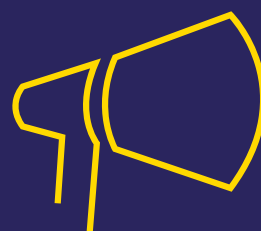




TRACKING PROGRESS ON SDG 5: ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

WAGGGS REPORT FOR HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM 2017



**WORLD ASSOCIATION
OF GIRL GUIDES
AND GIRL SCOUTS**

INTRODUCTION

As the world's only movement for every girl and any girl the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) is uniquely placed to understand the experiences and needs of girls and young women around the world. Representing ten million girls in 146 countries we believe that each of them deserves to be the best they can be.

WAGGGS had been extensively engaged in consultations around the Sustainable Development Goals adoption. We have also been at the forefront of advocating for the inclusion of a standalone goal on gender equality, as well as sex and age-disaggregated data to track the progress for girls and young women.

While a standalone goal on gender equality which incorporates targets to eliminate gender-based violence signals a clear commitment to gender equality and a world free from violence on the global level, it needs to run alongside a clear plan of action from Member States. Domestic engagement is critical if the global community is to meet not only SDG5 on gender equality, but all SDGs, and achieve the true empowerment of all women and girls.

Following adoption of UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (SDGs) WAGGGS embraced the Global Goals as its global framework for delivery of its advocacy and programme initiatives. "Stop the Violence: Speak out for Girls' Rights" is WAGGGS' global advocacy campaign. WAGGGS developed it in response to an overwhelming outcry from girls and young women telling us that gender-based violence was a major issue they were facing and one that they wanted WAGGGS to prioritise.

Violence against girls and women is a flagrant violation of human rights and a pandemic affecting all countries across the world. As per a poll conducted by WAGGGS through U-Report, a social messaging tool designed by UNICEF's Global Innovation centre, 75% of U-Reporters who responded said they believed gender-based violence is on the rise in both their community and the world¹.

WAGGGS' work to address the key issues affecting girls and young women living in the world today means that we cover a broad range of initiatives through our unique non-formal educational approach. These initiatives cover a variety of SDGs ranging from health, climate change to leadership and opportunities to speak out.

For the purpose of this report, however, we will focus on WAGGGS' work on SDG 5 with a specific focus on violence against girls and young women.

¹ Poll conducted on U-Report in January 2017. 2334 U-Reporters participated in question 1, 4197 in question 2 and 3,665 in question 3. Results are shared in the above report in this order.

<https://ureport.in/poll/1789/>



CREATING OWNERSHIP OF SDGs

The challenges of ensuring sustainable development are intergenerational, therefore creating awareness and ownership of SDGs among the youth generation, and building strong national constituencies to keep pressure on governments is key to the success of SDGs. Apart from being the watchdogs to hold their governments to account, young people have unique perspectives, experiences and solutions that are crucial for SDGs.

Following the adoption of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, WAGGGS has been working to educate its members about the SDGs through its programs and advocacy campaigns.

For the International Day of the Girl 2016 WAGGGS focused on the Global Goals for Sustainable Development through its #TeamGirl campaign. The day was an opportunity to raise awareness of what SDGs are and showcase the transformative impact that girls and young women in the movement are having through their work on specific SDGs. Through the WAGGGS developed #Teamgirl activity pack girls discovered more about the Global Goals, and set up their own teams to take action on the Goals they were passionate about.



WAGGGS' Member Organisations in about 130 countries engaged with #TeamGirl. Below are the snippets of what some girls and young women did as part of the campaign in support of the Global Goals.

Meet the young woman who's battling climate change in Bolivia

Mirna Ines Fernández Pradel - Bolivia



For Mirna, 27, the environment matters and she's passionate about protecting it. Mirna, who lives in Bolivia, became a Girl Guide when she was just six and it's a movement that's inspired her to stand up for what she believes in. That's why she's determined to make the fight against climate change a priority...

“Among the poorest communities, girls are most vulnerable,” says Mirna. “Girls often have to drop out of school to take care of their siblings and to do the housework. As the effects of climate change worsen, it’s the girls who will have to shift activities to help their communities. This means they might have to drop out of school to help address issues associated with climate change, such as collecting water or becoming farmers to help families make ends meet, leaving them more vulnerable to early marriage.”

