second pillar, tended to rely on a top-down approach rather than a bottom-up approach from 2019 to 2023. This study identified that the participation indicator was not met in the Spotlight Initiative program because the number of women participating was greater than the number of men. In addition, the participation indicator is not met due to weaknesses in the reporting of gender-disaggregated participation data.

The authors acknowledge that this study has some limitations. First, the study is limited to analyzing the implementation process of the United Nations and the European Union's Spotlight Initiative program in addressing femicide in Honduras. This study did not evaluate the effect of the program on reducing the number of femicides; therefore, for further research, it is recommended to expand the focus to evaluating the implementation of the program on reducing femicides in Honduras. Second, most of the data used in this study were sourced from secondary data, making them highly susceptible to incomplete data. Therefore, further research should expand data collection to make future studies more diverse. Third, this study has theoretical limitations; future research could expand the theoretical framework by using other perspectives, such as intersectional feminism and postcolonialism, to further examine femicide in Honduras and the Spotlight Initiative programme.

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The researchers' contributions to the writing of this journal article are as follows: M.R.H. was responsible for the entire process of preparing this article, from formulating ideas and problems to collecting and analyzing data and finalizing the manuscript. L.D.E and A.P are the supervising lecturers who played a role in providing direction and guidance related to the completion of the journal article.

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