

EVERY
ONE

EVERY
Day

EVERY
Way

Prevent Violence Against Women Your Way!

Everyday Activism Training Session

Objective

The purpose of this training session is to stimulate individuals to take action to prevent violence against women (VAW). The focus is on inspiring **everyday activists** who will be able to use their power to create positive change in their families, workplaces and communities.

This training session will encourage participants to translate this year's *16 Days* campaign theme. '**Everyone, Everyday, Every way: Prevent Violence Against Women Your Way**'- into action in their daily lives. It helps to clarify and define activism, uncover examples of how to use one's power to prevent violence against women, and celebrate the small actions we take which can lead to big changes.

The training is divided into 3 distinct sessions which can be done in succession or at different times according to your organization's schedule. Each session has a suggested duration but the facilitator is free to amend the time to suit the needs of your group. The materials required are minimal; all you need is flipchart paper, empty wall space, markers, and some sticking tape to get started. Remember to conduct the training in the local language of participants whenever possible.

Everyday Activism

A. Introduction (2 Minutes)

Welcome to the GBV Prevention Network *Everyday Activism* training session. This session is part of the 16 Days Action and Advocacy Kits for 2011-2012. It explores how organizations and individuals can translate this year's theme - "**Everyone, Everyday, Every way: Prevent Violence Against Women Your Way!**" - into action in our own lives to create community-wide change in confronting violence against women.

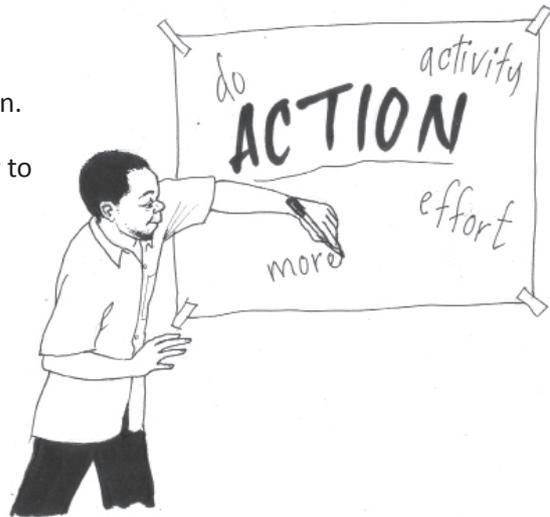
B. Action Wordplay (10 Minutes)

Objectives:

1. Stimulate participants' focus on taking action.
2. Introduce the concept of "having the power to take action."

Preparations:

- Tape together 2 flipcharts and hang on the wall.
- Hang an additional single sheet of flipchart on the wall.



Steps:

1. Write the word "Action!" in the middle of the large square of flipchart paper.
2. Ask participants to take turns contributing words or expressions that come to mind when they hear the term "Action!" Keep this process at the pace of a fast brainstorm.
3. Write all the words and expressions on the flipchart around the word "Action!" as participants call them out. (Contributions might include: movement, activity, work, effort, etc.).
4. Explain: *"In order to prevent violence against women in our communities, we need to take specific actions that challenge harmful norms and offer positive alternative behaviors. We cannot sit back and wait for others to do something. We all have the power to take action to create positive change and prevent VAW. In the next sessions, we will explore further what kinds of action we can take in our daily lives to prevent VAW and how even the smallest actions can lead to the biggest changes. Everyday and every way counts!"*

C. Everyday Activism Opportunities (60 Minutes)

Objective:

1. Recognize opportunities for taking action to prevent VAW in our everyday lives.

Preparations:

- Hang one blank flipchart on the wall.