A committed campaigner, Mirna is also educating her fellow Girl Guides about why climate change needs to be tackled, through a range of non-formal education programmes.

“I want to influence as many people as possible to care about biodiversity related issues. At a grassroots level, I want to keep motivating my Girl Guides to work on environmental issues. At a national and global level, I want to network with young people from different regions focusing on biodiversity, as well as bringing solutions to the environmental crisis.”

Meet the woman inspiring girls across Greece to support refugees

Olympia Tsamasfyra - Athens, Greece



Olympia Tsamasfyra, from Greece, is educating Girl Guides from her country on the refugee crisis, encouraging them to volunteer in camps and make a difference...

Determined not to be bystanders, Olympia Tsamasfyra and her team from the Greek Guiding Association have been on the ground, taking action for refugees. So far they’ve supported approximately 20,000 refugees.

“Groups of Girl Guides, age 14 to 17, go to the camps where refugees stay and distribute food and aid,” explains Olympia. “Our aim is to make refugees feel as safe and comfortable as possible. We also work with the children to help them express themselves and feel safe. We also run educational programmes in primary and secondary schools to raise awareness among children about the refugee issue, as well as teach refugees basic Greek so they can communicate with others.”

Brownies, the younger contingent of the Girl Guides, are getting involved too, putting together backpacks for those who are continuing on with their journey to another country, while other volunteers sort out the donations.

GOAL 5 ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN:

Focus on Violence

WAGGGS' mission "To enable girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world" echoes the SDG5 focus, as women's empowerment starts with girls. Investing in girls is a primary means of increasing better outcomes for them later on in life.

WAGGGS' work has focused on tackling the issues that are the biggest challenges, barriers and obstacles to girls and young women's ability to participate equally in society. Our value-based non-formal education programmes and campaigns are designed based on the needs expressed by our members and with a vision of benefiting every girl and any girl. WAGGGS' "Stop the Violence: Speak out for Girls' Rights" global advocacy campaign was developed in response to an overwhelming outcry from girls and young women telling us that gender-based violence was a major issue and one that they wanted WAGGGS to prioritise. With the data indicating that across the world, up to 50 percent of sexual assaults are committed against girls under 16², the campaign could not have been more relevant.

At the core of WAGGGS' work on violence prevention is the "Voices against Violence" non-formal education curriculum developed jointly with UN Women. It provides young people with the tools and skills they need to identify the root causes of violence and educate their peers to prevent such violence. The curriculum identifies and challenges harmful beliefs, norms, values and practices and has had a transformative impact on the lives of girls, boys, and young women and men who have been through it. With the support of Zonta International and UN Women the curriculum has been rolled out in 35 countries and has already reached nearly 9,000 youth leaders. In the month of April and May 2017 alone, trainings were held by WAGGGS' Member Organisations and World centres in Chile, Maldives, Costa Rica, India and Switzerland.

Girlguiding UK conducted a Girls Attitudes Survey in 2016 where they found that frequent threats to their safety meant many girls were adapting their own behaviour to avoid experiencing sexual harassment. When asked what the three most important ways to improve girls' and women's lives are, 50% of girls aged 7-10 included making sure that girls are safe. 32% of girls aged 11-21 said they felt unsafe most of the time or often when out on their own.

² <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/299-fast-facts-statistics-on-violence-against-women-and-girls.html>



Voices against Violence training in India

From May 5-10 2017, young people from across 52 states came together in Delhi, India, to gain the tools and expertise they needed to understand the root causes of violence in their communities. They learned how to educate and involve their peers and communities to prevent such violence, as well as learning where to access support if needed. There was also an opportunity to interact with high-level women rights' lawyers, local NGOs and representatives from the Police Department of Delhi.



Girl Guide Harini, 18, from India, who recently completed her training, said:

“Voices against Violence” has given me the courage to speak out and stay strong. It has taught me about my rights and the importance of gender equality, and I want to continue to spread the message, during my day to day life.”

This new pool of trainers will further strengthen WAGGGS’ work to stop the violence. Upon completion of the training, these young people will become State Coordinators ensuring even more young people can get involved and put a stop to violence.

Within the framework of the Stop the Violence campaign, in 2016 WAGGGS launched its ‘16 Ways in 16 Days’ campaign to mark 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence. Each day for 16 Days 1 action that could be taken by individuals at personal, community, national and global level was shared to bring an end to violence against girls and women.

