



## **Faculty of Law International Studies**

UN Women intervention on violence against women in the  
canton of Cuenca 2020-2022.

**Graduation project prior to obtaining bachelor degree  
in International Studies**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my 5 year old daughter Samantha, to my sister Kimberly who has been the reason for me not to give up and to my grandmother who accompanies me from heaven

## **GRATITUDE**

I thank God for allowing me to complete my university studies. To my family for always supporting me in everything I have proposed to myself. To Engineer Juanita Bersosa, my degree project director, for believing in me. To Kitty, Kimy and Globa for accompanying me every morning. To Panky and Layca for changing my stressful days into peaceful days

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**Resumen:**

La violencia hacia la mujer es un problema de salud pública, que afecta de manera indiscriminada a la vida y desarrollo de las mujeres en todo el planeta, por ello los organismos internacionales han priorizado acciones para su prevención. La provincia del Azuay en el año 2019, con su capital Cuenca han sido categorizadas como la provincia en donde ha existido el mayor índice de violencia hacia la mujer, por ello ONU Mujeres ha desplegado una serie de programas y proyectos para su erradicación. El objetivo de este artículo es identificar el modelo de gestión implementado por ONU Mujeres en el cantón Cuenca al momento de implementar estrategias para este fin. Para ello, se realizó revisión documental y entrevista a la técnica de la coordinación de equidad y desarrollo del GAD de Cuenca. En donde se obtuvo los procesos de coordinación con ONU Mujeres para una vida libre de violencia.

**Palabras clave:** Atención, Erradicación, ONU Mujeres, Políticas públicas, Prevención Violencia contra la mujer

**Abstract:**

Violence against women is a public health problem that indiscriminately affects the lives and development of women around the world, which is why international organizations have prioritized actions for its prevention. The province of Azuay in 2019, with its capital Cuenca, has been categorized as the province with the highest rate of violence against women, which is why UN Women has opened a series of programmes and projects for its eradication. The objective of this article is to identify the management model implemented by UN Women in Cuenca when implementing strategies for this purpose. To this end, a documentary review was carried out and an interview was conducted with the coordinator of the coordination of equity and development of the GAD of Cuenca. In this interview, the processes of coordination with UN Women for a life free of violence were obtained.

**Keywords:** Attention, Eradication, Prevention, Public policies, UN Women, Violence against women



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# **UN Women intervention in the area of violence against women in the canton of Cuenca. Period 2020-2022.**

## **1 Introduction**

Violence against women is prevalent worldwide, taking various forms and reaching limits where it is intertwined with other serious crimes, such as femicide, rape and sexual harassment. These violent acts have serious consequences on the physical, sexual and psychological health of the victims, endangering their lives and affecting their social and economic well-being. Ecuador faces a serious situation regarding gender violence. According to data from the Ecuadorian Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) in 2019, seven out of ten women recognize having suffered mistreatment. Unfortunately, many women who suffer violence do not report their aggressors (PONTON, 2009). In the last three decades, Ecuador has made progress in the fight against gender violence, both in terms of national legislation and in the development of public policies aimed at this end. In Cuenca, ordinances have been established to combat gender violence and domestic violence. The actions undertaken focus on research, service provision, the proposal of norms at the local and national levels, as well as social control and the enforcement of rights. However, in this context, little is known about the role and work carried out by UN Women on this issue at the cantonal and national level, which has implemented different actions in conjunction with the state and the Municipal Government.

### ***1.1 Objectives***

#### General Objective

Identify the management model implemented by UN Women in the canton of Cuenca when implementing strategies for the prevention of violence against women.

#### Specific Objectives

1. To investigate the reality of violence against women in Cuenca
2. Research programs and strategies developed in Cuenca to prevent violence.
3. Map the actions promoted by UN Women in the canton of Cuenca and identify the impacts achieved.
4. Identify the management model applied by UN Women in Cuenca.

### ***1.2 Theoretical framework***

Violence against women is a phenomenon that affects every country in the world, and in the last 30 years the international community has recognized it as a public health problem. The United Nations General Assembly, in its Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in 1993, recognizes it as a public health problem:

(...) that violence against women constitutes a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to the domination of women and discrimination against them by men and prevented the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the fundamental social mechanisms by which women are forced into a situation of subordination with respect to men" (p 1-2).

He further states:

(...) that violence against women constitutes a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms and totally or partially impairs the enjoyment by women of those rights and freedoms, and concerned at the long-standing neglect of the protection and promotion of those rights and freedoms in cases of violence against women" (p.1)

In its first article, it conceptualizes violence against women as:

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or

psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (p.2).

This conceptualization highlights the types of violence, which are detailed in article three: physical violence, psychological violence, and sexual violence.

Furthermore, the United Nations Declaration constitutes a call to the different governments for "(...) the effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" as an effective measure that "(...) would contribute to the elimination of violence against women and that the declaration on the elimination of violence against women, set forth in the present resolution, would reinforce and complement this process" (p.1).

In this same context, on June 9, 1994, the Organization of American States (OAS) joined efforts to create in the Plenary of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women - Convention of Belém do Pará - which aims to: "Fight against the phenomenon of violence against women in both the public and private spheres, and its vindication within society"(p.1). It also establishes the meaning of violence against women as:

Any action or conduct, based on gender, that causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or private sphere" (p.1).

In Article 2 of this agreement, as in the Declaration, violence against women is understood to include physical, sexual and psychological violence. In addition, the OAS General Assembly ratifies the approach: "That the elimination of violence against women is an indispensable condition for their individual and social development and their full and equal participation in all spheres of life" (p.3).

In 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action was developed and adopted by the United Nations. The platform covers 12 areas of special concern, including violence against women, for which it reaffirms its commitment:

To prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls; to uphold the rights and inherent human dignity of women and men, all other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Right to Development" (p.16).

Therefore, violence against women has long been a priority public health problem that threatens the life, integrity and full development of women and, therefore, of society as a whole.

