



SOCIAL JUSTICE LEAGUE

25 NOVEMBER – 10

DECEMBER

**16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
AGAINST GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE**

**REPORT
2023**

PREPARED BY :

SJL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a global campaign that runs from 25 November to 10 December every year, aimed at raising awareness and calling upon various state and non-state actors to take action to end violence against women and girls. The global theme for 2023 was ***“UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls”***. Since its inception in 1991, activists have collectively advocated for women’s rights and safety and built a powerful movement through the 16 Days of Activism. In the rural region of Homabay County where SJL does its work, the campaign was officially launched by the Governor of the County and activities were organized in the 8 sub-counties of the region.

SJL acknowledges the timely support of GBV Prevention Network (Uganda) who spared their resources and sent an Action and Advocacy Tool Kit comprising; Purple and White Ribbons, Campaign Documents, Campaign Posters, Journals, Calendars, and Inspiration Cards, all the way from the Pearl of Africa to a remote region called Ndhiwa, Homabay County Kenya where SJL is located. The support of this organization played a critical role in our activities throughout the 16 days and we, therefore, say ‘thank you’, ‘Weebale Nyo’. Through their support, our organization took practical steps in organizing programs and activities towards ‘uniting in solidarity and advocating for investments in preventing Violence against Women’. Equally, She’s the First, availed Adolescent Activity Toolkits freely available to any person or organization on their online website which assisted us in conducting activities during the 16 days of Activism against GBV.

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SJL: Summary

Established in 2022, Social Justice League (SJL) promotes Gender Democracy and Gender Equality through the actualization and promotion of fundamental human rights that are enshrined in Kenya's Constitution and other enabling legislation. The organization is a non-profit, non-partisan, and non-governmental institution that is registered in Ndhiwa, Homabay County (Kenya) as a Community-Based Organization.

It is managed by a network of lawyers who are Advocates of the High Court of Kenya with extensive experience in strategic litigation, community-based action, policy, and legislative advocacy. The organization works at the forefront of the needs of ordinary citizens, women, youth, persons with disability, minorities, and marginalized communities through the enforcement of their sexual and reproductive health rights. SJL works with communities and organizations dedicated to protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. SJL engages in sexual and reproductive health rights awareness and education, capacity building, policy and legislative advocacy, strategic litigation, research, and publication.

Organizational Objectives

SJL undertakes its activities through the following objectives:

- ▶ To actualise, implement, and measure existing policies and legislation on Gender Democracy to assess their gender responsiveness;
- ▶ To conduct Civic Education on social and economic opportunities whilst identifying opportunities for women entrepreneurs concerning regional trade in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- ▶ To undertake legal and other forms of research to identify issues and gaps negatively affecting gender democracy and transform such issues in ways that promote gender equality;
- ▶ To initiate policy and legislative changes in Gender Democracy through publications, capacity-building initiatives, stakeholder engagement, and strategic litigation among other activities;
- ▶ To champion sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls;
- ▶ To promote the rights of persons living with disabilities by incorporating the gender perspective in any disability action through the implementation of gender and disability-sensitive laws and policies, among others;
- ▶ To enhance partnerships, collaboration, and linkages with other persons, groups, or organizations for the benefit of the community.

Strategies

SJL’s Strategy is anchored on five (5) programmatic areas namely:

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Program

Economic Empowerment Program

Community-Based Action Program

Research and Publications Program

Policy and Legislative Advocacy Program



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

Preparation

In preparation for the 16 days of Activism, SJL organized various activities within Homabay County, Kenya and liaised with stakeholders in the region such as school administration, County Government officials and other civil society networks for logistical support and potential collaboration on the best days for meeting various groups for discussions.

“UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls”.

Mapping of Schools for Adolescent-Friendly GBV Awareness Activities

SJL identified two schools, namely Got Rachar Secondary School and Alara Primary School for its activities. After liaising with parents and the school administration, several students of Got Rachar Secondary School agreed to spare a few days to attend the activities we organized for them using the Action and Advocacy Toolkit.