With each of these actions a corresponding story of the inspiring work being done by a WAGGGS' Member Organisations to tackle violence against girls and women in their countries was shared.



These actions and stories included the work of Girl Guides in Rwanda who have formed anti-violence clubs in school and are educating boys about why violence against girls and young women is wrong and challenging the harmful beliefs. The result has been the development of young male allies going out into local communities, in partnership with girls, to speak out about ending violence against girls and women through art, drama and community action.

Girl Guides in Malta have played a lead role in lobbying the Maltese government to tackle the practice of Female Genital Mutilation which resulted in Malta outlawing the practice. The Girl Guides in Sri Lanka have built partnerships with a number of government departments, local stakeholders and local businesses who have supported them in the efforts to educate thousands of young people across Sri Lanka on the Voices against Violence curriculum.

Influencing legislation in Malta

Since 2011, Joyce Schembri has been leading the Voices against Violence curriculum in Malta. With support from the Malta Girl Guides National Board and her team of Leaders, Joyce has put Malta Girl Guides at the very centre of the country's work to end violence against women and girls.

“We've managed to change quite a few laws in Malta. We presented resolutions for the immediate regulation of the gentlemen's clubs which have been successful. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is now illegal in Malta, and we initiated that too. FGM hasn't traditionally been an issue for Maltese girls, but through my previous work with the Malta Red Cross I know that there are women in the refugee camps who this does affect. We developed written petitions to get laws changed. That started the ball rolling. The Ministry of health took on what we were saying about FGM and made this illegal.”



“We have taken many actions to ensure that we are heard. We held a silent march and a flash mob in the capital city. Rangers and Young Leaders presented a survey that we had done on the perception of violent relationships to parliament. We produced a comic book on healthy relationships.”

To date, the Stop the Violence campaign has reached WAGGGS Member Organisations in 65 countries in all regions of the world.

Despite gender-based violence gaining prominence on the global agenda, particularly as a target under SDG5, a poll conducted by WAGGGS through U-Report, found that 75% of those polled believed that gender-based violence is on the rise both in their local community and the world. This means we need a clear plan of action from Member States on the national measures they intend to undertake to tackle this. Voluntary national reviews are an opportunity for Member States to report on the progress done in this area, particularly as the SDG5 is one of the goals to be reviewed in depth at the High Level Political Forum 2017.

MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE: Capturing Girls' Perceptions and Priorities

As part of its mandate to represent the voice of girls, WAGGGS is committed to data-driven development. Through U-Report, WAGGGS aims to highlight girls' and young women's priorities, bridge the digital divide and embrace the digital era by engaging with innovative technologies that support young people to monitor and report on State actions. While the 2030 Agenda has significantly more targets and indicators than the MDGs did, qualitative data, such as perceptions of girls and young women is not well captured.

In the run up to the UN ECOSOC Youth Forum in January 2017, WAGGGS examined girls' and young women's perceptions on the progress of SDG 5, target 2, indicator 2 (5.2.2), which examines incidences of sexual violence against women by a non-intimate partner. Data gathered revealed 53% of U-Reporters polled knew a girl or woman who had been a victim of sexual assault, with the number rising to 61% for female U-Reporters. Alarmingly, almost 30% of U-Reporters said it was OK or sometimes OK to pressure a girl/woman into having sex, and 75% of U-Reporters said they believed sexual violence against girls and women was worsening in their communities and countries. This indicates that significant work needs to be done to tackle harmful norms and attitudes that normalise and condone violence.

Data from September 2016 to raise awareness of International Day of the Girl revealed that 84% of U-Reporters polled believed violence against girls was a problem in their community³. 71% of U-Reporters later reported sexual violence in schools was a problem with 57% saying they avoided study or extra-curricular activities because of it⁴.

³ Poll conducted on U-Report in September 2016. 1079 U-Reporters participated in this question. <https://ureport.in/poll/1504/>

⁴ Poll conducted on U-Report in November 2016. 2161 U-Reporters participated in question 1, 1986 in question 3. Data is presented in this order in this report. <https://ureport.in/poll/1625/>



WAGGGS is also concerned with gender based violence that threatens girls' and young women's participation in wider aspects of community life, including equal access to public services and spaces. Data collected to present at the UN Habitat III in October 2016 revealed 60% of female U-Reporters polled had experiences of harassment in public, prompting 52% of them to avoid public transport⁵. At the UN Habitat III official side event, WAGGGS highlighted to city mayors the need to recognise that cities where girls felt unsafe were not sustainable cities.