In addition, the different international treaties and agreements emphasize the different types of violence and their impact on women's lives, as detailed in 1 Table

*Table 1 Types of Violence*

TYPE OF VIOLENCE	DEFINITION
<b>Economic Violence</b>	The attempt is made to achieve financial dependence on another person, by maintaining control total on their income. Thus preventing him from accessing them or prohibiting him from working.
<b>Psychological Violence</b>	It consists of causing fear or intimidation to the victim, threatening to cause physical harm to the person, family members, pets or destroy their material goods. It also consists of removing the person from family, friends, school or work.
<b>Emotional Violence</b>	It consists of undermining the person's self-esteem through unfavorable criticism of his or her physique or abilities, subjugation or other types of verbal abuse, damaging the relationship between partners, family or friends of the person.
<b>Physical violence</b>	It consists of attempting or causing harm to a partner by hitting, kicking, pinching, slapping, biting, pulling hair, denying medical attention or forcing the partner to consume alcohol or other substances.
<b>Sexual Violence</b>	Involves forcing the partner to have sexual intercourse without his or her consent



## 2 Literature review

In the year 2000, after several years, the international community created the agenda of objectives or what it called the "Millennium Development Goals - MDGs" led by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with the participation of 147 heads of state and member governments. With the objective of promoting and eradicating poverty and violence through the 8 MDGs set to be achieved by 2015. Among the eight MDGs, two of them - MDG 3 and MDG 5 - ratify the commitment to women's rights and the eradication of violence. Table 2.

These objectives achieved some progress at a planetary level, however, the goals set for 2015 were not met. (See Table 3)

Table 2 MDGs related to women's rights

ODM	3ODM 5
<b>Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education. education for the year 2015</b>	Target: Reduce, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters.

Source: ECLAC Prepared

Table 3 Achievements in MDGs 3 and 5

SCOPE	
<b>MDG 3: Worldwide, 40 percent of paid jobs in sectors other than agriculture are held by women. But women continue to enter the labor market unequally to men, even when their education, experience and skills are taken into account.</b>	MDG 5: Over the past 20 years, the global maternal mortality ratio declined by 47 percent, from 400 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births to 210 between 1990 and 2010. Achieving the target of reducing this rate by 75 percent will require urgent action and greater political support for women and children.

Source: ECLAC

It should be noted that, in order to achieve the MDGs, UN Women has played an important role in the implementation of processes that contribute to strengthening women's participation. According to ECLAC (year), this international organization has carried out work at the territorial level to contribute to the eradication of poverty, advance in universal primary education, contribute to the elimination of inequalities in schools and colleges, among others See table 4

Table 4 UN Women actions developed in the MDGs

OBJECTIVE	WORK ON UN WOMEN'S TERRITORY
<b>MDG 1 Eradication of extreme poverty</b>	Project: I work like a slave who eats like a king".  In which the women were helped to implement agriculture in order to improve their living conditions, developed in Timor-Leste.
<b>MDG 2 Achieve primary education Universa</b>	Project: Giving girls and boys access to education and mothers the possibility of finding a job in the environment. rural Moldova
<b>MDG 3 Eliminate gender disparities in primary education and secondary</b>	Project: Latin American women build electoral bridges, changing the political status quo
<b>MDG 4 Reduce</b>	Project: Dying to Live: The Gender Dimension of Infant Mortality in India,

<b>under-five mortality</b>	which shed light on the violence suffered by women, UN Women trained 800 women motivators to encourage other women to participate in special meetings designed exclusively for women.
<b>MDG 5 Improve maternal health</b>	Project: Ensuring that Mothers Don't Die in Childbirth, where the program was established and is making progress in seven countries in reducing maternal and infant mortality by highlighting the links between violence against women and maternal health, training midwives and community health workers to prevent and reduce maternal and infant mortality. health to achieve long-term change.
<b>MDG 6 Combat HIV AIDS The malaria and others diseases</b>	Activists fight for the rights of women living with HIV in Peru
<b>MDG 7 Ensure the sustainability of the environment</b>	UN Women helps preserve the balance between business and environment in Mexico
<b>MDG 8 Develop a global partnership for development</b>	UN Women's work has helped with a new online tool that tackles violence against women and girls.

Source: ECLAC .

An analysis of the programs implemented by international organizations against violence against women shows, according to the UN and ECLAC, that Latin America and the Caribbean are the most unequal regions and therefore it is a real challenge to reach the region's potential. Faced with this reality, 193 member states of the United Nations, together with a large number of actors from civil society, academia and the private sector engaged in an open, democratic and participatory negotiation process with a view to working to reduce inequality, exclusion and poverty.

As a result of this broad process, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was proclaimed, which has 17 Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs - and 169 targets, where Goal 1 seeks to eradicate poverty, Goal 2 seeks to ensure food sovereignty, Goal 3 to contribute to reduce gaps in education as well as Goal 4 to consolidate processes of prevention and care in health, sexual health and mental health, Goal 5 seeks to consolidate a much more equitable society and Goal 8 seeks to move towards a much more inclusive partnership. Table 5.

Table 5 SDG 5 Targets and Indicators

SDG TARGETS N.5	INDICATORS
5.1 It is based on ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls around the world.	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote and enforce gender equality and nondiscrimination.
5.2 It entails the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls around the world, both in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual exploitation, among other types of exploitation.	5.2.1 The proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older who have suffered violence: Physical, psychological or sexual violence at the hands of a former or current partner in the last 12 months.

Source: UN

One year after the launch of the 2030 agenda, the Global Plan of Action to strengthen the role of the health system in the fight against interpersonal violence, particularly violence against women and girls, and against children in general (2016) was held in Geneva. The plan evidences the overview of the global situation where common types of violence against women and girls are summarized. Table 7

Table 6 Common types of violence

Type of violence WHO	
<b>Violence against women</b>	It is based on women who suffer different forms of sexual violence at different stages of their lives, including: violence perpetrated by intimate partners or other family members, stalking, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. sexual among others
<b>Violence against girls</b>	Affects children, including adolescents between 0 and 18 years of age, where there is child maltreatment inflicted by relationship of trust or power.

Source: UN

After evidencing the different types of violence, WHO seeks with the Global Plan of Action (2016):

To mitigate the health and other negative consequences of interpersonal violence, particularly against women and girls and against children in general, by providing comprehensive health services and facilitating access to multisectoral services. In addition, to prevent interpersonal violence, particularly against women and girls and children in general (p.11).

