



Orange Day, 25th October 2015

Ensuring access to services for survivors of violence against women and girls

The United Nations Secretary-General's Campaign *UNiTE to End Violence against Women* has proclaimed the 25th of each month as 'Orange Day', a day to raise awareness and take action to end violence against women and girls. As a bright and optimistic colour, orange represents a future free from violence against women and girls, for the UNiTE Campaign. Orange Day calls upon activists, governments and UN partners to mobilize people and highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls, not only once a year, on 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), but every month.

Violence against women and girls has immediate and long-term physical, sexual and mental consequences for women and girls, as well as families and communities. It is critical that survivors of violence have access to essential services which can address their safety and health needs, facilitate their access to the police and justice system and can stop the reoccurrence of future violence. However, many women and girls who experience physical and sexual violence still lack access to quality multi-sectoral essential services. This month, the UNiTE campaign Orange Day therefore focuses on 'Ensuring access to services for survivors of violence against women and girls'.

ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL MULTISECTORAL SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

The term **essential services** refers to those services and responses that are closely coordinated and most typically respond to the needs of women and girls who have experienced violence, such as: hotlines; health care, including post-rape care; crisis counseling and referrals; shelter and safe housing; safety and police protection; and legal and social assistance.

According to a number of binding global conventions, agreements and resolutions, States are obliged to take responsibility for responding to violence against women and girls. However at present, even where basic support services exist in the world, they are typically underfunded, understaffed, not of sufficient quality and mostly available in the capital or district-level cities. Even in high-income countries, the availability, quality and access to such services can be insufficient or limited in scope or coverage. Essential services for women and girls, especially those who suffer multiple forms of discrimination and/or are particularly marginalized, such as migrant and younger women, women living with disabilities or HIV, or those living in remote or rural areas, are even more inaccessible.

The lack of access by women to coordinated, quality essential services means that they continue to suffer from the physical and mental impacts of violence including acute physical injuries, serious injuries leading to severe disability, unwanted pregnancy, other obstetric/gynecological complications, depression and stress and anxiety disorders.

KEY CURRENT INITIATIVES

UN Joint Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls subject to Violence

To improve the quality of and access to essential multi-sectorial services, UN Women, together with four other agencies, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP and UNODC, has established the [Essential Services Programme](#). This initiative seeks to fill the gap between the agreements made at the international level for responding to violence against women, which stress the need for access to quality services for survivors, and country level activity, by providing technical guidance on how to develop quality services and responses.

The multi-year programme will involve the following steps: reaching global agreement on the core set of essential services required to respond to violence against women in the areas of health, police and justice, social services and coordination and governance; the development and/or adaptation of guidelines for the provision of these services; the provision of technical assistance including guidance for implementation and capacity building for service providers; and, in the second phase of the programme, the identification of countries to serve as testing sites for how the guidelines might be implemented in different contexts.

The process for finalizing the guidelines is through global technical consultations with key experts from governments, academia, civil society organizations and the women's movement on each relevant area or sector. The development of this guidance has been focused on low to medium income countries but can be applied universally. It is envisaged that countries integrate these guidelines into the existing policies and practices of the various sectors. The guidelines are currently being finalized for release on 9-10 December 2015. Testing of the guidelines will begin in 2016.

The Third World Conference of Women's Shelters

On request of the Global Network of Women's Shelters (GNWS) the Dutch Foundation of Women's Shelters and its partners are organising the [3rd World Conference of Women's Shelters](#) to be held from 3-6 November 2015 in The Hague, the Netherlands. The Conference is an important forum for advancing the issue of responding to violence against women and girls, and ensuring it remains a global priority. Around 1,000 participants from over 100 countries with various backgrounds will come together to exchange knowledge and experiences, strengthen existing alliances and promote new ones, and generate awareness in the wider community and public arena.

A closing statement will be developed and agreed, which will include a range of actions to be undertaken in support of efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls and ensure improved access to quality essential services for survivors of violence. In recognition of Orange Day and to draw vital attention to the importance of access to services for survivors of violence against women and girls, on 24 and 25 October, the Peace Palace in the Hague will be illuminated orange, as organized by the Global Network of Women's Shelters and supported by the ministry of Foreign Affairs, the City of the Hague, Philips and the Peace Palace.

ORANGE DAY ACTIVITIES

- Find out more about why shelters are crucial to survivors of violence, what kind of services they provide, the main challenges they face, and key strategies to improve access to essential services for survivors of violence at the Virtual Knowledge Center to End Violence against Women and Girls: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/modules/view/15-shelter.html#325>
- Follow developments at the 3rd World Conference on Shelters in November and watch out for the closing statement @3WorldShelter (#3WCWS) or on [Facebook](#). Check out the Peace Palace going Orange on 25 October!

- Wear orange on 25 October and show your support for ensuring access to essential services for survivors of violence against women and girls. Share your photos and messages with us at <https://www.facebook.com/SayNO.UNiTE> and https://twitter.com/SayNO_UNiTE

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

TWITTER

On #OrangeDay, #UNiTE says more must be done to ensure survivors of #VAW access the services they need <http://ow.ly/ORdug> v @SayNO_UNiTE

Its #OrangeDay! I'm wearing orange in support of access to essential services for survivors of #VAW <http://ow.ly/ORdug> v @SayNO_UNiTE

This #OrangeDay, learn more about how we can improve access to services for #VAW survivors <http://ow.ly/TDKye> v @SayNO_UNiTE

3rd World Conference on Women's Shelters starts on 3 Nov! Follow @3WorldShelter #3WCWS & learn more <http://ow.ly/TGNbg> #OrangeDay

What are essential services for women survivors? Does your country have them? Learn more: <http://ow.ly/ORdug> #OrangeDay v @SayNO_UNiTE

FACEBOOK

Happy #OrangeDay! This month's Orange Day highlights the need to ensure access to essential services for survivors of violence against women and girls which keep them safe, address their health needs and facilitate their access to justice. Even where basic support services exist in the world, they are typically underfunded, understaffed and can be difficult to access, leaving many survivors to face the physical, mental and practical consequences of the violence they have faced without adequate support. Learn more: <http://ow.ly/ORdug>

On 25th October, #OrangeDay, ahead of the 3rd World Conference on Women's Shelters in the Netherlands, the Peace Palace in the Hague is going orange! The Conference will bring together activists and practitioners from around the world to determine a range of actions to support survivors of violence against women and girls. I'm wearing orange today to show my support for

ensuring access to essential services for survivors of violence against women and girls!

<http://ow.ly/ORdug>