CALL TO MEMBER STATES

For the second set of Voluntary National Reviews at the High-Level Political Forum WAGGGS urges the Member States to take genuine action to address the issue of violence against girls and women in their country.

- We need a clear plan of action from Member States on the national measures they plan to undertake to tackle gender-based violence. We urge Member States to report on the progress tackling violence against girls and young women in their country in their Voluntary National Reviews.
- Up to 50 percent of sexual assaults are committed against girls under 16⁶. Member States need to capture the data for under 16s so that the progress for elimination of violence against girls can be monitored.
- Member States need to take actions to transform discriminatory social norms, stereotypes and practices that condone violence through legislative reforms, awareness-raising and media campaigns and educational programmes for both boys and girls.
- Member States need to collect data to track progress on transformation of those social norms.
- Member States need to disaggregate national data under each Sustainable Development Goal target by age, sex and other categories bearing in mind the intersecting nature of inequality so that progress for all girls is adequately captured.

⁵Poll conducted on U-Report in October 2016. 1445 U-Reporters participated in question 2, 1279 in question 5. Data is presented in this order in this report. <https://ureport.in/poll/1561/>

⁶<http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/299-fast-facts-statistics-on-violence-against-women-and-girls-.html>



ANNEX: CASE STUDIES

1. NIGERIA

Speak out! Challenge discrimination and violence against women

Edith, 30, from Nigeria has overcome a childhood fraught with violence. Having bravely spoken out about her experience, she is now encouraging others to do the same through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts' Stop the Violence campaign....



“When I was five, I was sent to live with my aunt. She had been struggling to have a baby, so my parents sent me as a blessing. While I was living there, I was subjected to physical and psychological abuse at the hands of my aunt. I thought the insults and beatings were normal. I thought it was part of my culture and my aunt was trying to make me a better person.

“I never realised her behaviour was abusive. That’s one of the problems with violence - you don’t always know when you’re being violated.

My aunt used to send me to hawk [sell goods] on the street. It started to affect my education as I had to go and sell things at 6am. If the market was good, I went to night school. If it was bad, I didn’t go to school at all. Sometimes I would be beaten and starved if I didn’t sell enough.

“Hawking wasn’t safe. There were risks and I was even sexually abused at one point. I was so young I didn’t know how to defend myself.

“After 11 years, I returned home to my parents. Although I tried to tell them what had happened, they didn’t believe me. Some years later my aunt came to live with us. She had just lost her husband. My parents finally listened to what I had to say when they saw the way in which she treated my brothers and sisters.

“It was the Girl Guides that gave me the power to speak out, to confront and challenge what had happened to me. “I became a Girl Guide when I was 10. It provided friendship and a safe space. In fact, when I attended a training session on Voices Against Violence, a curriculum developed by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and UN Women, I found the courage to speak out about what had happened to me as a child. This was the moment where something inside changed. I thought, “Wow, this happened to me.”

“I told myself I needed to share what I’d been through so other people could start speaking out too. It was my story then, but it’s no longer who I am. I am better off and I am no longer the person I used to be. I’ve used that experience to improve myself and that’s the encouragement I give to other girls when I run Voices Against Violence sessions. WAGGGS gave me a voice and the ability to express my own opinion, and I want others to do the same.



“In Nigeria, violence against women is a big issue, which involves female genital mutilation and teenage pregnancy. Parents discipline their children through violence, but it’s not seen as abuse. My friends and I have encountered many of these issues. Girls have told me how they’ve been raped, many are still afraid to speak out about it. Our Girl Guide group is a safe space for girls to speak out about what’s happened. We can then refer these cases to the police.

“We’ve encouraged girls to speak out in other ways too. In Nigeria, I’ve been working with 10 Girl Guide trainers who attended the Activate event. Together with our association’s project department we will be rolling out our Voices Against Violence curriculum across the country. We’ve worked with Girl Guide state officials whom we have trained, explaining why this programme is necessary. We’re also speaking out in communities where violence and discrimination is rife. We’ve spoken to the Ministry of Gender Affairs, and we’ve addressed village leaders and chiefs to help us implement our project at a grassroots level.