It also sets out four strategic orientations: The first seeks to strengthen the leadership and governance of the health system in the fight against violence, by ensuring the appropriate budgetary allocation of resources for prevention and effective response to women and girls who are victims of violence. The second orientation is based on strengthening the delivery of health services, which entails training staff to deal with cases of violence. The third orientation focuses on strengthening programs to prevent violence by providing support to programs that deal with intimate partner violence, with the aim of addressing the needs of children exposed to this type of violence, among others. The fourth strategic orientation proposes to improve information and scientific evidence about violence, where research in the area of violence against women will be conducted or supported (WHO, 2016).

The fight against violence is evidence of a sustained process of agreements and resolutions promoted by the different international organizations to join forces through the commitment of the different countries and governments to counteract it through policies, programs and projects to be promoted in each of the countries.

Outline 1 Agreements and resolutions to eradicate violence against women



After having identified the work that has been done for the eradication of violence against women in the international field, the it is possible to see the panorama in Ecuador panorama of Ecuador is visualized, that according to UN Women 65 out of every 100 persons of the female population has been violated in the year 2022, a figure that has not decreased, because violence against women in Ecuador is a structural problem rooted for years (UN Women 2008). In the 70s, through the project to strengthen the police stations for women and the family, In the 1980s, violence began to be seen as a public health problem, which is why, according to the Comprehensive Organic Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (1980), Ecuador signed and is a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (CEPAM, 2000):

Article 10: States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women (p.4)

In 1994 in Ecuador, in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution, the Women's Commissariats were created to prosecute offenses committed against women and the family. In January 1995, Ecuador signed and became a party to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women.

Women of Belém do Pará and in the same year subscribed to the Beijing Platform for Action (Author, 1995, p.2). In the same year, Ministerial Agreement No. 0751 was signed, making it mandatory to create women's police stations throughout the country.

After issuing the ministerial agreement, one of the first laws created thanks to the work of a group of professional women, housewives, from popular sectors and organizations to eradicate, prevent and attend to cases of domestic violence with a view to promoting a society free of violence.

On November 29, 1995, the law known as "Law 103" was approved with the objective of "protecting the physical and psychological integrity and sexual freedom of women and their family members, through the prevention and punishment of domestic violence" (p.1).

In addition, Law 103 determines the types of violence that a woman and her family members may suffer. See Table 8.

Table 7 Forms of domestic violence Ecuador 1995

TYPE FROM VIOLENCE	CONCEPT
<b>Violence physics</b>	Any act which causes harm, pain or suffering to the persons being assaulted or attacked. 3whatever the means employed and whatever the consequences.
<b>Psychological Violence</b>	Constitutes any act that causes: damage, pain, emotional disturbance, psychological alteration or decrease of self-esteem in women or children. family members.
<b>Sexual Violence</b>	Case of rape or other crimes which constitute an imposition on the exercise of a person's sexuality, and where the person is forced to have sexual relations. sexual relations with the aggressor or third parties.

Source: Law 103

It should be noted that Law 103 focuses on the prosecution of gender-based and intra-family violence, which is why the prosecution is the responsibility of family judges, women's commissioners, intendants and criminal judges. In this way, the State begins to assume a fundamental role through the legal system for the attention and judgment in cases of violence (p.2).

The 1998 Constitution establishes as one of its principles the full guarantee of rights and freedoms for women and men, an aspect that is emphasized in Article 41:

The State will formulate and implement policies to achieve equal opportunities between women and men, through a specialized agency that will operate in the manner determined by law, will incorporate the gender perspective in plans and programs, and will provide technical assistance for its mandatory application

in the public sector (p.16).

In addition, Art. 47 of the Constitution recognizes the priority of attention that the Ecuadorian State gives to priority groups, people at risk and victims of domestic violence, child abuse, disasters, etc., as well as to those who are a natural or anthropogenic. Also, it is established in chapter 2 of the Civil Rights that "The State shall adopt the necessary measures to prevent, eliminate and punish, especially violence against children, adolescents, women and the elderly" (p.17)

Similarly, the 2008 Constitution recognizes the right to a life free of violence, placing special emphasis on the prevention, care and eradication of gender violence. This action is framed in the first article that defines Ecuador as a "State guarantor of rights", for which a principle is the achievement of the regime of Good Living, understood as the full exercise of rights without discrimination of any kind.

In accordance with the Magna Carta, the rights of the Good Life are: health, education, work, social welfare, communication, culture, access to technology and communication and the right to a peaceful society. In addition, Articles 35, 36, 38 and 46 determine the actions that the State must undertake to ensure protection, care and prevention for different priority groups. This approach extends to the education system, the health system, the higher education system, among others.

Article 340 establishes the creation of the national system of social inclusion and equity as a mechanism that articulates the different institutions, entities, agencies, and norms aimed at social welfare, and among its obligations is one of the following:

The State will generate the conditions for the comprehensive protection of its inhabitants throughout their lives, ensuring the rights and principles recognized in the Constitution, particularly equality in diversity and non-discrimination, and will prioritize its action towards those groups that require special consideration due to the persistence of inequalities, exclusion, discrimination or violence, or by virtue of their age, health or disability status (p.106).

In conclusion, the 2008 Constitution clearly establishes the priority that the state gives to social inclusion, gender equity and combating all forms of violence against women and girls, regulating several mechanisms aimed at this end, among which those detailed in Table 9 can be highlighted.

*Table 8 Articles of the 2008 Constitution guaranteeing women's rights*

<b>Art. 11 Guarantees the rights of women not to be discriminated against for any reason, obliges the state to carry out actions to promote a more equitable and equitable real equality (..)</b>	<b>Art. 75 The right to free access to guardianship and justice is guaranteed(..)</b>
<b>Art. 66 Guarantees the right to the freedom physical, sexual, psychic y moral of all women, and a life of free of violence, whether in the public - private</b>	Art. 78 The state guarantees that determine the adoption of mechanisms for repair of the right to have the right to have been violated (..)

Source: Constitution of the National Republic of Ecuador 2008.

In 2014, the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code, COIP, was amended, Law 103 was eliminated and the regulation for the crime of violence, crimes against women and femicide was incorporated into this body of law, where violence against women or members of their families is also defined as:

Art. 155.- Violence against women or members of the family nucleus - Violence is considered to be any action consisting of physical, psychological or sexual mistreatment by a family member against a woman or other members of the family nucleus (p.54).

Articles 155, 156, 157, 158 indicate the three types of violence: physical, sexual and psychological. These are punishable by custodial sentences depending on the harm caused to the woman (p.54-55) Table 10.