Community Dialogues

In collaboration with other CSO networks and the Homabay County Government, SJL attended and actively participated in Community Dialogues organized during the 16 days of Activism. SJL played a critical role in providing legal advice and support to issues raised during the dialogues and touching on violence against women and girls. These issues ranged from; land and property rights, succession, separation, adoption of children rising cases of rape, incest, and other forms of gender-based violence.

Stakeholder Engagement Meetings

As part of the Homabay County CSO network, SJL attended stakeholder engagement meetings to discuss issues that intersect with gender-based violence and learned about areas that require intervention in Homabay County, Kenya.

The Activities

SOLIDARITY! INVESTMENT! AND ACTION!

“We stand united in our voices and present a powerful front to call for greater investment and resist backlash”

GBV-Awareness School Activities

SJL conducted several activities at Got Rachar Secondary School which included simplifying the meaning and implication of ‘gender-based violence’ for the young girls to understand. Before interpreting the term, our team asked the young girls what they know about gender-based violence and asked them to write their thoughts on Manilla Papers that we erected on the classroom black-boards. After reading out their responses, we engaged them on a discussion of rape as a form of gender-based violence, what amounts to rape, how to protect themselves from uncomfortable environments that could result in sexual violence, and actions to be taken before going to the hospital to get medical attention. In addition, we discussed police reporting mechanisms and simplified the court justice process for their understanding.

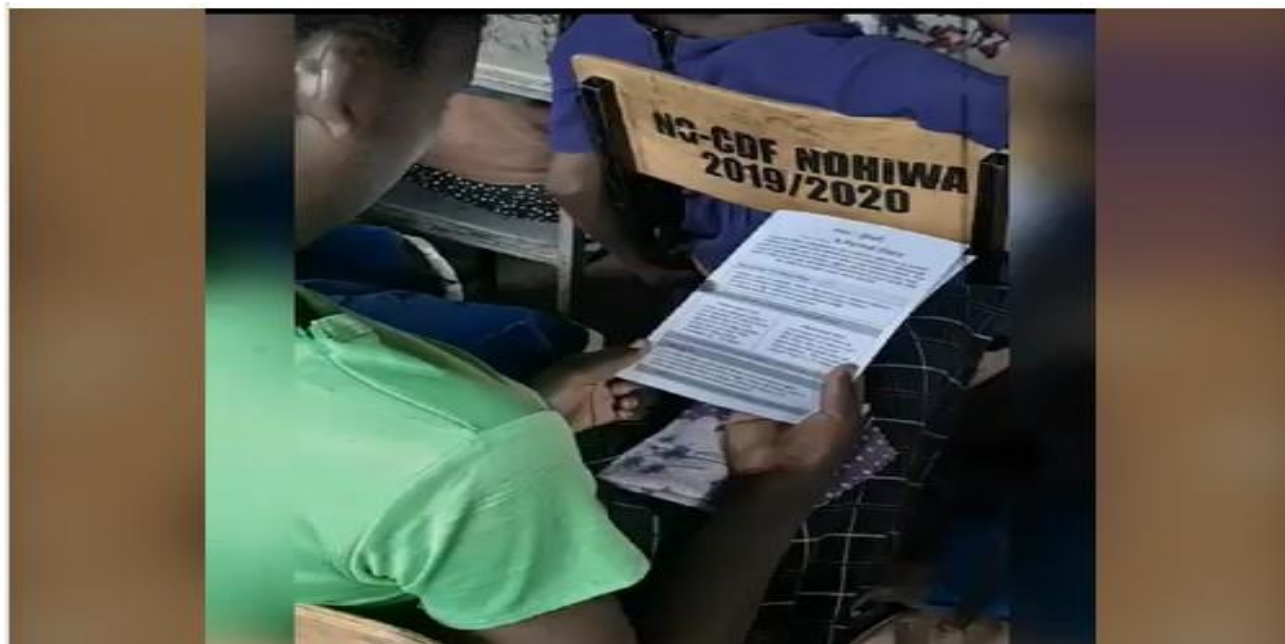
Secondly, the SJL team discussed Menstrual Hygiene and Period Tracking with the girls by first allowing them to inform us of ways in which they can maintain their hygiene and they provided their answers on the charts we availed for their use. We also allowed them to ask questions regarding difficulties in tracking their menstrual cycle and assessing safe days.