“We’ve spoken out via the media too and it’s had a lot of impact. Everyone has a radio or a television, so it is an opportunity to reach a wide range of people.

“Speaking out really can make a difference! When we launched our Voices Against Violence curriculum, 658 girls and boys, along with 100 teachers and adult leaders from 45 schools, attended the event. Girls came up to us and told us how they’d been violated, while boys pledged to change their behaviour.

“It showed the power of Girl Guides and reminded me that when girls are given a safe space to speak out, it can change lives. I know, because I’ve lived through violence. It has made me who I am and it has given me the confidence to speak out for myself and on behalf of thousands of girls around the world. For that, I will always be grateful.”

ITALY

Work with men and boys to prevent violence against girls and women

Girl Guide leader Stefania Affatato, 34, wants to put a stop to gender-based violence in Italy. Following a trip to Zambia, where she learnt about the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts’ Stop the Violence campaign, Stefania was inspired to use her new skills to take a stand against violence back home. In a bold move, she decided to include boys too...





“In Italy, [domestic violence is the most pervasive form of violence affecting women](#). Up until 1981, a law existed stating that if a woman committed adultery, it was justifiable to kill her. This law no longer exists, yet there’s still a mindset that violence is not a social problem, it’s a family problem.

“I learnt about many of these issues during my Stop the Violence training in Zambia, organised by WAGGGS, and it made me realise violence is an issue globally. We need to put a stop to it. To do this, girls must be educated about the issue and feel confident enough to have a voice and speak out.

“When I returned to Italy, I wanted to run sessions focused on the Stop the Violence campaign. The Italian Guides and Scout Association (CNIGI), is made up of boys and girls, so when I discussed the idea with my international team, we decided if we wanted to put a stop to violence, boys had to be involved too.

“Violence isn’t just an issue for girls, it involves everyone. Men must understand why it is a problem. When boys are educated about the dangers of violence, it gives them an opportunity to share their knowledge with friends and family. In Italy, we’ve found men are more likely to listen to other men when it comes to issues such as violence.

“There are four of us who developing these non-formal education sessions – and one of them is a man. It’s imperative he’s involved, as he can share his perspective and opinion about what boys are more likely to listen to.

“We work with boys and girls as young as eight, explaining what violence is and how they can tackle it. We talk about how gender can cause discrimination, how females are portrayed in the



media and use of language. It's also an opportunity for boys and girls to learn about what's going on in Italy and address it in whatever way we can.

“The mindset of teenagers, in particular the Rovers, is changing and many are creating activities to stop the violence. It's heartening to see the project is making them stop, think and share what they've learnt. When I run these sessions, it brings a lot of feelings to the surface. Even if you don't have a story, it is an opportunity to help others speak out about what's happened to them.

“Any project focused on stopping violence isn't going to be easy. It's impossible to educate people overnight if they are unable to see that a problem exists. But, we're committed to this cause. We're focused on educating boys and girls to think about violence in a different way. I don't want it to be just another activity. I want it to be part of our everyday activities.

“A lot of my passion and drive is down to the Girl Guiding Movement. It's made me stand up and speak out in the face of adversity. It's given me understanding and the tools to grow up and be part of this society. If I hadn't had this experience, I might not have become a teacher and I wouldn't have been educating boys and girls about why violence has to stop.”

RWANDA

Girl Guide leaders Ange Kamugisha, 38, and Germaine Umuraza, 27, are working with communities in Rwanda to tackle gender-based violence, as part of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts' Stop the Violence campaign. They are encouraging boys and girls to join forces and create anti-violence groups in order to take a stand...



What inspired you to stop the violence?

Ange: The Rwanda Girl Guides Association is the largest organisation focused solely on girls. As a result, we've seen the issues girls face first-hand. Many girls face issues such as violence and are vulnerable to teen pregnancy whether they live in the city or countryside. Some guides have dropped out because they fell pregnant or got married. Others were too poor and unable to provide for their basic needs.

Why did you decide to include boys as part of the action plan?

