



Action Plan for Orange Day, 25 May 2016
Water and Sanitation and Violence against Women and Girls



Women's organizations and women from all over Bolivia organized a hike to the Nevado Huayna Potosi glacier, near La Paz in northeast Bolivia during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. They left their footprints on the glacier to show their determination to end 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.

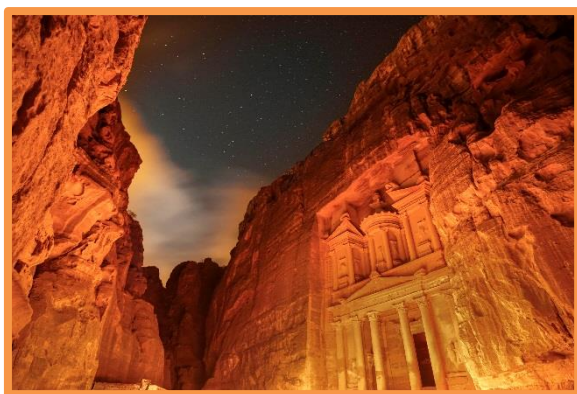
In 2016, a new global development agenda was accepted by all countries and is applicable to all. Through its 17 goals and 169 targets, the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), an agenda for global action for the next 15 years, addresses the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental. The Agenda recognizes gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key priority and pledges that "no one will be left behind". Goal 5 of

the agenda aims to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” and includes *specific targets to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls*. All goals are integrated and indivisible, therefore their achievement is also fully dependent on ensuring parallel and interconnected implementation of the efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. For this reason, throughout 2016, the UNiTE campaign through its Orange Days will highlight specific Sustainable Development Goals as they relate to violence against women and girls.

This Orange Day, 25 May, the UNiTE campaign will highlight **Goal 6: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”**, focusing on the following two thematic areas: safe access to water and to sanitation facilities in non-conflict, conflict and post-conflict areas, and situations of emergency.

Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

SDG 6 recognizes the interdependence of access to water and sanitation and development. It aims to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030. It also aims to achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.



On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November 2015, the UN Country Team in Jordan in collaboration with the Petra Archeological Park lit the UNESCO World Heritage archeological site of Petra in orange, responding to the call to action of the UN Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, to ‘Orange the World: End Violence against Women and Girls’.

Water and Sanitation and Violence against Women and Girls

Access to water and sanitation services are human rights that are experienced differently by men and women. The lack of access to drinking water and sanitation affects women and girls disproportionately, impacting their health and dignity, contributing to their vulnerability, and thereby frustrating efforts to empower women to lead a healthy and economically productive life. Women and girls and other at-risk groups without water

supplies and toilets within their homes are potentially vulnerable to sexual violence when travelling to and from public facilities, when using public facilities and when they have to defecate in the open in the absence of any amenities.

Women and girls are frequently subjected to unacceptable risks of violence, including sexual violence, while accessing water and sanitation facilities. Understanding the special needs of women and girls is essential in the selection and design of providing water and sanitation facilities and programmes to minimize the risks from violence and allow women and girls to access services with dignity.

In situations of emergency, if there is insufficient water (during drought for instance), women and girls may be punished for returning home empty-handed or for returning home late after waiting in line for hours. School-age girls who must spend a long time collecting water are at a higher risk of missing and/or not attending school, which limits their future opportunities. This, in turn, may place them at a higher risk of gender-based violence in the future.

With regards to women's and girls' right to access to sanitation, there have been instances of women who cannot use public latrines for fear of violence, particularly at night. Women and girls may also face the risk of violence when trying to access public toilets. Where there are no toilets, women and girls may defecate in the open (at night or during the day) and may face sexual harassment and indignity from the lack of privacy.

In both urban and rural contexts, women and girls often experience sexual harassment when going to the toilet. Given the taboos around defecation and menstruation and the frequent lack of privacy, women and girls may prefer to use sanitation facilities or bathing units under the cover of darkness. They may even delay drinking and eating in order to wait until nightfall to relieve themselves. However, using these facilities after dark puts women and girls at further risk. These issues are compounded further by the fact that police officers sometimes do not take these cases seriously enough and/or lack experience in handling such cases, and thus do not start or complete their investigation, and/or re-victimize victims/survivors of violence during the conduct of the investigation.

Initiatives to provide safe access to water and sanitation for women and girls

Guidelines and reports recently issued by the United Nations have affirmed the link between lack of access to water and sanitation, and violence against women and girls. The [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Actions \(2015\)](#) and UN Women's report on ["The Effect of Gender Equality Programming on Humanitarian Outcomes" \(2015\)](#) provide clear guidance for practitioners to include prevention of violence against women in programmatic actions related to water and sanitation, as well as examples of lessons learned and best practices. The United Nations and its agencies have been working with Member States and partners to address this issue through advocacy, building an evidence base on the issue, by strengthening research and providing technical assistance.