By incorporating the themes of ‘solidarity’ and ‘action’, we asked the girls not to shy away from; reporting any incidences of sexual violence to their parents, guardians, teachers or friends.

Lastly, SJL undertook a practical demonstration of using the period tracking journal to track the menstrual cycle and engaged the girls on the differences between regular and irregular periods.

After a few days of activities, SJL distributed free sanitary towels to the girls.

Adolescent girls in rural regions of Kenya do not have access to materials like Period Tracking Journals and Sanitary Towels. The girls we engaged at Got Rachar Secondary School were elated and thankful to receive the Manual Menstrual Tracker from She’s the First and Sanitary Towels donated by SJL after acquiring them from a local manufacturing organization.



A student at Got Rachar Secondary School looking at the Period Tracking Journal during a session on Menstrual Hygiene undertaken on one of the days of the 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence.

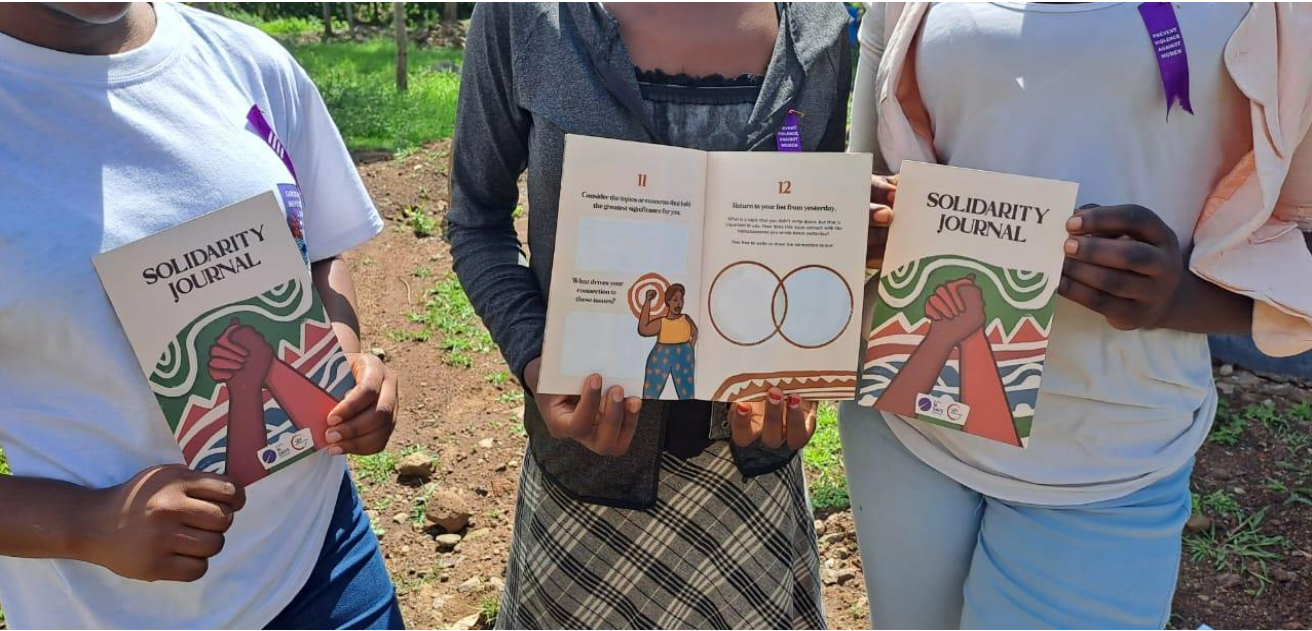


An Example of the Hand-written responses shared to us by the students on one of the activity days during the 16 days of Activism, regarding their views of 'what to do when one is a victim of rape' (in no order)

