

DIVERSE VOICES FOR ACTION & ACCOUNTABILITY

#YOUNGWOMENLEAD #16DAYSOFACTIVISM

16 Days of Activism runs annually from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day). Underpinned by feminist values, human rights principles and the belief that a world without violence is possible, this campaign is aligned with the Goal 2035 of World YWCA.



THE FOCUS OF
2020
CAMPAIGN.

World YWCA seeks to advance action for through this year's theme - "Young Women Lead: Diverse Voices for Action and Accountability", by calling out: governments to significantly allocate budget for shelters and places of safety that respond to the different circumstances of women, young women and girls; the judicial system to clear the backlogs of gender based violence cases which continue to deny a majority of women and girls the justice they deserve and; governments to prioritize women participation in the decision making process during and post COVID-19 pandemic.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Violence against Women and Girls

During COVID-19 lockdowns, many women and girls have been isolated in unsafe environments where they are at heightened risk of experiencing intimate partner violence. **Around one third of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner; and 18% have experienced such violence in the past 12 months.**

GBV prevention and response is lifesaving and it is necessary for countries to adapt GBV programs to safely deliver these essential services during COVID-19.

SRHR and Mental Health

Studies estimate that disruptions in access to contraceptive services for a period of 6 months, would lead to **approximately 47 million women in low- and middle-income countries not being able to meet their contraceptive needs, and potentially 7 million unintended pregnancies in the coming months.**

The limitations presented by COVID-19 pandemic has high potential of causing stress and anxiety, ultimately leading to depression, suicide and substance abuse.

HIV Response during COVID-19

COVID-19 responses should be grounded in human rights and equality with particular attention paid to **20.1 Million women and girls who are living with HIV globally.**

There is an urgent need to create an enabling environment and remove punitive, arbitrary and discriminatory legal and policy measures that increase marginalization and undermine access to essential prevention and treatment services.

War, Justice and Peace

The COVID-19 pandemic has not paused conflict around the world despite calls for a global ceasefire by the UN Secretary General.

Violent conflicts remains a deadly reality for far too many people, a majority being women, young women and girls. **1 in 5 internally displaced women living in humanitarian crisis and armed conflict zone have experienced sexual violence.**

YWCA- GROUND FOR ACTION

Providing safety and space to share is key. A number of tactics have been adopted by women led organizations including World YWCA through the Virtual Safe Spaces initiative for going remote - adopting protocols to comply with social distancing measures that allow Safe Spaces to remain open both on ground and through digital platforms. It is critical to ensure GBV response services stay open and real-time information on risks reaches women, young women and girls.

Social media advocacy is changing the way voices are being shared. Despite the current contexts one of the most striking sights to emerge from days of protests in Belarus has been women forming solidarity chains demanding an end to police brutality. **Women are reinventing the face of activism by actively taking part in the revolution.** Likewise, the revolution on digital spaces are being used to reach out to challenge the system that continues to oppress women, young women and girls.

Action calling accountability on ground still remains. In Sudan the tide has changed from women providing food, shelter and necessary resources for other protestors to actually being at the frontlines of the protests. Young women from South Sudan have used their initiative, "Let Girls Talk." to give voices to survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence a platform to heal from the trauma of war and violence. In Lebanon women have been on streets leading civil action and fighting for systematic change, their slogan being, "The Revolution was, and is, female."



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SOME IMPORTANT DAYS OF OBSERVANCE

25 November

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

In 2000 the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 54/134 (14) formally designating 25 November as International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women commemorating the brutal murders of the Mirabel sisters, three political activists from the Dominican Republic, by the country's leader in 1960. *Write a message on social media directed to the government and policy makers to hasten the fight on violence against women and girls especially during this COVID-19 pandemic.*



The International Day of Solidarity traditionally provides an opportunity for the international community to focus its attention on the fact that the question of Palestine remains unresolved and that the Palestinian people have yet to attain their inalienable rights as defined by the General Assembly. It is our responsibility to stand with the people of Palestine. *Sign the petitions and be part of the movement that restores dignity to the people of Palestine..*

29 November

International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People.



