



IMPACT STORY



RAISING AWARENESS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN HAITI

Photo: UN Women/Flavien Janvier (left); John Kafady Noel and Kerry D. Joseph (remainder photos)

In the municipality of Roseaux, Grand-Anse, Marie Luna Mathieu, 43, a mother of three, is fighting to end violence against women and girls in Haiti. No matter what it takes, she is determined to ensuring that no woman or girl facing violence is left alone. Through her organisation, l'Union Femmes Paysannes de Roseaux (UFPR), Mathieu has trained thousands of people in her community on topics related to gender equality.

More than a voice, Mathieu has also become an ear for her community. People confide their problems to her without hesitation, and she supports them by redirecting their complaints to the competent judicial authorities for legal follow-up.

Mathieu's path as a human rights advocate began in September 2020 during a series of training sessions conducted as part of the Spotlight Initiative, a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. "During the training, I realized the enormity of the work to be done to end violence against women and girls in Grand-Anse, but also the advantages offered by this project by bringing together leaders and decision-makers from different sectors who share the same objective of ending violence. I told myself that together we can make things happen," recalled Mathieu.

Photo above: Left: Portrait of human-rights activist Marie Luna Mathieu. Others: Supporters of advocacy campaign "I'm with her" ("Mwen kanpe ave l").

PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

The **Spotlight Initiative** is a global, multi-year partnership between the **European Union** and the **United Nations** to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. Launched globally in 2016, with a global funding commitment of **EUR500 million** from the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. UN Women is one of the core agencies that delivers the Initiative on the ground, alongside **UNDP**, **UNFPA** and **UNICEF**.

In Haiti, the Spotlight Initiative was launched in October 2020, with an investment of **USD14 million**, and is implemented through partnerships with civil society organisations, public institutions, in particular the **Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation** and the **Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights**, and the private sector. Together, they mobilize efforts to specifically address domestic violence in four out of the 10 departments in Haiti: Ouest, Nord-Est, Grand-Anse and Sud.

Throughout its implementation, the Spotlight Initiative expects to reach over **1.2 million** Haitians.

The trainings were implemented with the financial and technical support of UN Women under the Spotlight Initiative project “Community Mobilization for the Prevention of Domestic Violence against Women and Girls in Grand-Anse.” Eight municipalities were reached: Marfranc, Moron, Chambellan, Anse-d'Hainaut, Irois, Beaumont, Corail and Roseaux, where Mathieu lives. Implementing partners were the Haitian non-profit organisations Grade for Democracy, PESADEV (Perspectives pour la Santé et le Développement) and Panos Institute.

As part of this initiative, trainings on violence against women and girls were held in schools, reaching students and teachers. The broadcasting of awareness-raising messages and the training of journalists and students were also part of the planned activities. In addition, artists, community leaders and civil society were called upon to take part in the fight to end violence against women and girls, with particular focus on domestic violence.

Among the awareness-raising campaigns launched in Haiti under the initiative, the social media campaign “I am #WithHer” (“Mwen kanpe ave l”) reached 20,000 Haitians so far. It encourages citizens to post on social media photos of themselves holding signs with the words “I am with her”, to express their solidarity with women survivors of violence.

“UN Women is catalyzing a transformation of social norms by promoting the active involvement of women, youth, men and the press through campaigns to prevent domestic violence towards women and girls,” noted Dede Ekoue, UN Women Representative in Haiti. “Through its key actions within the Spotlight Initiative, UN Women is working in partnership with other recipient agencies to reform discriminatory laws and policies that do not comply with international human rights standards.”

Since she completed her training, Mathieu has been reaching out to remote communities, through her organisation, to raise awareness about women and girls' rights. She collects data on cases of violence on behalf of the departmental office of the Ministry for Women and Women's Rights, and has increased the number of dialogues on violence against women and girls among primary and secondary level students in Roseaux.

Aware that many challenges must be overcome to achieve a more just and egalitarian society where women's rights are respected, Mathieu firmly believes that her work is having a positive impact on people's mentality and is determined








Spotlight Initiative

2020 KEY RESULTS IN HAITI

- **43,946** people, including victims of violence, were sensitised on violence against women and girls, positive masculinities, women and children's rights, and gender equality.
- **1,073** students (including **713** girls), **300** parents, and municipal authorities were trained on types of violence against women and girls and sexual and reproductive education in schools.
- **13,480** people were reached by messages on violence against women and girls through social networks as part of the campaign “Mwen kanpe ave l” (I am with Her).
- **69** journalists were trained on the use of gender-sensitive language and ethical journalism.
- **162** community, religious and women/girls leaders were trained and mobilized to promote gender equality, positive masculinities, violence prevention and women's rights.
- **5** telephone helplines were established, including dedicated lines for the protection of minors, LGBTIQ people and for cases of violence against women.
- **11** health structures were audited to strengthen their capacities to care for victims of violence and to plan the integration of violence against women response units.

to contribute to changing the image of Grand-Anse. “Today, thanks to the education and awareness-raising activities carried out with the support of the project in Roseaux, people are beginning to understand the seriousness of this issue and more victims are filing complaints against their attackers,” she explained.

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