Steps:

1. Explain to participants: *“Everyday we interact with many people. With all these people we could be fostering change through our words and actions. Yet often we are not aware of this and feel that activism can only be a large or well-planned activity. Our attitudes and actions affect others. Our choices can inspire others to also create positive change in their own lives. We may think that we have little power to make a difference, but in reality we can be a spark that lights a fire! Many times the most effective activism is what happens in the course of normal life.”*
2. Explain: *“I am going to read you a simple story. Please make yourself comfortable, relax and listen carefully.”*
3. Once you have everyone’s attention, begin reading:

“John is a farmer. He lives in a small farming community. It’s Sunday, the only day he gets to sleep longer and rest a bit. He and his family get up at 7:00 a.m., bathe and have breakfast. From 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. they go to church, after which they talk for a while with some of their fellow church members. On the way home they stop at the market to buy some vegetables and food for cooking. They come home and prepare food, with everyone helping in the food preparations, and at 1:00 p.m. they enjoy a nice meal together. At 2:00 p.m. John goes to the big mango tree where his friends gather for talking and sometimes playing a game. From 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. the whole family goes to visit a relative with a sick child. When they arrive back home, there are neighbors sitting outside enjoying a rest. John’s wife cooks a special supper. Some neighbors come by and they all share food. The whole family takes supper at 9:00 p.m. and goes to bed at 10:00 p.m.”

4. Debrief the story in the following way:
 - a. Explain: *“The story about a day in the life of John is a simple one. It focuses on the social interactions John had during a typical Sunday. This could have been the story of any woman or man living in your community. Let’s review John’s day and the social interactions that he had throughout it.”*
 - b. Write on the flipchart *“7:00 a.m.”*
 - c. Ask participants: *“What social interaction did John have first thing in the morning?”* (Answer: He had breakfast with his wife and children).
 - d. Write the answer on the flipchart next to the corresponding time. In this case you could just write *“Breakfast with wife and children.”*

- e. Review John's whole day in this manner, writing down the time and the corresponding social interaction. Reread parts of the story if needed to help participants remember.
5. Summarize as follows:
 - a. *"Everyone has social interactions each day."*
 - b. *"Every social interaction is an opportunity for activism."*
 - c. *Everyday activism can be personal (in your private life, with family and/or friends) or public (in your community, workplace, society, etc.)."*
 6. Ask participants: *"Please choose a day from the past week. In your notebook, write out all of the social interactions you had at different times throughout that day like we have done for John. Write down both formal and informal interactions, personal (with family) or public (with community members, colleagues, etc.). For each social interaction, write down a way you could have used that opportunity for activism to address violence against women. Take 5 minutes to do this independently."*
 7. Call "Stop!" after 5 minutes have passed.
 8. Ask participants: *"Please turn to your neighbor to discuss your work. Explain your day and its opportunities for personal or public activism. Be specific. Work together to ensure you have named specific means of activism for each social interaction. You will have 6 minutes for this discussion. After 3 minutes, I will ask you to switch roles and begin working on the other person's opportunities for everyday activism."*
 9. Ask participants to begin. After 3 minutes ask participants to switch roles. When 6 minutes have passed call "Stop!"
 10. Debrief the exercise, using the following questions as a guide:
 - a. *"What did you learn from this exercise?"*
 - b. *"Did the exercise help you think differently about your day and your role as an activist? If so, how? If not, why not?"*
 - c. *"What times of day or types of social interaction were the most challenging for identifying how to take action?"*
 11. Summarize as follows:
 - a. *"Everyone can take action to prevent violence against women. You don't need special training, education, or resources."*
 - b. *"Action comes in many forms. Activism does not have to always be a large or organized event. We can be activists in our everyday interactions and relationships. Every choice we make throughout our days allows us to live and demonstrate our beliefs."*
 - c. *"It is actually when our activism becomes part of our everyday lives that we will begin to see long-term social change."*
 - d. *"Everyone has the power to reach and influence many people. The more people we reach out to, the more we will be able to effect social change."*

- e. *“If **everyone** can reach 10 people, and those people reach 10 people and those people reach 10 more, we will soon create a critical mass—a large enough number of people committed to non-violence for non-violence to become a community norm.”*

D. Small Actions Mean Big Change (25 Minutes)

Objective:

- Emphasize the importance of small, personal actions in preventing violence against women.

Preparations:

- Hang two blank flipcharts on the wall.

