

16 Days of Activism to Stop Violence Against Women: A Global Call to Action

Introduction

The 16 Days of Activism Against Violence against women and girls is an international campaign that runs from November 25 to December 10 every year, symbolically linking two significant dates: the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls and International Human Rights Day. This campaign serves as a powerful reminder of the urgent need to address and eradicate violence against women, a pervasive issue affecting millions around the world especially widows.

The Global Epidemic

Violence against women is a global epidemic that transcends borders, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds. During COVID it was called - the Shadow pandemic - as it still continued but no-one seemed to take notice of it. It takes many forms, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence. Despite progress in various areas, women continue to face discrimination and abuse simply because of their gender. The 16 Days of Activism is a concerted effort to raise awareness, challenge societal norms, and galvanise action to eliminate this pervasive issue. Across the globe widows are particularly vulnerable to all forms of violence and in itself some of the harmful traditional practices against widows are a form of violence that must be recognised.

The Objectives

Raise Awareness

The campaign aims to raise awareness about the different forms of violence women experience, fostering a deeper understanding of the root causes and consequences. Through education and advocacy, the hope is to create a more informed and empathetic global community.

Demand Accountability

Governments, institutions, and communities are urged to be accountable for the safety and well-being of women. This includes implementing and enforcing laws that protect women from violence, as well as ensuring access to justice for survivors.

Empower Women

Empowering women is crucial to breaking the cycle of violence. The campaign encourages initiatives that promote women's economic independence, education, and leadership roles in society.

Challenge Stereotypes and Norms

Societal norms and gender stereotypes often perpetuate violence. The 16 Days of Activism calls for a reevaluation of these norms, challenging harmful beliefs and promoting a culture of respect and equality.

Support Survivors

Providing support and resources for survivors is a fundamental aspect of the campaign. This includes access to shelters, counselling, legal assistance, and community networks that foster healing and resilience. A key area that requires highlighting is funding for those organisations working with and for women. These organisations, especially those working with widows, are vital in support as well as advocacy for female headed households. They are desperately in need of financial support to take forwards their work in the field.

Global Solidarity

Participation in the 16 Days of Activism is not limited to a specific region or community; it's a global movement. Governments, NGOs, activists, and individuals must unite in solidarity to amplify the message that violence against women is unacceptable in any context.

Conclusion

The 16 Days of Activism Against Violence against women and girls serves as a poignant reminder that the fight against violence is ongoing. By fostering awareness, demanding accountability, empowering women and girls, challenging norms, and supporting survivors, the global community can contribute to creating a world where every woman can live free from violence and fear. It is a call to action for individuals and societies to stand together, recognising that the elimination of violence against women and girls is not just a goal but a collective responsibility. Without equality peace and process for the world is impossible.

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