

Break the **SILENCE** Break the **BARRIERS!**

How will you make education safe for girls?

GBV Prevention Network

16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence 2016

Campaign Activity Guide



Building Momentum • Fostering Activism

Break the Silence, Break the Barriers! How Will You Make Education Safe for Girls?

Over 25 years activists and practitioners across the globe have used the 16 Days of Activism period to highlight gender based violence as a human rights violation. This year we will focus on making education safe for all, specifically girls and young women.

Using a range of activities Collaborating Organizations will break the silence in their communities and schools publicizing barriers for women and girl's access to education and issues that make educational spaces unsafe. Some of the issues to be highlighted include; barriers to girl's enrolment and retention at school e.g. child marriage, safety hazards on the way to school like sexual harassment, safety within the school e.g. separate toilet facilities, and barriers within the educational system e.g. school curriculum that reinforces discrimination of women and girls.

This Campaign Activity Guide is a suggestion of steps and activities you can conduct to make your campaign as creative and engaging as possible. You could add other details to activities you select to make them fit your own context better. Please let us know how these activities go we can't wait to hear from you!

Getting Prepared for your Campaign

1. **Step 1:** read the Campaign Overview document found in this kit to familiarize you with the issues being addressed by the campaign.
2. **Step 2:** read and complete the Campaign Worksheet also in this kit and decide on one or two issues that are the most significant barriers to education in your community.
3. **Step 3:** have a meeting with colleagues to plan and map out your campaign. In that meeting you could choose from some of the activities listed in this document.
4. **Step 4:** remember to have fun as you break the silence around barriers to girls education

Suggested Campaign Activities

Breaking the Silence with the Media

The media is a strong source of power in shaping attitudes, beliefs and practices within our society. If we are deliberate in our engagement with the media during (and after) the 16 Days campaign then we can use this influential force to break the silence and highlight barriers (within our homes, communities and schools) to girl's enrolment and completion of school. Strategic use of the media will not only highlight your activities and barriers to education for girls but could also act as a catalyst to affect wider change. Below are a few suggested ideas for your media activism

- **Press Conference:** this is usually organized to announce significant information to a large number of journalists¹. Invite a diverse range of media houses to your press conference and highlight barriers to girl's education in your community outlining your suggestions to address these. Ensure that your announcement is newsworthy so you can receive enough media attention for this issue

- **Press Briefing:** this is more informal than a press conference and you could use it to inform journalists of your planned activities for the campaign as well as activities of other organizations in your city and in the Horn, East and Southern Africa
- **Radio and Television Spot Ads:** You could use these to call attention to your events but also to highlight the issues being addressed by the Campaign Theme. Spot Ads could be expensive to run but you may want to consider using a highly respected personality with a following and ask the media house to run it as a non-profit venture (that way you both benefit)
- **Written Pieces in the Newspapers:** using the content of the Campaign Theme Announcement as a guide you could engage school children, teachers and school administrators in writing articles, Opinion Editorials (Op Eds), or letters to the editor. Be sure to make them newsworthy so they are published and help to break the silence around the barriers to girl's education
- **SMS Campaigns:** An SMS campaign is one of the effective ways we can broadcast our ideas to a wide range of people spread over a large area. A number of people have mobile phones across the region and many more are getting connected. We can use that opportunity to break the silence and create awareness around barriers to girls' education
- **Social Media Campaigns:** Social media platforms are increasingly becoming popular mediums to share information and to mobilize communities around an issue. Use your social media platforms to mobilize and create awareness around the barriers to girl's education in your community, be sure to tag other social media pages that have a lot of traffic. The GBV Prevention Network Campaign will be plugged into the Global Social Media Campaign coordinated by Center for Global Women's Leadership. In addition on a daily basis we will provide updates on our pages of your activities. Please be sure to send us current updates of your activities at info@preventgbvafrica.org so we can share them across the region. Follow us @GBVNet and Facebook (the GBV Prevention Network)
- **Community Radios:** Many rural based communities have a community radio. Most of the times the radio is active on market days and is located in the trading center. Partner with the Community Radio and use it on strategic days to break the silence about barriers to girl's access to education for example you can broadcast an interview where the barriers of safe education for girls are highlighted

