How to Implement
enditnow
Adventists Say No to Violence Against Women
Campaign in the local Church
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Adventists Say No to Violence Against Women

ADRA/WM
Partnership
• Approximately one in three of the world’s women will experience gender-related violence in her lifetime, with rates reaching 70 percent in some countries.
WHAT IS ENDITNOW?

Enditnow is the boldest stand the Seventh-day Adventist Church has ever taken regarding violence against women and girls. Women’s Ministries and ADRA are joining hands to stand up and to mobilize Adventist women, church members, all individuals, church congregations of every faith, social groups, schools and businesses to stand up in favor of human rights and say enditnow to violence against women and girls.
BACKGROUND CAMPAIGN

• Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, in all socio-economic and educational classes. It cuts across cultural and religious barriers, impeding the right of women to participate fully in society.
Throughout the world, violence against women and girls is perpetrated within:

- Marriage and families by husbands
- Intimate partners and relatives
- Within communities by strangers and traditional leaders
- In the workplace
- Across international borders as women are trafficked for sex and labor, and as a tool of war by military forces
- In wartime and in post-conflict settings
Forms of violence against women

- Sex trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual assault
- Honor killing
- Female genital mutilation
- Child marriage
- Emotional and verbal abuse and other forms of violence.
HOW TO BEGIN?
Understanding the Petition

• One of the first goals of this campaign is to gather 1 million signatures from Seventh day Adventists and supporters from around the world. These signatures will be collected through grassroots efforts via written and electronic petitions. Once the goal has been reached, the entire petition will be delivered to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.
• In order for this campaign to increase its support base, every effort should be made to provide printed copies of the petition to local organizers, so that they may circulate it among their peers effectively. Supporters should learn about the petition’s goals, which are listed in the preamble on page one of the petition, before they sign it. Copies of the petition template are available for download.
• After petitions are signed, they should be sent by regular mail, or scanned and emailed as PDF files. See ‘Contact Information’ for address details. Petitions are to be sent together with the banner. (Go to item number 8 for more information regarding the banner).
1. Work With Your Pastor

- It is wise to work closely with your pastor. You will need his or her support to be successful, and he/she can give you valuable advice. It is also important that you plan your programs into the larger church calendar well in advance.
2. Work With a Team

• Gather a group of women to work along with you. Be sure that the women on this group represent a cross-section of women in your church—different age groups and ethnic groups of varying educational and economic levels. It would be good to have an enditnow local church coordinator to help you.
4. Involve the Community

- Invite someone in the Community to work with you: police, school principals, lawyers, shelter directors, and media people.
5. Advertise enditnow Campaign

• Even the best campaign will fail if people don’t know it exists. People in the advertising field say that you have to talk about something five to seven times before people will be aware of or remember it. So think of every possible way to share information (the enditnow Package).
• You can use your church bulletin, newsletter, announcements, and bulletin boards. You can make posters and hand out fliers. If you want the community to participate in the campaign you can use public service radio/TV announcements and newspaper stories or ads. Include women’s groups from other denominations.

• You will be most effective if you can get your whole congregation involved in promoting enditnow. Ask the prayer bands to pray for the campaign. Most importantly, encourage your church members to involve more people.
6. Use the Key Campaign Messages

- A list of key campaign messages is available to use during presentations to the media, general public, and church congregations. (See the campaign resource guide)
7. Get the entire church involved in getting **signatures from their communities**

• One of the first goals of this campaign is to gather 1 million signatures from Seventh-day Adventists and supporters around the world. These signatures will be collected through grassroots efforts via signed written and electronic petitions. (See petition sample)
• If there is to be global change, we must start locally. The impact we can make locally can have an influence globally, but mobilization must begin locally. Each of us must realize “I can be a change enditnow agent. I can make a difference.” Invite each member to work on creating awareness, share solutions, and collecting signatures in their communities.
8. Prepare the enditnow Banner

• The banner is an important compliment to the petition. Its role is to provide a place for petitions signers to express their support for this campaign in their own words after they have signed the petition, by writing their names or personal comments. (See the campaign resource guide for the enditnow standard banner information: enditnow@adra.org

• www.enditnow.org)
9. Use the **Pledge Card**

- The pledge card is a useful and practical tool to have with you, as it serves as a reminder of the goals of this campaign. Take this card and share it with the church, leaders, church members, supporters, when you launch the campaign.
10. Use the Logo

• An official logo has been created and trademarked to represent this campaign in more than seven different languages.

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EDUCATION: WORKING TOGETHER

• Educate myself and others about the gender-based violence most prevalent in our community.

• Evaluate my culture and traditions. Are there beliefs or practices that encourage gender-based violence and discrimination, such as male dominance, son preference, lack of education for girls, female genital mutilation, heavy work loads for women blaming the rape victim, forced early marriage for girls, financial dependence, lack of safe havens, etc.
• Question the beliefs and traditions that undergird gender violence and discrimination.

