

# 16 Days of Activism Against SGBV Americas Region

25 November – 10 December 2019

“Orange the World:  
Generation Equality  
Stands against Rape!”

Across the Americas Region, UNHCR and its partners engaged in multiple activities to commemorate the **16 Days of Activism against Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)** taking place annually from the 25<sup>th</sup> of November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, Human Rights Day.

SGBV **disproportionally affects mainly women, girls and LGBTI+ people in the Americas**; men and boys are affected as well. People who are forced to flee their homes are at greater risk of SGBV. Moreover, in situations of forced displacement, social protection networks break down creating greater vulnerability and lack of access to basic services and resources.



Sign from reflection session on SGBV in Comayagua, Honduras

In the Americas, the 16 Days of Activism campaign aims to raise awareness on SGBV as a widespread social, health and economic issue in all corners of the world that is rooted in gender inequality and unequal power relations. SGBV, wherever it is found, can be a consequence and a cause of forced displacement and affects families as well as entire communities.

## 16 Days of Activism Activities

In order to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism, several countries in the region participated of activities which included workshops, art exhibits, trainings, and public demonstrations against SGBV.

### Central America

In **San Pedro Sula, Honduras**, a march was carried out under the name “A Thousand Reasons to Continue Fighting #25deNoviembre” commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. During the march, women raised specific messages and statistics regarding cases of femicides, forced displacement of women, other forms of SGBV and a call to justice for affected women, survivors and victims of violence.

During the Regional Youth meeting in **Comayagua, Honduras**, November 26-28, a reflection session was held on gender-based violence. As a result, the participants made a sign that reflected the purpose of the meeting which was signed by the participants putting their handprints on it. This event is annually held by UNHCR and Save the Children to bring together the community youth leaders of the country that participate in the projects of protection and assistance, and prevention and mitigation of violence in the country.

Several activities were held in **Panama** to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism, including a t-shirt painting workshop on November 25, a “Paint for the survivors of GBV, we all have equal rights” workshop in which the resulting paintings were donated to several

institutions for their exhibition, and a lecture on female empowerment on December 10.

A booklet on the protection of the LGBTI+ community was also created by the Regional Office of Panama (ROPAN) in order to spread information among humanitarian actors. A coloring book under the campaign “#YoTeCreo” (#IBelieveYou) which helps explain SGBV to children and what they should do to keep themselves safe. Some of these initiatives were conducted in collaboration with HIAS while others were developed by the Gender Based Violence Working Group comprised by HIAS, RET, the Red Cross, SENNIAF, ONPAR, UNFPA, and NRC.



*Colouring book made by ROPAN to teach children about SGBV*

Several activities resulted in the creation of a mural in a highly visible place in the community of **La Carpio** which was done with the support of the Community Association for Development of La Carpio. Twenty postcards were also made by a group of women, showcasing their process of integration in **Costa Rica**. These activities were done in **La Carpio, San José and Desamparados**.

## The Caribbean

A Rape Crisis Silent Walk, and a Human Rights Day Fun Walk and Run Race were events planned in **Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago**. UNHCR participated and sponsored the events respectively. There was also a Collaboration for Impact: From Recommendations to Action in **Port-of-Spain**. Human Rights Day was commemorated in

**Icacos, Trinidad and Tobago** with an event that particularly targets school children in south Trinidad, who are the most affected by the Venezuela Situation.

UNHCR supported the “Marcha de las Mariposas” (March of the Butterflies) on the 24th of November in **La Romana, Dominican Republic**. A film screening with the community of Los Alcarrizos in **Santo Domingo** served as a facilitator to start conversations in the community. Lastly, UNHCR, together with IOM, supported a Medical Fair targeting women’s health which was conducted in **Puerto Plata**. The event was led by Venezuelan community-based organizations.

