

# TAKE BACK THE TECH! CAMPAIGN BRIEF

How many hours a day do you spend using some kind of ICT tool?  
Have you ever wondered how it connects with violence against women?  
Can things like mobile phones, webcams, blogs and videogames  
transform power relations between women and men?

For 16 days, this campaign has one call: take control of information communications technology and use it in activism to eliminate violence against women.

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## WHAT DOES GENDER HAVE TO DO WITH ICT?

Information and communications technologies, or ICTs, are becoming increasingly woven into all aspects of our lives. From education, work, banking, personal and social relationships to participating in governance, we rely on things like the radio, mobile phones, internet and more to find out information, exchange what we know, express what we think and connect with each other. It has the potential to change inequality by enabling more people to have a say in how we shape the world we live in.

However, in many societies, women are the most impoverished with the least access to resources and with little control over decisions that affect their lives. For this reason, women have limited access to and control over ICTs, and do not benefit equally from the opportunities they can provide. Factors that contribute to these inequalities include the different ways that ICT are allocated between women and men, and the different opportunities that exist in terms of education, training and skills development, employment and working conditions, content development, and access to power structures and decision-making processes. Beyond questions of access to technology and software, other important concerns include gender and cultural barriers to women's participation in the development of technology, and the absence of women in decision-making processes related to ICTs.

## WHAT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)?

Violence against women, or VAW, means any act that results in harm and disproportionately affects women. The root cause of VAW lies in unequal power relations between men and women in almost all facets of life. Some examples of VAW include domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment.

VAW was recognised as a violation of fundamental human rights in 1993, less than two decades ago, through the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women by the United Nations General Assembly. Women's movements across the world are continuously bringing to light new dimensions and different forms of VAW.

## HOW ARE VAW AND ICT INTERCONNECTED?

Both ICT and VAW affect our capacity to completely enjoy our human rights and fundamental freedoms. Violence against women, which takes place in the home or on the street, is now taking new forms and occurring in online spaces or through the use of ICT. For example, women are becoming targets of cyber stalking and harassment. Images of women are being posted on the internet without their knowledge or consent. And in the hands of domestic violence abusers who are familiar with technology, spyware and satellite tracking technologies are used to monitor and control women's mobility.

To change this reality, we have to take control of technology, and exercise our right to define, access, use and shape ICTs for their potential to transform power relations towards a vision and reality of equality. Many people are already doing this, and Take Back The Tech! is a call to grow this movement.

Take Back The Tech! is a collaborative campaign that takes place during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence [link to: <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days/home.html>] (25 Nov - 10 Dec). It is a call to everyone - especially women and girls - to take control of technology to end violence against women.

We believe that it is possible to end violence against women if every single girl, woman, man and person approaches ICTs with an aim to change unequal power relations, take action and commit to transforming the way that all our spaces are defined and developed – both online and off.

## WHAT IS THIS ACTION?

- A collaborative campaign to reclaim information and communications technologies (ICT) to end violence against women (VAW).
- A call to everyone - especially grrls and women - to take control of ICT, and consciously use it to change power relations between men and women.
- For 16 Days (Nov 25 – Dec 10), to use ICTs for activism to end VAW.

## WHY TAKE BACK THE TECH?

- To create digital spaces that protect everyone's right to move freely, without harassment or threat to safety (echoing historic "Take Back The Night" campaigns).
- To realise our rights to shape, define, participate, use and share knowledge, information and ICT.
- To address the intersections between communication rights and women's human rights, especially violence against women.
- To recognise women's historical and critical participation and contribution to the development of ICT (e.g Grace Hopper, Ada Lovelace and more).

## WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS ACTION?

- Build knowledge on how VAW is connected with ICTs, based on diverse experiences and realities.
- Support and promote local actions, priorities and advocacy issues on VAW and ICT in different spaces and contexts.
- Collaboratively develop strategies and generate a dialogue on how to take control of ICTs to address VAW.
- Change the landscape, potential and paradigm of ICTs through active participation.
- Build a community and strengthen the movement that will take action to end VAW through and in digital spaces, and on women's rights in relation to the field of ICTs.

## WHO TO SPEAK TO?

- Web communities, developers and users
- Advocates against VAW
- Women's rights defenders
- People who profit from ICTs
- Media, information & news providers
- Policy and law makers

## WHO WILL TAKE ACTION?

- Ordinary ICT users - especially grrls and women
- Advocates of women's rights and communication rights
- Information providers, content creators, knowledge builders and disseminators
- ICT developers
- Basically anyone who uses ICT - from librarians to lecturers, activists, writers, techies, geek grrls, bloggers, emailers, SMSers, trainers, storytellers, poets, writers, web managers, theorists, graffiti artists, photographers...

## WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

- Campaign banner, logo and other multimedia materials that you can use and adapt [link to: <http://www.takebackthetech.net/organise/visuals-multimedia>]
- Guides on how to organise a campaign and spread the word
- Campaign ideas by looking at daily actions [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/actions/previous>], exchanging ideas [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/take-action/ideas-kitchen>] and diverse Take Back The Tech! campaigns [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/meet-other-campaigners>]
- Information about violence against women and ICTs [link to <http://www.takebackthetech.net/know-more>]
- Tips and tools on how to be safer online [link to <http://www.takebackthetech.net/be-safe>]
- Spaces to connect with other campaigners, for discussion and exchange [link to <http://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/tbtt-campaigns>]

- Platform to share your campaign ideas and actions [link to <http://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/share-your-campaign>]
- Links to other spaces, campaigners, information & strategies [link to [www://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/tbtt-campaigns](http://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/tbtt-campaigns)]

## WHAT CAN YOU DO? (SOME SUGGESTIONS)

- Take part in one of the 16 daily actions [link to: <http://www.takebackthetech.net/take-action/16days>]
- Put up a campaign banner on your site, and help spread the word [link to: <http://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/spread-the-word>].
- Think of ideas for action that can be taken in the 16 days and share them [link to: <http://www.takebackthetech.net/take-action/ideas-kitchen>]
- Write, blog, tweet, document. Share your what you know, your experiences and strategies to address violence against women. [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/ka-blogs>]
- Submit tools or write guides that you think are useful. [mailto: [ideas@takebackthetech.net](mailto:ideas@takebackthetech.net)]
- Create campaign icons, digital postcards, audio and video clips, or share them [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/create>]
- Translate resources into your own languages. Start by translating this campaign brief :) [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/write/translate-localise>]
- Collaborate with partners, and organise a Take Back The Tech! campaign [<http://www.takebackthetech.net/organise/start-a-campaign>]
- Don't forget to share your campaign! [link to <http://www.takebackthetech.net/connect/share-your-campaign>]

You can also refer to other materials in the full campaign kit to help you organise your campaign!



**TAKE CONTROL OF TECHNOLOGY TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN [www.takebackthetech.net](http://www.takebackthetech.net) | [ideas@takebackthetech.net](mailto:ideas@takebackthetech.net)