Germaine: We launched the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts' Stop the Violence campaign in Rwanda in 2011. At first our efforts were focused on girls, but we realised if we really want to make a change, we must include boys and men too. Once boys realised that taking a stand would help their sisters, mothers, cousins and relatives, they were on board.

Is that how the anti-violence club started?

Germaine: Yes! The boys decided girls had been working on the issue of violence for far too long and it was time for them to do something about it.

What happens at the anti-violence clubs?

Ange: Girl Guide leaders share the Voices Against Curriculum (a non-formal education curriculum for children in schools and communities) across the groups, using it to generate debate and discussion. The young people also discuss ways that they can make a change in their community, such as discussing the issue of violence with their fathers, brothers, educating them about why it's not right. The groups have continued to grow and girls have joined too.

Shouldn't girls be able to discuss the issue of violence with male family members?

Germaine: In theory, yes, but when girls exercise their rights in Rwanda, they are seen as exaggerating or making trouble. If we want to change the mindset of men, the discussion needs to start with another man.

Ange: I agree. Men aren't interested in listening to girls. They want to hear a man's voice.

How are Girl Guides involved in anti-violence clubs?

Ange: The educators are Girl Guides. We're always present, providing materials, flipcharts and educational modules.

Where do the clubs take place?

Ange: The anti-violence clubs take place in schools. However, we also reach out to the communities. We want to raise awareness about Stop the Violence across Rwanda.

What kind of impact are these anti-violence groups having?

Ange: We've seen a positive change in attitude so far. In some communities, the campaign is still met with resistance, but we're trying to overcome this.

Germaine: When boys return from their holidays, they always share stories about how they're educating their families about violence. I remember one boy telling me: "We used to have troubles in families, but now we understand why girls and women deserve equal rights."



MALAYSIA



Thammy, 36 and Azizah, 49 both live in Kuala Lumpur. Since 2014 they've been working together to lead the Stop the Violence campaign and deliver the Voices Against Violence curriculum for the Girl Guides Association Malaysia. They're raising awareness in their communities so that girls, leaders and those outside of the Movement can work together to stop violence against women and girls. We asked them how they've been working with different groups to make change happen.

1. How are you engaging teachers in Malaysia?

Azizah: In Malaysia, although it's not reported much, there are many cases of dating violence happening in schools. As a teacher I know that this is affecting girls as young as 12 years old. I think it's our duty to set an example to young people so they know their rights. The theme that we're focusing on is dating violence – it surprises teachers that the Girl Guides are talking about this topic. They want to know more.

Thammy: As well as through regular guiding meetings that happen in schools, we also deliver awareness talks for large-scale school events and trainings. We introduce the programme to teachers to drive interest. They tell us that Voices Against Violence is a great programme and that we should be introducing it to girls at an even younger age. Many teachers and girls tell us that every school should implement the curriculum.

2. How can girls raise awareness of these issues in their communities?

Thammy: While we're only running the curriculum with girls, the 'shout out and take action' sessions are helping girls to reach boys and teachers too. Girls are creating and displaying posters



in their schools – which helps us reach more people. We can't stop violence alone, so it's really important that girls are sharing these messages with men and boys.

Thammy: When the girls deliver their work back into their communities –especially schools – their parents are also engaged. This brings the campaign and the curriculum it to non-guiding members. We're raising awareness about dating violence to girls' communities, and we're also raising the image of Girl Guiding too.

3. How have you been engaging the public?

Azizah: In 2015 we ran a Stop the Violence roadshow as part of our organization's national World Thinking Day celebrations. We reached around one thousand girls and leaders – but we also spoke to the public.

Thammy: We ran a survey with girls and members of the public – asking what kinds of violence they were aware of, what they could do to prevent violence etc. The response was overwhelming. We really raised awareness of our Movement. Most people in Malaysia have this typical idea that Girl Guiding is all about camping, making gadgets and marching. The roadshow brought a new perspective about Girl Guiding to the public. People were surprised to see us talking about this topic!



4. What other groups are you working with?

Azizah: For me, hopefully by next year I'll try to approach the police force so we can deliver roadshows along with them. We've already spoken to some officers and they have agreed to help. They've suggested some ways to go about it.

Thammy: I want to carry out more work together with other NGOs. We want to approach NGOs that work on women's issues and put together some programmes to mark various international days. Working with other organizations will help us reach out to more people - especially non-guiding members. I want to share this message with more MOs in the Region – engaging NGOs can be a really good way to access funds and get involved with the Stop the Violence campaign.