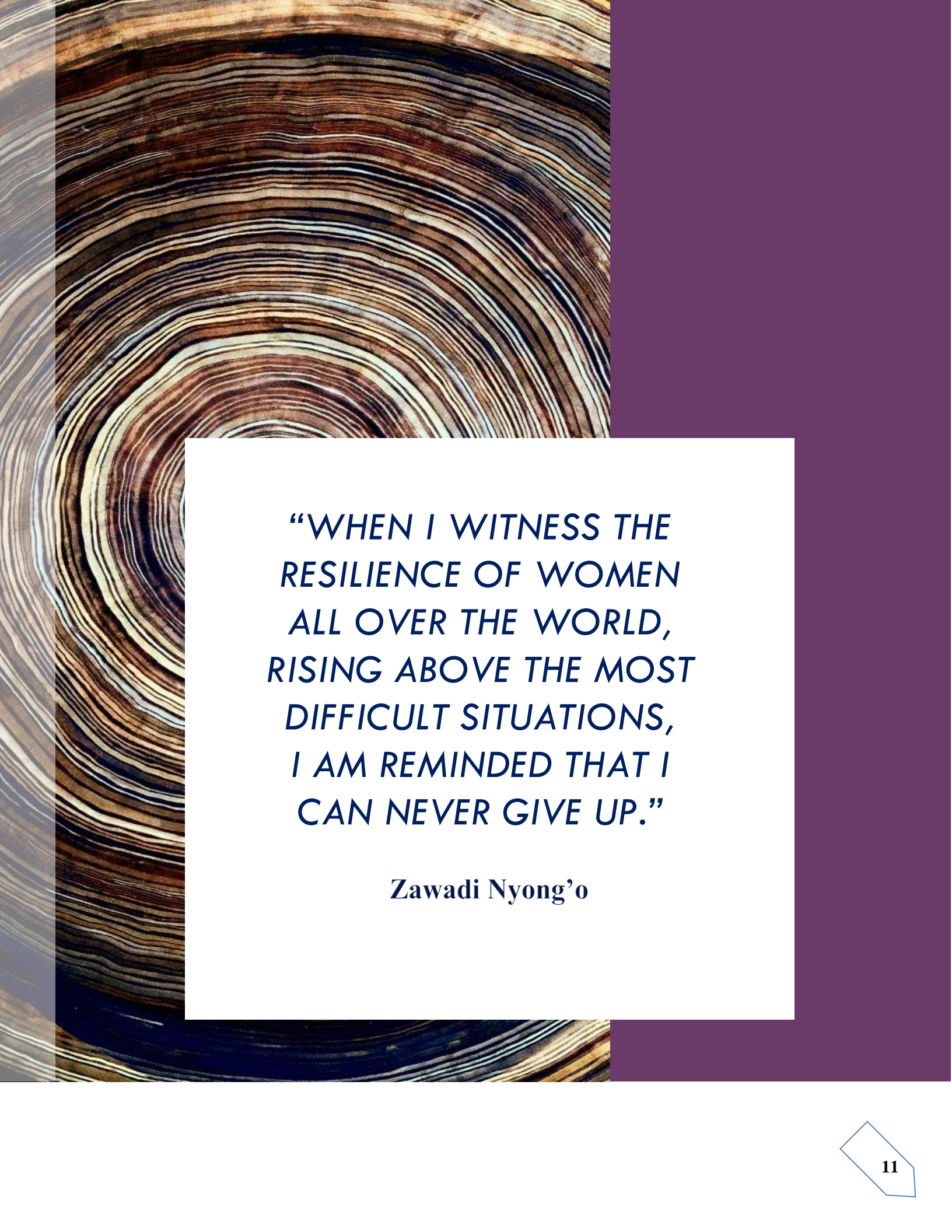
NB: We later engaged the girls on the practical and chronological steps towards safety, medical and psycho-social support, justice and re-integration in safe places.



SJL Team, conducting an Activity, explaining Gender Based Violence and its various forms to adolescent and young girls in Ndhiwa, Homabay (Kenya) during the 16 days of Activism against GBV



Some students who received the Solidarity Journal from GBV Prevention Net after we trained them on how to fill them. We agreed to check the things they have documented when they resume back to school after the 2023 December holiday season.



