



GRADUATE WOMEN INTERNATIONAL TOOLKIT

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

Take Action to End Violence Against Women

25 November - 10 December 2021





Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace. GWI, formerly International Federation of University Women, is in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1947 and is a nongovernmental organisation maintaining official relations with UNESCO and the International Labour Organisation.

Graduate Women International

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"Gender-based violence is a major consequence of gender inequality. It is a worldwide phenomenon".



**Bukky Shonibare, 2021 Ford Global Fellow
and women's rights advocate**



Foreword: "Orange the world: End violence against women now!"

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) (16 Days of Activism) is an international annual campaign. It commences on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and concludes on 10 December, Human Rights Day, indicating that violence against women is the most pervasive breach of human rights worldwide. This campaign is motivated by the 6 December 1989 tragic, anti-feminist massacre that took place at the École Polytechnique University Montreal, an event that is representative of the wider societal violence against women and girls (VAWG) concern. The movement gained its foothold in 1991 from activists at the inaugural Women's Global Leadership Institute and continues to be used each year as a global organizing strategy by individuals, institutions and organisations to call for the prevention and elimination of all forms of VAWG. Over 6,000 organisations worldwide are now involved with this international campaign.

Alongside the 16 Days Campaign is the recurring "Orange the World" movement that aims to brighten women and girls' futures by eradicating GBV in all spheres of public and private life. In effect, the colour orange conveys dynamism and vibrancy that symbolise a positive future without VAWG. To increase the campaign impact, buildings and landmarks globally are lit up and decorated in orange. **The 2021 global theme is "Orange the World: End violence against women now!"**

**Click [HERE](#) to learn
more about
significant Days
of Observance
relating to the 16
Days of Activism**



Incredibly, the world changed in 2020 with a pandemic that revealed the wide-ranging scope of social and economic disparities in each country while giving rise to new inequalities around the world. Predictably, the pandemic lockdown measures set off unprecedented levels of GBV, the shadow pandemic, and set back the rights and access to education for women and girls by twenty years. All indications are that these rights will not be reprioritized during the next ten years – unless women around the world become organized and engaged in the fight against GBV.

The aim of this GWI 16 Days of Activism toolkit is to raise awareness about and advocate for the elimination of all forms of GBV in public and private spheres through a united, global voice and to guide you along your path to strategic advocacy against GBV.

In every GWI member lies a powerful advocate. Now more than ever, each must see herself as an advocate for the elimination of GBV, locally and globally. GBV jeopardises the safety, dignity, human rights, and the emotional and physical wellbeing of the millions of women and girls who experience it - urgent steps are needed.

Your commitment is critical to protect the extraordinary women and girls around the world who are affected by GBV every day. **This interactive toolkit includes impactful and easy-to-use resources facilitating** GWI members and followers to participate in this international movement in their local and national communities.

*"We can make the greatest positive impact not by working alone but by using our collective backgrounds, experiences and skills",
Terry Oudraad, GWI President.*

We urge you to widely share this toolkit as a guide to eliminate GBV.
Together we can end GBV!

[Click HERE to learn
about GWI
resolutions
addressing GBV](#)



[Click HERE to
learn about how
GBV is addressed
on a global scale](#)



Current situation: The Impact of GBV and COVID-19 on Women and Girls Right to Education



Around the world, 743 million girls were removed from school as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. **School closures due to COVID-19 exacerbated gender inequalities, GBV, adolescent pregnancy and forced marriage, especially for the poorest women and girls.** Most of the challenges have to do with the lack of capacity to flatten the curve, whether it be at the UN, in the private sector or within organisations like GWI.

Moreover, building capacity has been identified by the UN as a key factor in the accomplishment of the SDGs with SDG Target 17.9 of the 2030 Agenda dedicated to capacity – building: “Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals”.



It's time for action!

Get involved with GWI



You can make a difference at the local, national and international level by joining in the efforts of GWI and our NFAs:

- Advocate for women and girls' right to live a life free of violence and fulfill their fundamental rights by joining forces with a GWI affiliate in your area. [Click HERE to learn more about our membership and join us.](#)
- Subscribe to the GWI Update newsletter: [Click HERE to subscribe to the Update newsletter.](#)
- Click on the icons to find and follow our **social media** pages.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many events marking the 16 Days of Activism 2021 are likely to be held online. Take this opportunity to participate in any online training or information session that might be of interest to you, inform yourself, and spread the word around you! Learn more [HERE](#).

Suggested Books and films for discussion

As the current pandemic temporarily prevents participation in and organisation of local events marking the 16 Days of Activism against GBV campaign, there are still so many creative ways available to raise awareness, spark discussions and bring people together in support of GBV survivors. Below is a short list of books and films exploring the topics of GBV and VAWG. We encourage you to watch and read the suggestions as a means to increase your awareness and knowledge on issues surrounding GBV. Alternatively, you can organize an online book club or film screening to stimulate a discussion in your NFA and community about the importance of safe access to education for girls around the world.