01 December

World AIDS Day

Founded in 1988, World AIDS Day seeks to remind people around the world to unite and show support for people living with HIV and to remember those who have died from AIDS-related illnesses. The theme for this year is Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility. *Take the HIV test, know your status.*



The day promotes the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. However, girls with disabilities face unique challenges and obstacles on the quest for education and employment. *Be part of the conversations that seek to promote inclusivity and give attention to the rights of women, young women and girls living with disability.*

03 December

International Day of Persons with Disabilities



05 December

International Volunteer Day

In 1985, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the resolution for International Volunteer Day. The day has provided opportunities to recognize the efforts of volunteers from all walks of life. *Acknowledge the efforts made by volunteers within your organization by sending them a thank you note for the great work they are doing.*



This days marks the end of the 16 Days of Activism and celebrates the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (15) in 1948. The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the generation efforts made by organizations to end violence against women and girls. *As the 16 Days of Activism come to an end, petition your government, policy makers and media at all levels to have women at the centre of decision making process.*

10 December

Human Rights Day



ROADMAP TO THE BEIJING +25 AND GENERATION EQUALITY.

This year the international community marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing conference. Though COVID-19 pandemic has threatened to undo the hard won gains in the global response in elimination of violence against women and girls, the key critical areas of concern to achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls everywhere are: women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, and Violence against women which forms the key purpose of 16 Days of Activism against GBV.

Women, young women and girls from all over the women's movement, including the YWCA movement, are participating and sharing ground evidence, advocating for action to Beijing+25.

Do not let the voices die as the year 2020 comes to an end. Our voices matter, our commitment is authentic, nothing about us without us is for us.

Participate, engage and demand accountability of the 12 areas of action from Beijing+25. Share your voices online. Use the #16DaysOfActivism. #YoungWomenLeaders #EndGBV #WorldYWCA #Ratify



ADVOCACY IDEAS TO FIGHT GBV IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

INDIVIDUAL- ORANGE YOUR ACTIVISM

- Speak out about violence in the home against women and girls.
- Urge your community leaders to be part of the campaign, demand accountability.
- Engage boys and men in the VAWG discussion.
- Reach out to local radio stations and pitch a GBV action story.
- Organise a Instagram live with a activist and discuss ideas for demanding accountability.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS

- Engage actively on social media and encourage girls to speak out.
- Start petitions directed to your government calling for the collection and publication of VAWG data and demand action .
- Attend the World YWCA #YoungWomenLeaders virtual panel and learn from young women fighting in their communities.
- Join the World YWCA Virtual Safe Space and unpack pertinent issues related to violence against women and girls.
- Repost the World YWCA content on your own social media pages and become an advocate for GBV and Peace.
- Acknowledge and applaud the activists fighting on ground.
- Go online, donate to women rights organisations and tag other friends to do the same.

RESOURCES

1. <https://www.un.org/en/un-chronicle/global-16-days-campaign-taking-life-its-own>
2. <https://unfpa.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2020/09/six-months-of-global-pandemic-covid-19-impact-on-violence-against-women-and-frontline-organizations>
3. https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/women-girls-covid19_en.pdf
4. <https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/4981/essentialsofcbvdunderandaftercovid-19625vupdated629.pdf>
5. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/08/policy-brief-covid-19-and-conflict>
6. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw59/feature-stories>
7. <https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019-16-Days-of-Activism-Against-Gender-Based-Violence-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>
8. https://www.unaids.org/en/World_AIDS_Day
9. https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19_impact_brief_for_UNFPA_24_April_2020_1.pdf
10. <https://www.un.org/en/desa/world%E2%80%99s-women-2020>
11. <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/infographics/girls-and-women-living-with-HIVwome>
12. <https://www.unocha.org/story/gender-based-violence-closer-look-numbers>

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