

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

November 25 - December 10, 2006



Suggested Actions: 16 Ideas for 16 Days

These 16 suggested actions for 16 Days events can be adapted and used for different themes. For a more comprehensive list visit the link <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/kit05/suggactions.pdf>. Please refer to the 16 Days bibliography for background resources as you consult this document for activity ideas. This document opens with 16 broad ideas for action, and concludes with a general resources section which provides information on planning the logistics of an event. Please inform the Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL) of which actions you found particularly useful and provide examples of activities that were especially effective in your campaign. Write to CWGL with any suggested additional actions and please report your activities and send your materials for inclusion in the 2006 International Calendar of Activities and the archives. Thank you!

1 Educate the community about VAW	2 Attend an event	3 Celebrate progress	4 Join a listserve
5 Collaborate with other initiatives	6 Conduct research	7 Lobby governments	8 Highlight Women Defenders on WHRD Day
9 Sensitize health care workers	10 Use the media	11 Organize a tribunal	12 Commemorate World AIDS Day
13 Support international work	14 Engage in programming	15 Advocate at the UN	16 Observe international dates

1**Educate the community about violence against women as a human rights violation.**

Use items such as fact sheets, speak outs, and the media, to educate people on Violence against Women (VAW) and how it is a form of discrimination and a human rights violation. Other ideas include: creating a “violence free space” in the community; riding the buses, trains, etc. for a day and distributing information to women that outlines their rights and provides phone numbers for organizations that provides services, empowerment or educational opportunities and tools to women in the area; holding public events that commemorate the women who have lost their lives to violence; keeping the spirit of the 16 Days campaign alive by reaching out to organizations that have not previously been involved with the campaign.

2**Attend an event held by groups working on violence against women or human rights and contribute to a dialogue on the connection of the two issues.**

Look for relevant conferences at the regional and international level. Consult their websites for information on how to register and attend. Many individual organizations’ websites such as those listed in the 16 days Bibliography contain their own calendars that may also have these events highlighted as well.

3**Celebrate the positive steps your community has taken towards the eradication of violence against women.**

Some ideas include: sponsor an essay contest; ask your school or community libraries and bookshops to use the 16 Days as a time to feature books by women authors, books written about violence against women, or books which focus on key women figures in history, politics and literature; hold a festival with other organizations and women business owners in your town to celebrate women; hold a festival online.

4**Join a listserv discussion to encourage dialogue about violence against women and to stay informed of new developments. Join the 16 Days listserv by writing to the campaign coordinator at cwgl@igc.org.**

Do a search online or consult CWGL for lists of organizations doing work on violence against women or organizations relating to human rights defenders. If your organization has a listserv, or if you are already a part of another listserv, send a message about the theme and your particular 16 Days activities to raise awareness and get people involved.

5**Collaborate with other international initiatives that are dealing with violence against women and/or human rights defenders issues, such as the following:**

- Defending Women Defending Rights: <http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org>
- Amnesty International Stop VAW Campaign: <http://web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/index-eng>
- Action Aid: http://www.actionaid.org/327/women_and_girls.html
- MADRE: Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand against Violence: <http://www.madre.org/programs/hra/fimireport06.html>

6**Look through the 16 Days Bibliography for any research that has been done in your region on violence against women and/or the use of the human rights framework around VAW issues.**

Hold an event to discuss the United Nations Secretary General’s in depth study on all forms of violence against women, a two year study that was just released in October 2006. Obtain copies and distribute them to local organizations or hold awareness-raising events, such as a panel discussion or teach-in, based on the conclusions in the report. If there has not been any research conducted or if you feel follow-up research is necessary, try to initiate a project that does that. You may also want to review the bibliographies created for the last few 16 days campaigns:

<http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/biblio.html>.

7**Advocate for your government to uphold the commitments it has made at the national and international level to respect, protect and fulfill women’s human rights, especially with regard to violence against women.**

Lobby your government to strengthen policies and programs on VAW. Use tactics such as petitions, public discussions, rallies, and meetings with government officials.

8**Highlight International Women’s Human Rights Defenders Day, November 29th.**

Conduct local or national consultations on women human rights defenders among women and other activists in your locality or country; contact local human rights organizations and ask them to honor or feature a “grassroots woman activist as a human rights defender;” plan a photo exhibit or music festival with local artists that would highlight the work of activists working for women’s human rights.