• Encourage the church to donate to an ADRA’s Project. (See the Women’s Edition ADRA Catalogue)

• Encourage local law enforcement agencies to receive specialized training for dealing with domestic abuse and to devote resources to prevent gender-based violence.
• Pray for victims of abuse, gender-based violence, and exploitation. Pray for a change in the hearts of their abusers.

• Host a weekly prayer group or book study group on some aspect of gender-based violence

• Volunteer my time and talents to the enditnow campaign.
PARTICIPATION

What can my local church do to help prevent violence against women?
• Ask the pastor or some other qualified person to preach a sermon on violence prevention.

• Ask those who have the main prayer during the worship service to pray for those in the congregation who are abused.
• One small but vital principle the church must apply is that of confidentiality. It is imperative that any victim of gender-based violence may speak with an appropriate church leader in total confidence. Recognize that gender-based violence is a tremendous evil, that it is never acceptable and cannot be condoned.
• Compile complete, up-to-date information about all resources in your community available to victims of any type of gender-based violence. Make sure the information is easily available to members and others. Get acquainted with shelters and referral sources to learn what services they offer and when they are open.

• Collect funds and provide your church leaders with educational materials on gender violence.
• Create a church lending library of materials on gender-based violence issues relevant to your community so members and leaders may become educated on this vital topic.

• Organize a group to assess the needs in the local community. What is one need your group can address that may help reduce gender-based violence?

• Create one or more “safe houses” where abuse victims can find emergency shelter.
• Present sermons and workshops to the congregation and the community on issues of gender-based violence relevant to your community. Offer to present age-appropriate information in local schools.

• Examine church policies and practices to be sure none foster or encourage hurtful or discriminatory attitudes towards women.

• Provide ongoing support to a local women’s shelter or other organization benefitting victims of gender-based violence.
• Care for hurting people in our church. Be non-judgmental. Develop support groups.
• Help raise awareness. Share materials about gender-based violence with your community.
EXTRA INFORMATION
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
AND THE CHURCH
A. SPEAKING OUT

Many denominations and communities of faith recognize the urgent need to end the violence against women and to bring about justice. Many have created, or support, organizations working to create awareness, to educate the public, and to find ways to stop the violence.
• The Seventh-day Adventist Church is also speaking out about violence against women. We recognize that as believers in a heavenly Father, we must become agents of change, helping to end the evils of abuse and gender-based violence—both in society and within the church itself. The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s position is clear in the following statement:
Seventh-day Adventists affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence. We recognize the global extent of this problem and the serious, long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. We believe that Christians must respond to abuse and family violence both within the church and in the community. We take seriously reports of abuse and violence and have highlighted these issues for discussion at this international assembly. We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and potentially extend such behavior.
We accept our responsibility to cooperate with other professional services, to listen and care for those suffering from abuse and family violence, to highlight the injustices, and to speak out in defense of victims. We will help persons in need to identify and access the range of available professional services. (Voted by General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee, at the general Conference session in Utrecht, the Netherlands, June 29-July 8, 1995.)
4th Sabbath of August is Abuse Prevention Day

• The Seventh-day Adventist Church took a pro-active stance against violence when in 2001 the Women’s Ministries Advisory voted to ask the Annual Council for a specific day on the church calendar as an Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day. This was done in connection with most church departments.
• This was voted and it is on the church calendar the fourth Sabbath of each August world-wide. A packet that gives sermons and other useful material is available each year through Women’s Ministries and other departments.
B. Abuse within the Flock

• Even though as Christians we abhor abuse and violence against women, it is necessary to recognize that a congregation is made up of human beings, not saints; and that humans have failings and weaknesses. We must not close our eyes to the fact that domestic abuse and violence against women are not limited to certain areas, economic groups, countries, areas, or social classes. Our churches are not immune.
A more recent study conducted in one North American conference “surveyed 1,431 adults—men and women—and found some startling results. Nearly 34 percent of women and more than 20 percent of men reported being assaulted by an intimate partner.”
• The researcher points out that, recognizing the prevalence of abuse within the church, we must do more than talk about it. “It is our ethical and moral responsibility to promote peace and healing to ultimately end abuse in the Adventist Church.”
The importance of this topic was underscored by Jan Paulsen, president of the Seventh-day Adventist world church. Paulsen emphasized that “violence of any kind in the church” is unacceptable: “We need to develop a culture of kindness, care, consideration, [and] non-abuse.... [It] is not just physical; mental [emotional] abuse can be just as bad.” (“Culture of Kindness Can Help Combat Domestic Violence, Paulsen Says,” Adventist World-NAD, August 2007, pp. 6-7)
As a church, we must find ways to change attitudes and traditions that condone or excuse abuse. We must consciously work to eliminate the attitudes as well as the practices.
Changing people's attitude and mentality towards women will take a long time—at least a generation, many believe, and perhaps longer. Nevertheless, raising awareness of the issue of violence against women, and educating boys and men to view women as valuable partners in life, in the development of a society and in the attainment of peace are just as important as taking legal steps to protect women's human rights.
CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.adventistwomensministries.org

ADRA International
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Adventists Say No to Violence Against Women
More Information

General Conference
Women’s Ministries Department

http://adventistwomensministries.org