In section one of the crimes against life, a new term is added, categorized as "Femicide", which includes the following definition:

The person who, as a result of power relations manifested in any type of violence, kills a woman because she is a woman or because of her gender condition, shall be punished with imprisonment of twenty-

two to twenty-six years (p.49).

Table 9 Types of violence Organic Penal Code

Type	from	Sanctions
<b>Violence</b>		
<b>Art. 156</b> <b>Physical violence</b>		The person who, as a manifestation of violence against women or members of the family nucleus, causes injuries, shall be punished with the same penalties provided for the crime of injuries, increased by one third (p.60) Reform 2014
<b>Art. 157</b> <b>Psychological violence</b>		Psychological violence against women or members of the nuclear family: A person commits the crime of psychological violence if he/she threatens, manipulates, blackmails, humiliates, isolates, harasses, persecutes, controls the beliefs, decisions or actions of the woman or members of the nuclear family, insults or any other conduct that causes psychological affectation, and shall be punished with a penalty. imprisonment from six months to one year (p.60) Reform 2021
<b>Art. 158</b> <b>Sexual violence</b>		The person who, as a manifestation of violence against a woman or a member of the nuclear family, imposes himself on another and forces her to have sexual relations or other similar practices, shall be punished with the maximum of the penalties provided for in the crimes against sexual and reproductive integrity, in the case of children and adolescents, persons older adults and persons with disabilities (p. 60) Reform 2021

Source: Código Orgánico Integral Penal

### 3 Methods

A qualitative methodology used that will include a bibliographic and documentary review to examine the reality of violence in the province and the programs to be implemented at the cantonal level. Semi-structured interviews be conducted with relevant individuals public entities responsible for the development of programs in Cuenca. The information obtained be analyzed and processed through matrices and schemes that will synthesize the management model to be applied locally. A qualitative approach will be used, using techniques such as documentary analysis to analyze the data collected in the future.

### 4 Results

#### 4.1 The reality of violence against women in Cuenca

According to figures from the Ecuadorian Institute of Statistics and Census, INEC, as of 2019, seven out of ten women acknowledge having suffered violence. According to Ponton (2019); many women who suffer violence do not report the aggressor because of fear or intimidation.

Based on the National Survey on Family Relations and Gender Violence against Women (ENVIGMU) in 2019 in the province of Azuay there is evidence of more acts of violence throughout life, a reality reflected in the fact that 80 out of every 100 women have experienced acts of violence in their lives. This statistic places the province in first place nationally.

ENVIGMU has identified that women have suffered three types of violence: psychological violence, which accounts for 13.7% of cases, and physical violence, which accounts for 8.7%.

According to statistics on femicides at the national level from 2014 to 2021, a total of 1045 femicides have been identified, with 2021 being the year with the highest number of cases and the Sierra region reporting the highest rate of femicides. In this same context, Azuay is among the five provinces where a high percentage of femicides have been reported, leaving 60 children orphaned (ALDEA Foundation, 2022). Of the registered cases, 44% correspond to women between 19 and 30 years old, 72% of cases are caused by the victim's partner, 15% are unrelated to the victim and 9% are caused by the victim's father or relative (ENVIGMU, 2019).



## 4.2 Programs and strategies developed in Cuenca for violence prevention

Faced with this reality in the city of Cuenca since the 90's there has been strong work from women's movements to promote actions that have an impact on the eradication of violence against women. Achieving relevant impacts both in the organization of feminist activism, as well as in the generation of public policies in coordination with the Autonomous Municipal Government of Cuenca - GAD Cuenca-.

In 2008, the Cantonal Council of Cuenca approved the ordinance "To prevent and eradicate gender violence in the public and private spheres of women in Cuenca.

Cuenca canton", whose objective is: "To guarantee citizen security and a life free of violence against women in both the public and private spheres. "(p.2).

In addition, Articles 1 and 2 detail the strengthening of the principle of equality by establishing public policies and programs aimed at the eradication of violence.

Furthermore, Article 6 indicates that the Municipal Government of Cuenca together with civil society will create a system of care, prevention and eradication of violence and Article 7 adopts November 25 as the day of "No violence against women". Finally, Article 4 creates, within the Department of Planning, the Management Unit for Social and Gender Equity.

In 2011, the Councilwoman President of the Social Inclusion and Gender Commission of the GAD of Cuenca created a space for coordination between authorities, civil society, foundations, institutions and public and private organizations involved in the prevention, care and eradication of gender and domestic violence, called "Mesa Cantonal para la erradicación de violencia de género e intrafamiliar" to articulating actions and policies that have a significant impact on this problem.

This space for convergence as well as the Observatory for Cases of Gender and Domestic Violence were institutionalized by resolution of the Cantonal Council on November 25, 2013, setting a precedent of advocacy and coordination at the local and national level, which was incorporated as a mechanism of mandatory operation at the cantonal level in the Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women, approved by the National Assembly in 2018<sup>1</sup>.

In 2019 the ordinance ""For the prevention, comprehensive care and eradication of violence against women in Cuenca 2 which aims:

"The prevention, attention, protection, reparation and eradication of gender- based violence against women, through policies and practices that promote the transformation of social, cultural, political, economic and institutional patterns that sustain inequalities between men and women and generate vulnerability to violence (p.6).

This ordinance, like the law, incorporates the cantonal roundtable as a space for articulation and advocacy in cases and processes of attention, prevention and eradication of violence.

Among the actions that guide the operation of the cantonal roundtable are the following: To have cantonal statistics on cases of violence, follow up on compliance with the care routes to cases of violence, monitoring of cases, eradicate revictimization in the processes of care of public, private, justice, educational, and health institutions when dealing with different cases of violence and improve existing legislation in the canton of Cuenca. In order to carry out the aforementioned actions, 17 commissions are working together. In which the progress of public policies has been achieved in a participatory manner.

In addition, the ordinance recognizes and conceptualizes the different types of violence. See Table 10.

