



## Orange Day, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016

### Poverty and Violence against Women and Girls

The United Nations Secretary-General's Campaign *UNiTE to End Violence against Women* has proclaimed the 25<sup>th</sup> 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 ([International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#)), but every month.

In 2015, 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. The goals are integrated and indivisible, therefore the achievement of many of the other goals is also important to efforts to prevent and elimination 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 violence against women and girls. This Orange Day, 25 February, the UNiTE campaign will highlight **Goal 1: 'End poverty in all its forms everywhere'**.

## **POVERTY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS: BREAKING THE CYCLE THROUGH GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

While billions of people live in poverty, women are more likely to do so due to heightened vulnerability for a variety of reasons including unequal access to paid work, lower earnings, lack of social protection and reduced education opportunities. Women continue to be denied equal pay for work of equal value and are less likely than men to receive a pension. Globally, women's earnings are 24 per cent less than men's and on average women earn half as much income as men over their lifetimes. Women also do almost two and a half times as much unpaid care and domestic work.

Although violence against women and girls takes place across all socio-economic groups, living in poverty exposes women to particular risks. Lack of economic autonomy can reduce women's choices, exposing them to heightened risk of violence and sexual exploitation, limiting avenues of escape from violent situations, and creating additional barriers to accessing healthcare, police, legal and social services. Poverty in turn can be a consequence of violence, causing women to lose income and affecting their capacity to work or complete their education. These risks are often compounded for women who face other forms of discrimination aside from gender discrimination, such as on the basis of race, sexuality or disability.

The effects of, and responses to, the recent global financial crisis, which resulted in low growth and high unemployment, have brought about further challenges. Austerity measures have resulted in cutbacks in infrastructures, including health and support services for women and girls subjected to violence, while rendering them more vulnerable to sexual exploitation including trafficking

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE**

The Sustainable Development Agenda recognizes the eradication of poverty as the greatest global challenge and highlights the empowerment of women and girls as central to sustainable development. It includes targets to eradicate all extreme poverty by 2030, and reduce by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty according to national definitions. It highlights the need to ensure the equal rights of all to economic resources and basic services, as well as the implementation of national systems of social protection and pro-poor gender-sensitive development strategies.

## INITIATIVES AND SOLUTIONS

Ending gender discrimination and achieving gender equality are key to the eradication of poverty and violence against women and girls. Investing in women's economic empowerment paves the way for women to gain economic independence and make significant contributions to economies. At the local and national level, initiatives often led by women's organizations and civil society organizations aim to support women's economic empowerment.

Many international commitments support women's economic empowerment, including the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and a series of International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions on gender equality. UN Women supports women's economic empowerment in line with these, and with the growing body of evidence that shows that gender equality significantly contributes to advancing economies and sustainable development.

UN Women works with a variety of partners through its programmes and promotes women's ability to secure decent jobs, accumulate assets, and influence institutions and public policies determining growth and development. UN Women also facilitates [Empower Women](#), an open global online community of viewers and registered members promoting knowledge mobilization, innovation and partnerships for women's economic empowerment, which is dedicated to empowering women to achieve their full economic potential by inspiring both women and men to become advocates, change-makers and leaders in their community.

In a significant recent global development, the UN Secretary-General announced the launch a [High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment](#). The panel will provide thought leadership and mobilize concrete actions aimed at closing economic gender gaps that persist around the world, and will provide recommendations for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to improve economic outcomes for women and promote women's leadership in driving sustainable and inclusive, environmentally sensitive economic growth. The panel is backed by the United Kingdom, the World Bank Group and UN Women.

## ORANGE DAY ACTIVITIES

- Host an online or offline event to discuss the links between violence against women, poverty and discrimination. Explore how the new global development agenda can

advance women's empowerment and rights. Invite development organizations, local governments and community leaders to participate.

- Visit [EmpowerWomen](#) and become a Champion for women's economic empowerment to make a positive change in women's lives. If you are in business, share the story of your business: how you arrived at success, the challenges you faced, and recommendations to other business women. Participate in online and offline events and opportunities for making a difference in your life and that of others. Initiate dialogues, contribute your expertise, skills and knowledge and take the opportunity to learn from other members' local experiences, lessons learned and good practices.
- Follow the [High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment](#) and watch out for the outcomes of its inaugural meeting at the 60<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women in March.
- Find out more about projects aimed at women's economic empowerment in your area and what you can do to support them.
- Wear orange on February 25<sup>th</sup> to show your support for women's economic empowerment and an end to poverty and violence against women and girls.

#### USEFUL RESOURCES

- [The Progress of the World's Women 2015](#)
- The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)
- Planet 50-50 Step It Up for Gender Equality <http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/step-it-up>
- UN Women thematic brief on women's empowerment
- [http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2013/12/un%20women\\_ee-thematic-brief\\_us-web%20pdf.ashx?v=3&d=20141013T121456](http://www2.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2013/12/un%20women_ee-thematic-brief_us-web%20pdf.ashx?v=3&d=20141013T121456)
- World Bank Video: To End Poverty, Eliminate Gender-Based Violence
- <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2015/11/25/to-end-poverty-eliminate-gender-based-violence>
- Read about UNDP's work on women's empowerment <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/overview.html>

## **SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES**

### **TWITTER**

It's #OrangeDay and #UNiTE campaign is focusing on #globalgoals on poverty & violence against women & girls: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via @SayNO\_UNiTE

On 25Feb #OrangeDay find out how #planet5050 is key to eradicating poverty and ending #VAW: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via @SayNO\_UNiTE

Happy #OrangeDay! Today #UNiTE is highlighting #globalgoals to end poverty & violence against women: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via @SayNO\_UNiTE

On #OrangeDay find out how women's economic empowerment is vital to ending poverty & stopping #VAW: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> v @SayNO\_UNiTE

On 25Feb #OrangeDay wear orange, discuss how ending #VAW must be part of #globalgoals to #endpoverty: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via @SayNO\_UNiTE

### **FACEBOOK**

Happy #OrangeDay! This month we're highlighting #SDG1: end poverty in all its forms everywhere and how it relates to efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. Learn more: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via [SayNO - UNiTE to End Violence against Women]

On 25 February, #OrangeDay, #UNiTE is taking a closer look at #globalgoals on ending poverty and how women's economic empowerment is a step in the right direction to eradicate poverty and prevent and end violence against women and girls. Join the conversation: <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via [SayNO - 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're focusing on the goal for ending poverty. Wear orange and start a conversation in your community about the links between violence against women, poverty and discrimination, and how you can leverage the #globalgoals to further women's economic empowerment. <http://ow.ly/Xnpxe> via [SayNO - UNiTE to End Violence against Women]