***“WHEN I WITNESS THE
RESILIENCE OF WOMEN
ALL OVER THE WORLD,
RISING ABOVE THE MOST
DIFFICULT SITUATIONS,
I AM REMINDED THAT I
CAN NEVER GIVE UP.”***

Zawadi Nyong’o



Suggested Way Forward to Addressing Gender-Based Violence

- ▶ Advocacy efforts on social behavioural change.
- ▶ More sensitizations on existing laws and policies at the grassroots level.
- ▶ To facilitate efficient referral of SGBV cases and ensure full administration of justice, strengthening of gender sector working groups sub-committees at the grassroots level is crucial.
- ▶ The community volunteer as ambassadors and champions of anti-GBV campaigns in their respective villages.
- ▶ Formulation of gender-specific and responsive budgets to address various challenges affecting diverse groups of the society.

Community Dialogues

One of the key events undertaken during the 16-days campaign was Ndhiwa sub-county Community Dialogue and a Sexual and Gender Based Violence awareness clinic. This initiative was sparked by recent reports on teenage pregnancy rates from local primary and secondary schools, as well as multiple incidents of domestic violence within households. To gain insight into some of the root causes behind SGBV and adolescent pregnancy, community members were divided into groups consisting of youths, parents, and adolescents. These sessions provided a platform for discussion among participants to seek solutions to these pressing issues. Each group had facilitators sourced from government and CSO networks. The leaders chosen by each group presented their findings at the end. SJL documented the legal issues raised by the community during this dialogue and provided legal advise on the available legal avenues.

During these discussions, parents pointed out various factors that contribute to SGBV such as: *poverty, drug and substance abuse, disregard for human life, peer pressure and adolescent curiosity, lack of parental guidance, impunity of perpetrators who roam freely in society, overprotection of girls by either parent and exposure to violent environments that normalize aggression as a problem solving technique.*

SJL and other CSO network organizations shared their respective initiatives and what they do in prevention and response to SGBV and teenage pregnancy. These organizations collectively implored community members to join in efforts to shift the current narrative and statistics surrounding these pressing issues in Ndhiwa and Homabay County, Kenya.



SJL Team (in blue SJL t-shirts) together with Ndhiwa Sub-County (in white T-shirt) commencing a dialogue session explaining the significance of the 16 days of Activism against GBV



SJL Team listened keenly to an ongoing plenary session during the community dialogue and responded to legal queries raised by the Community



A section of Community members attending a Community Dialogue in Ndhiwa, Homabay County



A section of Community members attending a Community Dialogue in Ndhiwa, Homabay County

Social Media Engagement and Analytics

Throughout the 16 days of Activism and beyond, SJL tracked social media engagement on the issues we were raising through posts on different social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and Tiktok). SJL used the social media toolkits provided by GBV Prevention Network to curate online messages raising awareness of the root causes and prevalence of GBV in Kenya, Africa, and the world in general. A few examples are provided below:

	Views	Location of Viewers	Gender of Viewers	Age Demographic	Engagement
Tiktok	580	Kenya (77.3%) South Africa (5.2%) Mauritius (1%) Uganda (1%) Italy (1%)	Male: 33% Female: 67%	18-24 (64%) 25-34 (29%) 35-44 (6%) 45-54 (1%)	Average of 1% viewers watched full videos
Twitter	4 views, 20 impressions	Not available for analysis	Not available for analysis	Not available for analysis	Average of 100% full viewership of videos that lasted 12 seconds, 4 engagements. NB: Higher Engagements recorded in other days such as 30 November 2023
Facebook	5 Impressions, 4 views	Not available for analysis	Not available for analysis	Not available for analysis	Average of up to 5 seconds viewed for videos
LinkedIn	119 impressions, 46 views	Nairobi, Kisumu (Kenya) Bamenda (Cameroon), Minna (Nigeria), Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)	Not available for analysis	Not available for analysis	4 reactions 1 repost

Sample Data Analytics Extracted for 10 December 2023 from SJL’s Social Media Accounts



CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The activities and conversations that the Social Justice League held with different stakeholders during the 16 Days of Activism outlined a clear path to take forward efforts to counter sexual and gender-based violence faced by women and girls across Homabay region and Kenya in general. Over the coming year of 2024, SJL aims to take forward each conversation with defined steps, strengthen its partnerships, and take up action on the issues raised by the community and mainstream solutions in its work.



Connect with us!

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