Table 10 Types of violence - Mesa Cantonal

Type of violence	Definition
<b>Symbolic Violence</b>	It is all behavior that, through the production or reproduction of messages, values, symbols, icons, signs and impositions of gender, social, economic, political, cultural and religious beliefs, transmits, reproduces and consolidates relations of domination, exclusion, inequality

<sup>1</sup> Law 0 Official Gazette Supplement 175 of 05-Feb.-2018 Status: In force.

	and inequality. discrimination, naturalizing the subordination of women, and
<b>Political violence</b>	Violence committed by a person or group of persons, directly or indirectly, against women who are candidates, militants, elected or appointed officials or who hold public office, human rights defenders, feminists, political or social leaders, or against their families.
<b>Violence gynecology - obstetrics</b>	Any action or omission that restricts the right of pregnant and non-pregnant women to receive obstetric and gynecological health services.

Source: Ley para Prevenir y Erradicación la Violencia contra las mujeres Prepare

In 2022, the last amendment to the ordinance was made in Article 7, where the so-called "violet fund" was implemented:

"Strengthen the Violet Economy through financing mechanisms and various strategies to achieve economic autonomy and empowerment of women. The beneficiaries will be women victims of professionally corroborated systematic violence. Likewise, for women who have left the circle of violence after the support programs of which they have been part and the reality of women survivors of violence will be taken into account" (p.3).

The aforementioned resources are earmarked for the following purposes:

Educational support and food kits

Integral health

Technology-based projects for personal use

Preventive material

Legal attention

In conclusion, there has been great progress at the local level in the articulation processes between society and the GAD to generate policies and mechanisms for the prevention, attention and eradication of violence, processes that have been institutionalized through the approval of resolutions, ordinances and regulations that guarantee their operation and sustainability over time.

#### ***4.3 UN Women and its work in preventing, addressing and eradicating violence against women***

According to UN Women, the United Nations has faced several challenges in the area of violence and gender equality around the world, including low funding and the lack of factors that give impetus to these activities. That is why in 2010 the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, an entity dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment to address the aforementioned challenges (UN Women, n.d.-a).

UN Women aims to achieve gender equality, to put an end to violence against women, and to this end has implemented actions aimed at female empowerment, prevention, care and eradication of violence. In this context it has been deploying various programs and actions in different countries and cities around the world, including Ecuador and Cuenca.

In 2015, the Include English name (Municipality of Cuenca) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UN Women for inter-institutional cooperation to work on promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in Cuenca, an agreement that is still in operation to date.

In 2016 in the city of Santiago de Chile, representatives of Cuenca participated in the III Ibero-American summit of local gender agendas called "Women and cities" developed by UN Women, which addressed issues such as gender equality and social justice at the local level.

In the same year Cuenca was part of the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces program. Event organized by UN Women and which aims to prevent and eradicate sexual harassment of women and girls in public spaces, where the GAD could identify the difficulties and obstacles that women face every day in rural and



urban areas (GAD Municipal de Cuenca, 2016).

Following the evaluation of the rates of violence in public spaces in 2020, multi sectoral partnerships were established in rural areas of Cuenca. The Cantonal Committee for the Elimination of Violence pledged to help ensure the safety of women, in addition to working on community mobility and preventing them from exposing themselves to risks in areas identified as dangerous.

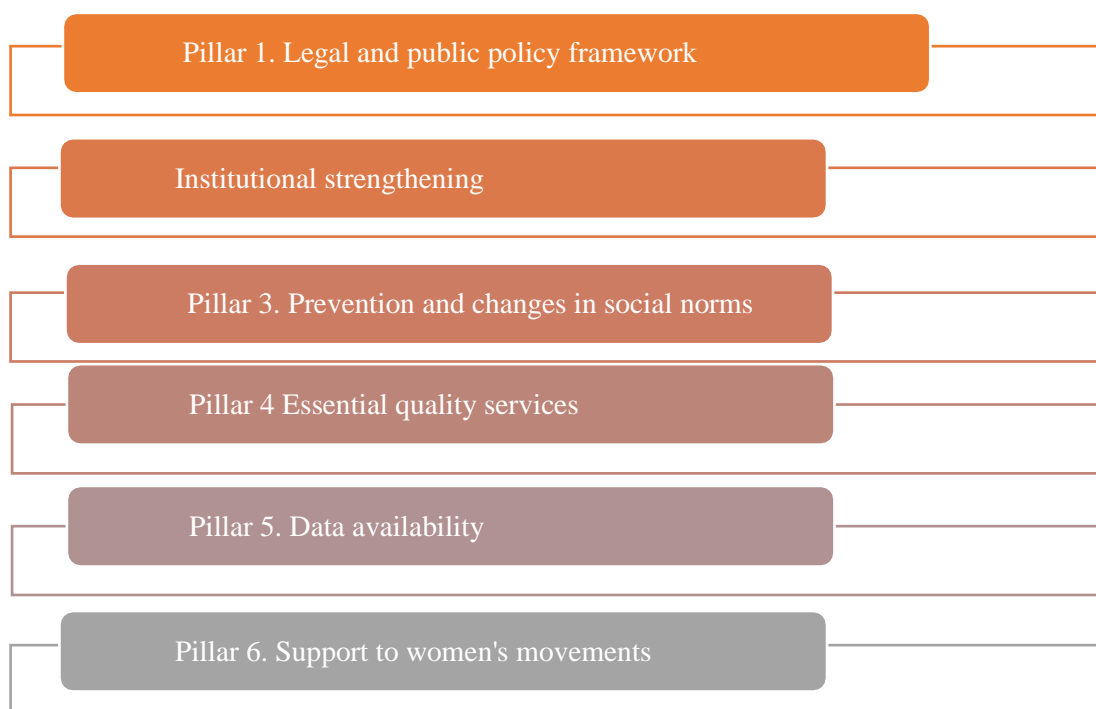
In the rural areas, they committed themselves to contribute with different actions aimed at guaranteeing women's security, through areas of influence and action (p.16).

In 2017 in Mexico City, Cuenca was present at the world forum of leaders of safe cities, an event in which the actions taken by cities to build safe routes and spaces were made known.

In 2020, the United Nations and the European Union presented the Spotlight initiative, which seeks to eradicate violence against women and girls and to combat cases of femicide in the country. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) joined this initiative as international partners.

The program is carried out in five cities in the country: Cuenca, Azogues, Manabi, Morona and Puyo. With a total of 12,443.93 direct beneficiaries and 16,580.74 indirect beneficiaries. The main objective of this initiative is to eradicate violence against women and girls through the promotion of human rights and gender equality. The initiative has six fundamental pillars which are detailed in this figure

#### *Outline 2 Fundamental Pillars - Spotlight Initiative*



Source: Spotlight Virtual Repository

Pillar 1 is oriented to work on strengthening and implementing the legal framework and public policy, in this case focusing on laws and policies to prevent violence, discrimination and the eradication of impunity.