9**Ensure that health services in your community are aware of the issues surrounding violence against women and are prepared to deal with women survivors of abuse who seek medical treatment or counseling.**

Use resources from the toolkit section of the 16 Days bibliography and collaborate with health centers to hold a training to sensitize health care providers to the issue of violence against women.

10**Use the media as an agent for education and social change.**

Ask them to focus on the issues highlighted throughout this year’s 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence campaign. Promote the work of your group through different media by writing a press release, a letter to the editor, giving an interview, making a public service announcement, using your listserve, contacting local human rights groups in your area, and/or creating an independent publication/zine.

11**Organize a tribunal or hearing that makes public the violations of women’s human rights in your community, state or region.**

A hearing is an effective method of building awareness of violations of women’s human rights and demanding accountability from perpetrators of these violations. It can also call for implementation from governments of effective mechanisms to promote and protect the human rights of women. See CWGL resource guide *Women Testify: A Planning Guide for Popular Tribunals and Hearings* available at: <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter/womentestify/index.htm>.

12**Commemorate World AIDS Day** by organizing an event that brings together groups working on violence issues and groups working on HIV/AIDS issues, including associations of people living with HIV/AIDS. Distribute information that highlights the importance of the connection as it pertains to your particular region (see the 16 Days Bibliography for help with resources). Also see CWGL publication

Strengthening Resistance: Confronting Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS:
<http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/globalcenter/publications/strengthening.htm>.

13**Think global, act local.**

Conduct activities that connect your local work to global efforts to combat violence while educating yourself and your community on international issues of violence. Start a local solidarity committee with individuals from the community to respond to appeals/alerts that focus on violations of women’s human rights occurring throughout the world; ratify and monitor the implementation of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

14**Whether you are a research, education, service-provision or advocacy-focused organization, integrate programming on violence against women into your work.**

Get involved with VAW organizations and human rights groups and see how both groups can work to integrate each other’s work into programming. Emphasize the use of the human rights framework as a basis analysis on VAW. Look to resources such as the Secretary General’s report on VAW for guidance.

15**Advocate for women’s human rights at the United Nations.**

In early 2007, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will hold their 51st session focusing on the girl child. Hold events and activities that highlight and call attention to all forms of discrimination against the girl-child.

16**Observe the significant dates of the campaign: International Day Against Violence Against Women (November 25th), International Women Human Rights Defenders Day (November 29th), World AIDS Day (December 1st), the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre (December 6th) and International Human Rights Day (December 10th).**

General Resources for Planning Activities

At every event you hold, open with a brief statement about the 16 Days campaign, emphasizing its history, objectives, and importance. Note that organizations all around the world are holding events at this time. Check the International Calendar for updates and give concrete examples of events taking place in other parts of the world.

Consult other resources on how to plan a campaign around violence against women to help guide you in your 16 Days planning. Many such resources are listed in the 16 Days Bibliography. These planning guides will help you with event ideas, as well as the logistics of many different types of events including panel discussions, rallies, candlelight vigils, teach-ins, etc., and provide tips on how to lobby officials, work with the media, and strengthen your organization. Such resources include:

- ACT-UP NY has many toolkits available on such topics as demonstrating, civil disobedience, and activism: <http://www.actupny.org>.
- Amnesty International USA. Activist Toolkit (2004-2006): http://www.amnestyusa.org/activist_toolkit/index.html.
- Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF): Freedom from Violence (Women's Strategies from around the World): <http://www.hri.ca/partners/wildaf/pubs/pubs.shtml>.
- International Planned Parenthood Federation: Advocacy Guide for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. Available at: <http://www.ippf.org/pubs/advocacyguide>.
- New Tactics in Human Rights: <http://www.newtactics.org>.
- UNIFEM: *Making a Difference: Strategic Communications to End Violence Against Women*. Available at: http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=66.
- UNIFEM: *Picturing a Life Free of Violence: Media and Communications Strategies to End Violence against Women*. Available at: http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=66.
- US National Advisory Council on Violence Against Women and the Violence Against Women Office: Online Toolkit to End Violence Against Women: <http://toolkit.ncjrs.org>.