

GBV Prevention Network 16 Days of Activism Campaign: Public Event Guide: **A Community Fair**

Introduction

This year 16 Days of Activism regional campaign; GBV Prevention Network members across the region will convince, inspire and challenge leaders to recognize violence against women as a human rights violation and a barrier to social and economic development. We call on leaders to publically condemn violence against women, and allocate needed resources to prevent and respond to it.

A public event is an important part of mobilizing leadership and communities into action. There is power in numbers; GBV Prevention Network members are encouraged to organize a Community Fair. This is a public event intended to mobilize communities ask their leaders to use their voice to take action and end violence against women now. Additionally, it is also an opportunity for leaders to condemn VAW and renew their commitments to take actions to end VAW.

This brief guide provides you with some ideas to prepare and organize a dynamic and effective Community Fair. The event will require preparation by working closely with other organizations, community members and with leaders of all types – government technical staff, elected leaders, religious and cultural leaders. You could create a 'Community Fair Committee' to take responsibility for organizing and hosting the Community Fair. The Community Fair Committee would consist of active and trusted community members, staff of yours, partner organizations, and allies within the leadership.

Organizing the Community Fair

The key to a successful community fair is to plan carefully and thoroughly well in advance. We hope the tips below will be useful in helping you to plan and organize a successful event.

Step 1: Create a Community Fair Committee and Plan the Event

The Community Fair Committee has a number of roles they are responsible for organizing the event. Among their activities is mobilizing communities, and advocating leadership to publically condemn violence against women and girls. After the campaign the Community Fair Committee will be responsible for following up all commitments made by leaders during the campaign period by arranging and conducting closed and opened meetings. The Community Fair Committee could comprise of staff of your organization, staff of partner organizations, allies/ champions from within the leadership i.e. government technocrats, political leaders, religious leaders, cultural leaders and respected community members.

¹ Adapted from Michau, L. (2009). **SASA! An Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV**. Kampala: Raising Voices.

1. Conduct a brainstorming session (preferably well before the campaign commences i.e. no later than 10th November 2015) inviting the above-mentioned persons that you would like to form the Community Fair Committee. Within this session use the following questions as a guide:

- Discuss the theme, goal and objectives of this year's regional 16 Days Campaign? (use ideas in the Action and Advocacy Kit Cover Letter)
- Using the worksheet (that you should have already completed at this stage) agree what are the specific issues you would like your leaders to address related to the main objectives of the regional campaign?
- Discuss mobilizing the community to hold leaders accountable for the campaign ask through the Community Fair activity. What would that look like? What kind of activities would you conduct (see below for some ideas)? What kind of commitments do you hope to get out of which particular leaders?
- What skills, interest, experience or knowledge does each of the individuals in the group have to contribute?
- Which prominent leaders would we like at the Community Fair and which commitments are they likely willing to make?
- Who among the team members will approach the different leaders and invite them to the event but also prepare them for the commitments that are expected out of them at this event?

Agree on the practicalities: **When** will the Fair be held? **Where** will it be held? **Who** will be involved?

Now, use the information from the brainstorm above to decide **what** will happen at the Community Fair. Suggested activities could include the following

Poster Display: Hang the posters on the wall, trees and everywhere. Have community activists/staff facilitate dialogues using the poster discussion guide. This could be done when there are no speeches going on so as not to divert attention from the main stage.

Clinic Space: Ask a local clinic to host a mobile voluntary counseling and testing unit during the community fair.

Community Mural: Find a wall or use large pieces of fabric for a community mural. When there are no speeches going on community members can draw on it and post messages related to the campaign asks. Encourage the community to be creative and express their views on how to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.

Main stage: where different people will give speeches addressing the community. This includes someone from your organization to highlight the campaign issues (the magnitude of VAWG and its consequences to the social and economic development of the country/ community), someone from the service delivery sector i.e. health, police, judiciary speak about what services exist in the community, someone from the community highlighting the gaps that exist, the leader of your organization to highlight policy/ local government development plan gaps and call for leaders to publically condemn VAWG, put in place an effective Action Plans to prevent and respond to VAWG, multi-sectorial Coordinating Mechanisms in place, and sufficient budget allocations for the implementation of the

Action Plan. Finally speeches from various prominent leaders condemning violence against women and making commitments towards the campaign asks/ objectives, we suggest you instruct each speaker to keep their speeches short approximately 15 minutes each.