In this first pillar, among the recommendations detailed in the Spotlight Initiative report, it is important to reinforce the actions of the legal frameworks, among them.

The main objectives of the initiative are to deepen the revision of the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, with reference to the decentralization model, strengthen the capacity of the cantonal councils for the protection of rights, and to define specific guidelines to ensure the work of the initiative. The implementation has included defining specific guidelines to ensure the work of the initiative, adding strategies

to strengthen decentralization and a strong territorial strategy that identifies the different realities of the territories (Spotlight, 2022).

Pillar 2 seeks to Strengthen national and local institutions to end violence against women and girls.

Within the framework of the actions to be strengthened are: The procedures for training and education of authorities, national police, cantonal boards, decentralized governments, public servants in relation to the Organic Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence. In addition, to increase strategies which contribute to local spaces and finally, an analysis of the functioning of the protection systems and the roles of national instances such as councils for gender equality should be added.

For implementation, key points are: originate alliances with academia, add all kinds of strategies where it is possible to generate a public institutional framework, monitoring of specialized institutional responsibility within the framework of the Organic Law to prevent and eradicate violence (Spotlight, 2022).

Pillar 3 seeks prevention and change of social norms and behaviors, among the actions to be strengthened are: Increasing work in the territory and organizations in both public and private institutions, as well as better coordination with organizations in the territories.

The implementation phase should include the definition of mechanisms for linkage and association with different social organizations, incorporation of recognition of the knowledge of the nationalities and peoples, as well as the inclusion of all levels of education among the actors to generate practices that contribute to violence-free environments (Spotlight, 2022).

Pillar 4 seeks to work on quality services focused on prevention and resilience to make high-quality essential services available to victims of violence against women and girls. The actions to be strengthened ensure that service guidelines reach organizations and institutions (Spotlight, 2022).

For implementation, the territorial strategies should include actions focused on working with women and girls who are victims of violence. In addition, the definition of planning for the socialization of services, protocols and guidelines with the corresponding evaluation of the different realities, creation of strategic health points (Spotlight, 2022).

Pillar 5 seeks data management to inform policies and programs focused on violence against women and femicide with a view to improving data on violence against women and girls.

In addition, it seeks to strengthen the capacities of public institutions to generate data on violence and to reinforce the investigation and interpretation of cases of violence, as well as to establish strategies to promote better participation.

of civil society in all territories through case monitoring (Spotlight, 2022).

The Spotlight initiative has considered including in the implementation of the single registry of violence, RUV, a tool regulated in the comprehensive organic law to prevent and eradicate violence, to collect data that will contribute to record in a timely and efficient manner and with a comprehensive approach throughout the national territory the different cases of violence.

Pillar 6 seeks to strengthen the women's movement to consolidate the work around the eradication of violence and femicide.

In the framework of reinforcing the actions of women's movements and other civil society organizations, we have considered promoting strategies at the local level, in order to promote the participation of the National Group of the Spotlight Civil Society with the respective autonomous governments (Spotlight, 2022).

For the implementation phase, the development of strategies for the exchange of experiences and best practices among civil society organizations has been considered. In addition, strengthening women's knowledge about the different mechanisms of citizen participation and accountability, so that women and girls can have access to them (Spotlight, 2022).

After having identified the pillars on which Spotlight works in Ecuador in the figure

N.1 mentions the work that the program has achieved during the period 2021-2022, thus we will know the projects, objectives and achievements that have been generated during this period.

Matrix 1 Work of UN Women in the canton of Cuenca period 2021-2022

UN Women's work in the canton of Cuenca period 2021-2022					
2021					
Pilar	Project	Target	Achievement	Level	Year
N.1	Voluntary Interruption Law	Guarantee, protection and regulation of the rights of women, girls and adolescents (..)	In this area, the Spotlight Initiative provided technical assistance to the National Assembly, allowing the inclusion of international standards.	National	2021
	from Pregnancy at Cases of Rape				
	National Protocol for Investigation of Cases of Femicide and other Violent Deaths of Women and Girls	Provide specific guidelines for the investigation of femicides and other violent deaths of women and girls.	This program has been adopted by the State Attorney General's Office and is currently part of the training processes for prosecutors in the country.	National	2021
	Construction of the Regulations of the Reformatory Ordinance to the Ordinance for the Prevention, Integral Attention and Eradication of Violence against Women in Cuenca, through programs municipalities.	Assignment of resources for violence prevention and attention	The regulations for the creation and administration of the trust fund were implemented. The importance of this regulation lies in the fact that it allows the State, as guarantor of rights, to fulfill its role of ensuring the implementation of local policies for the eradication of violence.	Local	2021
N.3	Addressing violence against women and girls and gender equality	Focus the importance to identify, prevent and act against violence against women and girls (boys)	The campaigns were conceptualized on the basis of a qualitative diagnosis of communication needs of VAWG and femicide in the six cantons of the country influence of the Spotlight project.	National	2021
	Media management monitoring process through the Observatory Citizen Communication	Emphasize the monitoring processes in the area of media management.	This training process has allowed the local civil society to obtain new and better tools to become involved in the monitoring and public denunciation of the messages of this nature, thereby fostering greater awareness that will to prevent violence in the media and to prevent violence in the media communication.	Nacional	2021
	Communication Campaign "This guy is not".	Contribute with strategies to reach out to communities and ensure the principle of "Leave No One Behind", managing through	Advertised on radio and television, billboards, social media and other BTL products	Local	2021
		advertising campaigns	(Below The Line advertising technique), reached 2,067,905 people.		