There are a number of examples of programmes which seek to address violence against women and girls in the context of accessing water and sanitation, including the following:



Women public toilets of the Gerehu market after refurbishment.

- In Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, as part of the [UN Women Safe City programme](#), which aims to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public spaces, the National Capital District Commission (local government), women's grassroots, vendors associations, the private

sector, UN Women and other agencies, are working to ensure that gender sensitive planning measures are in place to ensure safe access to public toilets for women vendors and users of markets. Over 200 market vendors, of which 80% of women, and also all market users now have access to potable water, and safe public toilets, each containing private showers, with improved lighting and visible site lines.

- In Mumbai, in recognition that women often experience violence while using public toilets, UN Women is providing technical support to city partners who are working to enhance women's access to safe public toilets. Gender sensitization trainings have been conducted with toilet operators in 24 wards of Mumbai, and the "Right to Pee Campaign" was launched aimed at providing safe, clean, affordable, and free toilets for women.
- In Nepal, following the implementation of a World Food Programme project on the installation of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, women interviewed recognized that the project addressed their needs and that their health and living conditions, as well as

those of their community, improved notably because these facilities reduced the time required for women to collect water and access the facilities more safely.

World Humanitarian Summit – Istanbul, Turkey, 23-24 May 2016

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) will take place in Istanbul, Turkey, from 23 to 24 May, 2016. Five thousand participants from Member States, international organizations, international and national non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders will attend the Summit. Five core commitments have been proposed for discussion during the Summit. The third commitment aims to “implement a coordinated and global approach to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in crisis contexts, including through the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies”, discussions around which will provide the opportunity to discuss safe access to water and sanitation for women and girls in humanitarian settings. A Secretary-General’s report will be issued following the WHS which will contain information on a way to take the commitments made at the Summit forward, as well as to assess progress over time for Member States’ consideration. The report will be presented before Member States at the General Assembly in September 2016.

Suggested Orange Day Activities

- Wear orange on 25 May to show your support for ending violence against women and girls.
- Host an online or offline event to discuss the link between water and sanitation and violence against women and girls. Explore how the new global development agenda can help end violence against women and girls and promote their access to water and sanitation. Reach out to organizations working on water and sanitation-related issues to participate.
- If it is an issue in your country, talk to your local decision and policy makers about the elimination of open defecation to increase women’s access to sanitation, especially for women and girls from vulnerable and marginalized groups, and how this can be progressively realized.
- Follow the events of the [World Humanitarian Summit](#) (WHS), which will be livestreamed through the WHS website. You can also engage via social media and promoting the WHS global campaign:

Twitter:whsummit

Facebook:<https://www.facebook.com/WHSummit>

Hashtag: #ShareHumanity
Global campaign: <https://impossiblechoices.org>

Useful Resources

- General Assembly [Resolution 70/169](#), 17 December 2015, on “The human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.”
- [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Actions](#) (2015), Section on “Water, sanitation and hygiene”, Part III, Section 12, p. 281 to 302.
- [“The Effect of Gender Equality Programming on Humanitarian Outcomes”](#), UN Women (2015).
- [Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action](#) (2006).
- [Good Practices in Realizing the Right to Water and Sanitation](#) (2012), Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation.
- www.unwater.org
- [Secretary General’s Report for the World Humanitarian Summit](#), A/70/709, 2 February 2016.

Sample Social Media Messages

Twitter

This #OrangeDay focuses on #globalgoals to promote women & girls’ safe access to water & sanitation: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> v @SayNO_UNiTE

On #OrangeDay 25 May learn about & global approach to prevent & respond to #GBV in crisis <http://ow.ly/ORdug> via @SayNO_UNiTE

On #OrangeDay learn how ending #VAW is key to meeting #globalgoals on water & sanitation: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via @SayNO_UNiTE

Facebook

Happy #OrangeDay! This month we’re highlighting #globalgoals to ensure women and girls’ access to safe water and sanitation. Find out how it relates to efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via [\[Say NO - UNiTE to End Violence Against Women\]](#)

In 2016, #UNiTE is focusing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as it relates to ending violence against women and girls. This month we take a closer look at Sustainable Development Goal 6: ensure availability and sustainable management of water

and sanitation for all. Start a conversation in your community about the link between water and sanitation and violence against women and girls. Explore how you can leverage the #globalgoals to promote women and girls' safe access to water and sanitation and to end violence against women and girls. <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via [Say NO - UNiTE to End Violence Against Women] #OrangeDay