Open Mic: Set up a microphone and a small group of chairs where community members can express their opinions and question the leadership on the stage. Have a member of staff facilitate it, give each person 3 minutes (strictly!) on stage to share their ideas on violence, and how they would like their leaders and the community to take action.

Other activities: Make the fair informative, welcoming and fun for everyone in the community. Organize a drama performance, live music from a band, games for kids. Additionally, select 3-5 individuals from the Community Fair Committee to hand out five stickers/ ribbons/ wrist bands to five individuals from the audience, and begin a conversation about violence against women. Another group of individuals from the Community Fair Committee could conduct quick impromptu chats with small groups of people using the poster and poster discussion guide questions.

2. The Community Fair Committee is encouraged to invite and visit the leaders that they feel will create the change that the group seeks prior to the event. During this visit the leaders can be made aware of what activities are planned and what commitments the group hopes they can make towards the campaign asks. Assign different individuals in the group the responsibility of inviting different leaders.
3. Create talking points/ speeches for the different speakers at the event.
4. Agree from within the group who will mobilize and invite community members for the Community fair, who will organize the mobile VCT clinic, who will mobilize the media, who will conduct poster discussion guides etc
5. As you plan and allocate tasks remember to include specific dates for easy follow up of colleagues.

Step 2: Promoting the Community Fair

1. As a team (Community Fair Committee), choose a well-known, central, accessible public place to hold the event and seek permission from relevant authorities.
2. Invite the different categories of leaders (technical, elected leaders, religious leaders, and cultural leaders) as discussed in step 1 above
3. Publicize widely: send invitations through email, SMS, and telephone calls, hand out small bulletins/ or leaflets, announce on the radio, etc.
4. Remember to include where, when, what and who, in the invitation/leaflets/radio announcements/mobile van.
5. Make flyers to let people know about the event: what it is about, where and when it will be held.
6. Get Coverage! Invite the media to the event – discuss talking points, set up interviews (with leaders during the event ensuring they repeat their commitments in their interviews), and share story options with the media. Use the press release and media talking points to assist you in these discussions.

7. Make sure you are well prepared to speak with the media. Agree which individuals will answer questions from the media and discuss the talking points with them.
8. Follow up all tasks such as hiring public address systems, getting chairs, finding a guest of honour, writing her/his speech etc.
9. Arrange a briefing session to ensure speeches are clear and understood, motivate the speakers to deliver their speeches with energy.
10. Invite stakeholders from relevant institutions and remember to research on appropriate protocol for officials from government.
11. Check all electrical equipment and power sources, prior to the event.
12. Assign roles for the day of the event e.g. registration, handling guest speakers etc. Outline the activities of the event and the Master of Ceremony
13. The Community Fair Committee should arrange a meeting a day before the event to ensure that all necessary preparation are in place.

Step 3: Implementing the Community Fair

1. Have a motivational team meeting just before the event to energize the Community Action Group.
2. Arrive early to the space to prepare all equipment and logistics.
3. Ensure the overall coordinator of the activity is in touch with all persons on the team so they can check in on the progress of the activity.
4. Make sure staff are in their assigned locations to greet guests, follow up with logistics, register and usher people etc.
5. Thank everyone for coming.
6. Conduct a team celebration after the event.

Step 4: Follow Up

1. Hold a meeting with the Community Fair Committee after the event to discuss how it went, lessons learned, necessary follow up etc.
2. Congratulate everyone on the team, acknowledge and appreciate everyone's contribution to the event.
3. Arrange a follow up meeting with the Community Fair Committee to formulate a strategic plan to follow up on the commitments and promises made by leadership at the Community Fair.
4. Community Fair Committee to arrange community meetings to keep the community informed about the development of the commitments and promises made

Be positive! **This is the time to use your voice and take action to end violence against women!**

VOICE, ACTION-NOW!

Leading the way to end violence against women.

Working to convince, inspire and challenge leadership to end violence against women and girls will present challenges, but it also presents many opportunities to do great work, mobilize community and build their agency, and amplify your demand and impact.

Do not hesitate to contact the Coordinating Office for any assistance or simply to share your stories. We wish you all the best in your 16 Days 2015 collaborations!

Wishing you successful event for 16 Days 2015!