Books

Believing: Our Thirty-Year Journey to End Gender Violence (Anita Hill), No Visible Bruises: What We Don't Know About Domestic Violence Can Kill Us (Rachel Louise Snyder), Femicide in South Africa (Nechama Brodie), Everyday Sexism (Laura Bates), Dear Sister: Letters from Survivors of Sexual Violence (Lisa Factora-Brochers), The Color Purple (Alice Walker), The Wild Ones (Nafiza Azad), A Walk Across the Sun (Corban Addison), Crazy for You (Jennifer Cruise)

Films & Series

The Last Duel (2021), Athlete A (2020), Eve's Apple (La Manzana de Eva; 2017), I May Destroy You (2020), Lost Girls (2020), The Death and Life of Marsh P. Johnson (2017), The Invisible Man (2020), Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri (2017), I Was Worth 50 Sheep (2010), A Better Man (2017), The Road is A Red Thread (2020), Maid, The Handmaid's Tale



GWI 16 Days of Activism Social Media and Advocacy Resources Pack 2021

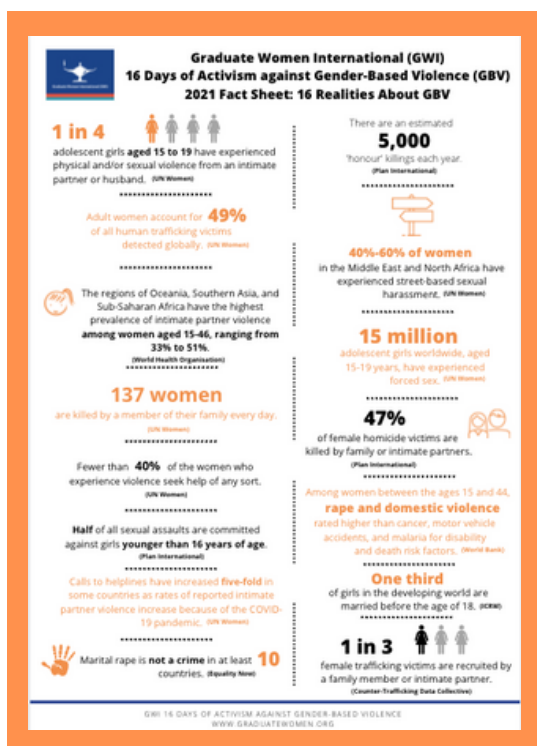
GWI 2021 Social Media Pack - download and share

GWI encourages you to use the below templates for social media posts. They have been especially designed by GWI to highlight its commitment to combating GBV. We will be particularly active on all 16 days with three posts per day on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. We encourage you to do the same.

[Click HERE](#) or on the graphics below to download our full social media pack.



GWI 2021 GBV Fact Sheets - download and share



Infographic about GBV

GBV and the SDGs in Focus



GWI Recommendations and Developing your own Strategic Advocacy Plan

Women are under-represented in decision-making positions worldwide. GWI considers the need to put women and girls at the forefront of policy-making and the response agenda of governments and UN Member States to be most urgent. Currently, approximately one in three women throughout the world will experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, and in over 50 countries, there is no legal protection for women against GBV. To build a better world effectively, we need women at the centre of decision-making.

The following pages provide the basic grounds to help you design your own Strategic Advocacy Plan for GBV. Whilst the 16 Days of Activism provides a global focus on the question of GBV, there is a vital need for year-round, multilevel efforts in order to fully eliminate GBV as a pervasive barrier to women's and girls' right to live lives free from violence.

Strategic Advocacy is about:

**Achieving specific outcomes,
not just raising awareness of
problems**

**Developing strategies based
on research and analysis
rather than guesswork**

**Choosing approaches and
deploying resources where
they will have the most
impact**

**The foundation for a
successful Strategic Advocacy
Campaign is based on three
guiding principles:**

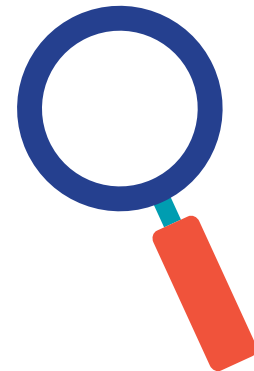
Gathering Evidence

**Mobilising
Resources**

**Monitoring,
Evaluation and
Learning**

Step 1 - Analysing the Situation

- **Clearly define the issue**
- **Assess the current status analyse and familiarize yourself with current laws and policies.** What policies are in place to diminish the incidence or impact of GBV? For example, what is the country's overall gender policy? How does your country rank on the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index?



Step 2 - Set Goals and Impactful Objectives

- **Goal: Raise awareness about and advocate for the elimination of all forms of GBV in public and private spheres through a united global voice**
- **Look at attitudes, practices, and norms as you assess your objectives.** What is the scale of GBV within your country?