5. How has social media helped you reach different communities?

Thammy: One of our main goals is to empower young women. If we lead by example then other women can follow- not just in our country – thanks to social media we can inspire women in other countries too. By sharing our work we can be positive ambassadors for WAGGGS and for the programme.

Azizah: Because of social media we get contacted by other Member Organizations who want to ask about our work and future planning.

Thammy: Because of this I've also been running training at an international level. I was recently asked to train leaders in Taiwan Girl Scouts. The response was really good. I see that the impact we're having is not only on my community, the girls that I meet, and on other organizations... it's also on myself. Now when they see me, people know I'm all about Stop the Violence. I'm really happy that people know they can come to me to find out more about the programme.

6. What's next for the campaign and the curriculum – what do you want to achieve?

Azizah: We want to reach out to more girls. Our action plan aims to reach 16,000 girls. We'll keep going to achieve that goal. I was quite a reserved person before this. I am full of confidence now.

Thammy: We make sure that we are heard by others. Not only at District or country level – but by the world! We really make sure that the world is listening to us. What do we want to achieve? I want to eliminate the stereotyping in society and also to stop the violence against girls and young women. I really think we can achieve it if we carry on with the momentum like this.

BARBADOS

Advise your government

Taking a stand against violence can really make a change, especially if you have the power to influence government and ensure they're reflecting the rights of girls. Kurlyne Alleyne, 51, a Girl Guide leader from Barbados, reveals how she influenced her country's law on domestic violence and why she's encouraging Girl Guides to do the same...





Is violence a big issue in Barbados?

For many years, women across Barbados faced violence. For example, men would traditionally go to work during the week. Come Friday, they would get drunk, come home and cause a ruckus. This led to violence towards women and children. It's a practice culturally ingrained, not just in Barbados, but across the Caribbean. It's a pattern we wanted to break.

What did you decide to do about it?

I've been a Girl Guide since I was six. Being part of this active women's movement inspired me to work on women's rights. For me Guiding is a way of life so each day I try to live out the Promise and Law. Inspired by my work with the Girl Guides, I became part of the Women's Forum in Barbados. As a result, I inputted into Barbados' first Domestic Violence Protection Orders Bill in the Nineties, which was drafted to assist victims of violence and perpetrators.

How did people react when the Domestic Violence Bill was drafted?

It wasn't met with much resistance – it was timely. The country was facing increasingly violent actions against women, but we knew breaking the cycle would take more than just a few groups coming together. It needed an act of parliament.

The Bill was recently updated. Were the Girl Guides involved?

Before the Bill was updated, Girl Guides, along with members from national women's groups, were encouraged to comment on the Bill and the proposed amendments. As the largest organisation for girls and young women in the country, we are well respected in Barbados and it is good to represent on these issues. When girls and young women are given a voice, people sit up



and listen. By inputting into the Bill and holding anti-violence rallies, it's made our country realise that girls can change the world – they just need to be given the opportunity to make a difference.

What advice would you give to those who want to influence their Government on issues such as violence and women's rights?

It's essential to build relationships with key allies. Many of the Girl Guide groups are involved in their communities, showing others how guiding isn't just about social activities. It is possible to advocate for change too. On our own we may be one small voice but if we join with our local, regional and international partners, our small voice moves from a whisper to a shout! Guiding is an activity; a movement and an organisation which help girls understand how they can grow to their fullest potential. Girls are the eyes and ears of communities, as well as the heart of it. Their active involvement in Guiding will ensure change happens.

What else are Girl Guides doing to Stop the Violence?

Violence permeates our society, and girls and women tend to face more violence than men. To help tackle the issue, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts introduced its Voices Against Violence (VAV) curriculum, which educates girls and young people about what to do if they see or experience violence.

The Girl Guides Association of Barbados is currently conducting training events to address the various issues of gender-based violence. We want our girls to be able to take responsibility for their own lives and see themselves as agents of change. Voices Against Violence is a great curriculum to generate such action. Working with men and boys is also part of the curriculum in Barbados as we believe all voices must be heard. When they are, authorities are given the invaluable opportunity to hear what life is really like for a young girl or boy living in Barbados.