Community Engagement Activities

Quick Chats: use the 16 Days poster and poster discussion guide, to hold discussions with small groups. Use these to plant a seed of an idea and encourage it to grow. Influence people in the community by holding spontaneous conversations with them. Engaging in a quick chat is a great way to get people talking. You can hold these chats with neighbors, friends, relatives, strangers in a queue, at the market in a taxi anywhere. Quick chats are meant to provoke dialogue. People you are chatting with do not have to agree with you – don't feel pressure to convince them to your point of view. Opening up new topics of conversation can begin to foster new ways of thinking and change. To have a successful quick walk up to a small group of people, smile, greet them, open up the conversation with a few lines chat about one or two ideas in the poster discussion guide, and close the conversation with a few departing ideas you would like them to stay thinking about. Keep the discussion positive and have fun! (it might be helpful to practice this with colleagues before the start of the campaign)

Open Theatre and Community Dramas: use local drama groups to engage and educate the community about the campaign theme. Many communities have a strong oral storytelling tradition. People like to learn about themselves and their lives through stories. The use of drama draws on this tradition by acting out stories that portray experiences in the community. Dramas aim to educate and inspire discussion. To have the most effect from your drama use a facilitator to conduct discussions with the audience after each scene to make the dramas an interactive experience. Ensure the discussion questions are designed to provoke, inspire, and motivate community members think about and do things differently. The music dance and drama could involve school children in partnership with local drama groups

Town Speaks: Community dialogues are a great way to ensure people connect with each other and learn about interests they share. You could hold a big community dialogue earlier in the day, during the dialogue; ask community members to discuss various issues that affect girl's education in your community. After the community dialogue, you then hold a smaller meeting with key people / leaders/ influential people in that community (15-30 people) (you need to be keen to ensure that these leaders were present at the bigger dialogue) During the smaller meeting these leaders should make one big commitment (write it down and have it signed) about how they will be promoting the education of girls in your community

Local Community Casting: Most communities have people whose opinions they respect. Using these individuals as champions of your cause can go a long way in influencing attitudes. Identify some very influential people in your community (school head teacher, local political leader, religious leader, cultural leader, parent, local celebrity etc) record them talking about girls education, each person's message should be short say 3-5mins. After the video recording you hold a big public event later in the evening and play the video to the bigger community. This usually creates excitement because the local

community does identify with these people making the ideas very relevant since they are being shared by people live in the same community. This activity requires your organization to have the capacity, skills and equipment to record and show a video

Games and Competitions: Organize games and competitions for children and adults. For an interesting day mix a variety of games – board games, netball, football, bicycle rides, arm wrestling etc. use this opportunity when everyone is relaxed and feeling positive to discuss and highlight the barriers to girls education in your community. To mix it up, you can have girls play games that are seen to be ‘for men’ and vice versa. The idea is to break gender stereotypes but also to inspire girls not to limit their dreams because of their sex

Mass Transect Walks: Together with staff of your organization, partner organizations and community activists plan and conduct a purposeful walk across your community using this as an opportunity to create awareness on barriers to education for girls. Ensure to target areas within your community that have a significant population. You could decide to move with a band or public address system or stilts man to attract attention. Divide roles strategically so that within the team there are colleagues with materials like flyers that have information on the barriers in your community. These team members will spread within an area to distribute these flyers and talk about the issues with smaller groups of people.

In-school Activism

Dialogues: Host discussions in the school on the barriers girls face in accessing information across all settings (home, school and the community) you could have separate dialogues for children, teachers, and parents on separate days. Use this activity to profile outstanding individuals in the school and community who are addressing the barriers to girls’ education

Edutainment: Use this opportunity to show films, use music dance and drama to highlight barriers to girl’s education.