What is the societal tolerance around GBV? How does that break down across generations, class, or geographic region? How strong is the will within civil society to end GBV? What is the strength of the women's movement, a recognized contributor to the decrease of GBV?

Step 3 - State the socio economic political impacts on the issue in your community

Globally, The COVID-19 pandemic is far more than a health crisis: it is affecting societies and economies at their core. While the impact of the pandemic will vary from country to country, it will most likely increase poverty and inequalities at a global scale, making achievement of SDGs even more urgent (UNDP).



GBV is a major obstacle to the fulfilment of women and girls' human rights and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Economic impacts of COVID-19 will be felt most egregiously by women and girls, particularly survivors of GBV, who may already be economically disadvantaged or economically dependent on their abusers. The risk of child, forced or early marriage may also increase as a coping strategy to financial and food insecurity. Furthermore, an increase in women's economic autonomy may disrupt power dynamics within the household, potentially resulting in male backlash causing a repeat in the cycle. **The global cost of GBV has been estimated at approximately US\$1.5 trillion.** That figure can only be rising as violence increases now, and continues in the aftermath of the pandemic (UNDP). **And security, health, and money worries heighten tensions and strains accentuated by cramped and confined living conditions.**



Step 4 - Identify your allies

There is a greater probability of success if you advocate along with other individuals and groups as this creates a unified request with greater impact on law and policy-makers. Allies are people or groups of people who have the same interests as you or the capacity to help you. Allies are essential because you can accomplish much more if there are people supporting you who believe in the cause and who may be willing to share resources and information in order to achieve a common goal.

Collaborate and form partnerships. Work in coalitions with groups whose philosophy and goals resonate with yours. Together, pooling staff and resources, all parties involved in the coalition should be better equipped to take on campaigns and work for change.

Step 5 - Develop your plan

Develop your recommendations

National response to COVID-19 must include:

- A STRONG MESSAGE FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT THAT IMPUNITY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Police and justice actors must ensure that incidents of GBV are given high priority and care must be taken to address the manifestations of increased violence against women
- PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT for women and girls affected by the outbreak, GBV survivors, front line health workers and other front line social support staff must be prioritized.
- SERVICES TO ADDRESS GBV. This includes increased resources to support shelters, hotlines and online counselling. These essential services should be expanded and adapted to the crisis context to ensure survivors have access to support.

Identify your targets and influences: focus points

The main target audiences for advocacy work will usually be decision-makers and influencers: influencers are the secondary audience. These are the individuals or groups who have access to the decision-makers and who may be able to influence them.

- Influencers may become partners in the advocacy plan.
- When talking about your issue with someone you are trying to influence to join your cause, do allow space for argument. Being able to see issues from other perspectives only makes your advocacy stronger as you will better be able to handle opposition.
- Encourage speaking and listening in all its forms.

Identify focal points (influencers and targets):

- Government leaders and legislators: community, local, state/provincial, federal
- Other community organisations, health professionals, legal professionals
- Police and justice systems
- Social support systems





Develop your message

Since advocacy means openly supporting a certain viewpoint of a target group of people, the language you use should be specific to the cause and meaningful to everyone. Avoid the use of acronyms and short forms unless they are readily and universally understood.

Your language is meant to persuade entities to grant specific rights, make policy changes, provide money or create new laws for the good of your cause. You might want to change the way people look at the issue by creating a reliable and consistent messaging stream and in addition motivate community members and policy makers to get involved. Use language that is appropriate.



Step 6 - Use appropriate tools for your target audience



Use tools that are effective for your focal points:

- Emails
- Social media
- Print media, including articles
- Editorials
- Open letters
- Telephone calls
- Face-to-face meetings
- Town meetings
- Position papers
- Radio and TV

About GWI

GWI is a membership-based international NGO located in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in some 60 countries with our NFAs and Independent Members. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls' and women's global organisation advocating for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. GWI is in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 1947 and maintains official relations with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

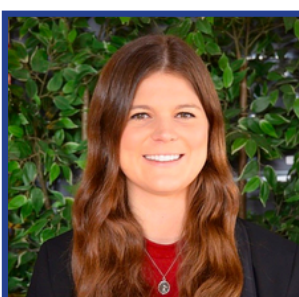
GWI operates with a small yet dedicated staff consisting of an Executive Director, a Junior Office Administrator, and a host of committed interns and volunteers. Additionally, our work is only possible with the support of our tireless Board of Directors: Terry Oudraad, President, GWI; Vice Presidents Veena Bathe (Legal and Governance), Glenda Hecksher (Membership), Louise McLeod (Advocacy and Education), Basak Ovacik (Fundraising) and Treasurer, Katharina Strub.



Stacy Dry Lara
Executive Director



Alexandra Taylor
GWI Intern



Alexa Grace
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