N.4	Development of a methodological proposal for the evaluation of judges competent in matters of violence against women and girls.	Establish specific evaluation parameters by subject matter, as opposed to processes current evaluation methods, which are carried out in a general manner, without considering no specialization.	This achievement has made it possible to improve the service provided by public officials in the judicial function and thus promote the principle of specialization provided for in the Organic Code of the Judicial Function.	National	2021
N.5	Flowers in the Air - Cartography for Memory	To make symbolic reparations to the families of women and adolescent victims of femicide.	Within the framework of the first results, it is highlighted that the families and friends of the women who have been part of the femicide rates have been part of this exercise and the same has presented a more visible reparation where it is more in line with their feelings than with their own.	Local	2021
	of Victims of Femicide.		the reparation actions that the State has taken with them.		
	Collection of quantitative and qualitative information to promote the analysis and analysis of decision making regarding violence against women and girls, and femicide in Ecuador.	The purpose of this project is to know and rescue the voices of women victims of femicide and their families, honoring their lives through the recovery of memory, as part of the symbolic reparation.	Through a participatory social mapping process, in 2021 the stories of eight women victims of femicides that have occurred in Cuenca have been recovered.	Local	2021
N.6	Strategic litigation course on violence against women and girls, and femicides.	Strengthen the capacities of Civil Society Organizations.	We have worked for the availability of a greater number of spaces for coordination and monitoring, thus strengthening communication and joint work among the agencies, which have been able to enhance the efforts of the agencies in their respective areas of work.	National	2021
			coordinated manner and achieve high-impact results.		
	Virtual courses on women's rights, on the creation of users' committees and on the LOIPEVCM law and strengthening of spokespersons.	They are intended to respond to the context produced by COVID-19, which required accessible learning processes. digital literacy and connectivity possibilities.	The implementing partner to the company is in charge of these processes and has extensive experience in face-to-face training processes. since 1990 and virtual since 2015, which managed to incorporate already proven best practices and to respond to the context of the pandemic.	National	2021

Matrix 2UN Women's work in the canton of Cuenca period 2021-2022

UN Women's work in the canton of Cuenca period 2021-2022					
2022					
Pillar	Project	Target	Achievement	Level	Year
1	Monitoring and Evaluation System of the National Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women	Enable the Ministry of Women and Human Rights, the System's governing body, to monitor and evaluate, based on evidence, at the local and national levels.	The implementation of the plan began in the last quarter of 2022, with the participation of 50 officials from the 22 national institutions that make up the SNIPEVCM, as well as from the 6 municipalities involved in the process. During this stage, capacity building was provided to the participants, with the objective of monitoring compliance with the actions contemplated in the plan and evaluating their real impact on the prevention of violence against women and femicide. As a result, the officers were provided with the necessary tools to carry out their duties in the following areas their role in an effective way.	National	2022
	Assistance technical assistance for adoption of ordinance	Create a specific financial destination to finance prevention and response actions to violence against women	Creation of the Violet Fund, which is destined to actions for the prevention of and attention to gender violence.	Local	2022
	Effective granting of administrative measures administrative measures of immediate protection	Adding to the regulatory policies of creation and operation that incorporates international standards	During the process, local capacities to implement policies and use tools generated at the national level were strengthened. This made it possible to recognize the experience of the entities and officials at the cantonal level, as well as their knowledge of the contexts in which they work. specific. Thanks to this, it was possible to develop more relevant and comprehensive responses, adapted to the needs and particularities of each place. This territorialization of the policy and tools contributed to greater effectiveness in prevention and approach to violence against women.	Local	2022
2	Gender Equality Seal	Eliminating gender gaps in the workplace	During the implementation process, the Gender Equality Seal was applied in four national and local institutions: the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC), the Public Defender's Office, the Decentralized Autonomous Government (GAD) of Azuay and the GAD of Morona. The Gender Equality Seal is a tool that seeks to promote gender equality in public institutions, evaluating and recognizing their progress in this area. The participation of these institutions demonstrates its commitment to equity.	Local	2022
	Situational diagnosis of the SNIPEVCM's functioning and articulation.	Activation of public policy on the prevention and eradication of violence against women and femicide at the local level.	During the implementation process, the capacities of 224 members of the Cantonal Roundtables for the Eradication of Violence against Women (VCMN), the Cantonal Councils for the Protection of Rights and the Cantonal Boards for the Protection of Rights were strengthened. Of these, 191 were officials of the Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GAD) of the 6 cantons. In addition, in the cantons of Morona, Azogues, Pastaza, Chone and Portoviejo, 147 civil servants increased their salaries.	Local	

	Gender Equality Policies Expenditure Guiding Classifier	Improve the reporting of actions for the prevention and elimination of violence against women.	In the cantons of Morona, Azogues, Pastaza, Chone and Portoviejo, 147 officials increased their capacity to apply this tool, skills to apply this tool.	National	2022
	Courageous Schools	To create critical thinking, change of perspectives and behaviors based on awareness of the issue in order to be alert and know how to react to cases of gender-based violence and discrimination.	The results show the transformation into an inclusive and safe space, which is why there is the commitment of the Ministry of Education, to elevate this tool to ministerial policy in order to expand its use and integrate it into teacher training in basic education.	Local	2022
3	Strategy strategy prevention	Sensitization and strengthening possible to act with mechanisms for prevention and action against violence against women and femicide.	Within the framework of the #EseTipoNo prevention communication campaign, approximately 10,162,700 people were reached nationwide, and an estimated audience of 7 million at the regional level.	National	2022
	New masculinities	Introduce young people to the national and local context, with cultural sensitivity in agile and accessible formats	The Spotlight Initiative had an impact on 70 young direct beneficiaries from the intervention cantons, who participated in a training process that covered topics such as feminism, gender, patriarchy, identities, masculinities, gender violence, and public policy.	National	2022
	Protocol of prevention and action against harassment	Guarantee safety in educational spaces, with the implementation of good practices to improve the prevention of and attention to violence against women in the higher education system.	In the educational field, the educational community, teachers, administrators, and students from the three universities were involved in adapting the protocols to their institutional and cultural context. Emphasis was placed on the development of prevention strategies to build safe and violence-free university environments. The three protocols were approved by the university councils and their compliance is mandatory.	Local	2022
4	Early Warnin. To provide guidelines and standards to guide the provision of health, security and justice servicesg System Design	Strengthening the capacity of health, security and justice services to provide adequate care for indigenous, Afro-descendant and montuvian women survivors of gender-based violence.	Information was collected from women, public institution officials, thro The guidelines and standards contained in the Guide were used to establish the intercultural guidelines and standards.ugh the promotion of dialogues with women and public institutions.	Local	2022
5	Implementation of the self- instructional e-learning course on the Technical Standard of comprehensive care for victims of gender-based violence and serious human rights violations,	Enhance the abilities, skills and abilities to be able to provide comprehensive care to victims/survivors of gender-based violence.	In the field of public health, at the national level, nearly 40,000 civil servants of the National Health System (Sistema Nacional del Sistema Nacional. Health care providers have been trained in the	National	2022