In **Aruba**, the 16 Days of Activism are called “Orange Days” and have been celebrated through the “Fundacion pa Hende Muhe den Dificultad” (FHMD) since 2015. This year, the events were led by FHMD with support from the R4V platform members. The events included a meeting of support groups for Venezuelan SGBV survivors, a two-day training for 400 policemen by FHMD, a SGBV dialogue with refugee and migrant women (with support of HIAS and IOM), and a silent auction, among other ceremonies.



*Symphonic concert at Santiago, Chile*

## South America

UNHCR Chile organized a Symphonic Concert on Sunday December 1st. The event received the support of UN Women and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Chile. More than 400 people —among them refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from Venezuela—

gathered in a traditional and very well-known cultural space in **Santiago, Chile**.

Several activities took place throughout the cities of **Quito, Esmeraldas, Tulcán, Huaquillas, Machala, Guayaquil, Portoviejo, and Cuenca in Ecuador**. The activities included workshops, community activities, festivals, presentation of plays, marches, among others. The events included the support and participation of UNHCR, OIM, ADRA, GAD Huaquillas, among others.

In **Barranquilla, Colombia**, HIAS and UNHCR provided orientation to Venezuelan women about the attention routes available to ensure the protection of their rights. Also, UNHCR organized a workshop on women's human rights and SGBV. In **Bogota**, a play was presented at UNHCR office to raise awareness on the effects armed conflict has on Afro Colombians.

At the bordering town of Cucuta, activities were conducted in several reception areas for refugees and migrants. Symbolic activities took place in **Cúcuta, Tibú, Bucaramanga and Villa del Rosario**. On World AIDS Day, December 1<sup>st</sup>, rapid HIV testing and counselling were conducted at the Support Space jointly with UNAIDS and *Activities at the CAI to raise awareness on SGBV*

other organizations . Activities were also spread



out throughout **Cali, Apartado, Arauca, Chocó and Medellín**.

At the same time, an event was organized at the Centro de Atención Integral (CAI) in **Maicao, Colombia** jointly with Profamilia, Save the Children, NRC, UNHCR, among others. The event included a monologue about SGBV, followed by a musical interlude. Photographs of women from the CAI were used to represent the spirit of strength and examples of day to day activism.

Five cities in **Brazil** hosted events in commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism. **Sao Paulo** had sessions on the protection and integration of trans women, a talk on *UNHCR and NGO Insituto Nice on the protection and integration of trans*



*women in Pacaraima, Roraima, Brazil*

women in displacement and SGBV was supported by a psychologist, specialized in mental health support to refugees . **Rio de Janeiro** conducted art workshops with the participation of 15-20 Venezuelan women.

In **Pacaraima, Roraima** group discussions were held at the indigenous shelter Janokoida with Warao community members regarding the risks of children left alone and child abuse. Other events in the area included a discussion on child abuse and sexual violence, an informational session on self-care and mental and physical health interventions for women delivered by specialists from UNICAMP, and a UNHCR and UNFPA-led group discussion on SGBV with a focus on domestic violence, among many others.

Meanwhile in **Boa Vista**, several screenings of movies with positive messages were shown. Also, mothers in the area received information on the Maria da Penha Law, a Brazilian domestic violence within the Brazilian legislation. Also, male UNHCR and partners colleagues participated in a workshop to promote positive patterns in male behavior.

A workshop promoted by UNHCR, Instituto Mana and the Secretariat of State for Justice, Human Rights and Citizenship in which outreach volunteers learned about the local network of SGBV prevention and response was organized in **Manaus, Amazonas**. Also, the UNHCR mediated a food donation to Casa Miga, a LGBTI+ shelter in Manaus, which shelters both Venezuelans and Brazilians.



*Focus group discussion on power relations in a sociological context in Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil*

Forty young people from different communities in **Maracaibo, Venezuela** got together for the first meeting of the youth network in the state of Zulia. This was organized by the UNHCR and the Instituto Radiofónico Fe y Alegría. The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate actions and construct strategies to take on the protection risks in the community, among them: the risk of SGBV, child abuse and family separation.