Steps:

1. Explain to participants: *“Often we think that the small things we do cannot really make a big change. Yet it is often the smallest actions that have the largest impact. In this exercise, we will do a quick calculation to demonstrate this idea.”*

2. Explain: *“Let’s think about an environmentalist who saves water by washing her dishes in a basin instead of under the running tap.”*

3. Ask participants:

- a. *“How much water do you think she can save that way?” (Answer: 5 liters per washing)*
- b. *“That is not much! Is it really worth making the effort to use a basin only to save 5 liters? Let’s continue our calculation. How many times a day does she wash the dishes?” (Answer: 3 times)*
- c. *“That already makes a savings of 15 liters per day. If you multiplied this by 365 days a year that makes 5,475 liters a year which is 27 drums of water.”*

- d. *“That’s already a lot which she can accomplish alone through a small action. Now what if others joined? What if others also started saving water? Let’s say she can convince 10 people to save water when washing dishes. Imagine that she can convince her mother, her mother-in-law, two neighbors, her two relatives, her son and daughter and two friends. That way 54,750 liters would be saved a year, or 2,737 drums of water—just because of her small actions!”*



- e. *“Can you imagine the change if the 10 people she convinced went on to convince 10 others and so on?”*
4. Debrief this calculation by asking the following:
 - a. *“What can we learn from this calculation?”*
 - b. *“Can this idea apply in our work to prevent violence against women? How?”*
 5. Summarize key points:
 - a. *“Everyone has a role to play in creating positive community change. This role can seem very small on its own, but if we imagine all the people in a community playing their small roles, we see that eventually this becomes a big change.”*
 - b. *“Activism is not only about changing ourselves but is about encouraging others to also create change.”*

E. Ideas into Action (60 minutes)

Objective:

- Develop concrete, practical ideas for activism to prevent violence against women.

Preparations:

- Label and hang three flipcharts: Family; Workplace; Community

Steps:

1. Explain to participants: *“Reflecting on activism is an important first step. This session is designed to provide space for us to now make some practical and action-able plans for strengthening our activism.”*
2. Explain: *“In small groups, please brainstorm ideas for activism within your family, within our organization, and within your community. Remember that even where we do not see violence, we can always strive to more fully live our principles of fairness, respect, and positive use of power in our words and actions. Take a few minutes to discuss what activism could be done within each of these spheres to promote the values of equality and non-violence. List your ideas on three different flipcharts labeled like the ones on the wall. You have 30 minutes.”*
3. After 10 minutes, ask participants to move on to workplace ideas. After 20 minutes, ask participants to move on to the community brainstorm.
4. After 30 minutes, ask each group to hang up their flipcharts. Place all the “Family” flipcharts on one wall, “Workplace” on another and “Community” on another if possible. Ask participants to return to plenary.
5. Explain: *“We will take 15 minutes to move around the room reading all of your ideas for activism. At each category, please take a few minutes to write in your notebook the most compelling ideas from the lists that you personally will commit to doing. On the ‘Workplace’ flipchart, star the top two items that you feel you and your colleagues should commit to doing.”*

6. After 15 minutes, ask participants to come back to plenary. Ask each person to share one idea for activism that they will do within the Family or Community category.
7. Move to the Workplace activism ideas flipcharts. Hold a group discussion about which items participants starred. If there was a wide spread of ideas, ask participants to prioritize the most essential 3 items. After building consensus on the top three, discuss concretely how they can actualize these ideas for activism. Be sure to put specific, concrete plans in place for bringing more activism into the organization and how and when these commitments will be monitored.

Note: If disagreement or concerns arise, don't shy away from them; schedule another time in the next week to further the discussion. Remember, activism starts with ourselves – it isn't always comfortable but is essential for us to live our beliefs!

Follow up idea:

After a few weeks, come together as a team and revisit the commitments for activism you've made. Ask participants to share in plenary or in pairs their progress in implementing their activism. Discuss what they found difficult in their activism and what they found rewarding. Ask how they could better support each other in their efforts to continue living, strengthening and deepening their activism. Congratulate all for efforts made!

**What's Your Way
to be an
Activist?**