	National Violence Observatory				
	Flowers in the Air	Analyze the regulatory context, public policies and good practices within the region; with a methodological document.	The management model and a process manual were implemented in accordance with the technical regulations of the Ministry of Labor, as well as a cost study for its operation in three different economic scenarios.	National	2022
		To make visible and raise awareness of the problem of VAWG, violence and femicide at the national and regional levels.	The testimonies of their family members and friends were key in this achievement in order to put together stories that raise awareness about the impact of femicide on the lives of families.	Local	2022
6	Strategic litigation	The objective is to strengthen local capacities in the legal field.	Strengthen the capacities of 60 women legal professionals from civil society organizations who have the knowledge and skills to bring cases of violations to the attention of the national and international courts.	National	2022

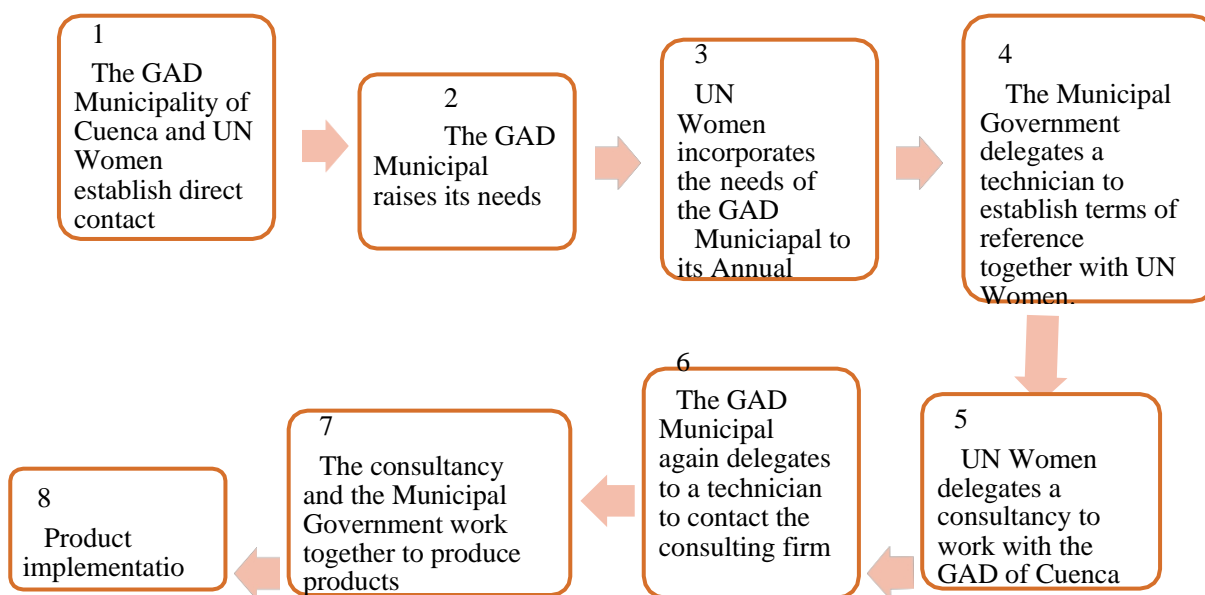
Source: Annual Narrative program report: Spotlight Initiative in Ecuador 2021, Spotlight 2022 Annual Program Report.

Having identified the work of UN Women at the national and local levels, the aim is to identify the management model applied when coordinating actions at the local level for its development and implementation.

#### 4.4 Management model applied by UN Women in Cuenca.

According to the social equity and gender coordination technique for the period 2021- 2022, for the development of projects coordinated or promoted by UN Women, a series of steps are followed, as in Figure:

Figure Process of working with UN Women



Source: Interview- Social Equity and Gender Coordination Technician (2023).

In this way we can demonstrate the process of working with UN Women in Canton Cuenca, according to the interview with the Social Equity and Gender Coordination Technician, who also explained that the work process is joint and there is no set time for a product to be implemented in the city, as it depends on the impact and results that are expected to be obtained.

A relevant aspect is the fact that the entity that implements the project defined between the GAD and UN Women is external to the municipality and is not always a local organization.

In conclusion, it is important to highlight that the work carried out by UN Women at the national and local levels seeks to coordinate actions directly with local authorities; however, in the route surveyed, there is no evidence of coordination or articulation with women's movements and organizations.

## 5. Discussion

Having identified the work of UN Women, it can be seen it can be seen that their work generates relevant impacts on the national and local reality. The sixteen

(16) projects/products that have been implemented at the national level, and twelve (12) at the local level within the Spotlight initiative detail powerful actions and results in each of the proposed pillars, demonstrating significant achievements in the fight against violence and femicide.

With respect to the work carried out in coordination with the Municipal Government of Cuenca, it consolidates it is possible to see the panorama in Ecuador a model use passive voice. A model of management and sustained work has been consolidated since 2015, however, it does not consolidate a process of interaction with local women's organizations and movements. This is an aspect that should be reinforced in the model in steps 2, 4, 6, 6, 7 and 8 in order to ensure sustained processes from civil society. Likewise, a monitoring and evaluation process should be generated to ensure that what is planned is adequately implemented, achieving



the expected results.

## 6. Conclusion

In order to carry out this article, initial difficulties were encountered in accessing information on violence against women. During several document reviews, laws were found in Ecuador, as well as some documents without background information or incomplete, which delayed the process. However, despite the setbacks, we managed to harmonize the review in accordance with the objectives set. Juanita Bersosa Webster, director of the gradation project, who was knowledgeable on the subject and was able to provide valuable information. Bersosa's experience, both as a councilwoman and as part of Spotlight, was fundamental in obtaining relevant information. Additionally, an interview was conducted with the The interview guide/questionnaire should appear as an appendix Social Equity and Gender, where detailed information on the work carried out by the Municipal Government of Cuenca in collaboration with UN Women was obtained. During the interview, we explored the actions and projects implemented both in the territory and in the offices of the Municipal Government, which allowed us to understand the management model developed jointly with UN Women. Through this interview, it was possible to appreciate the effective work carried out by the Municipal Government of Cuenca and UN Women.

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