

THE AUTONOMOUS WOMEN'S CENTER REPORT ON THE CAMPAIGN „16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN“ *REACT, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE*

CONTEXT

In the period of November 23 - December 10, 2007 The Autonomous Women's Center realized seventh national campaign „16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women“. On the initiative of feminists from Latin America, this international action is conducted in over 100 countries worldwide. Launching its own campaign against domestic violence The Council of Europe encouraged member states to intensify their activities in this period. At the National level, Serbia took part in organizing a Roundtable in the National Assembly of Serbia, after AWC had sent the official letter and proposal to the President with the appeal to mechanisms for gender equality. Tanja Ignjatović was the AWC representative and she actively participated in the discussion.



For this year's campaign, The AWC team chose a slogan *React, before it's too late*. We believed that everyone must report violence if he/she witnesses or had a knowledge for it. At the same time, public services must participate in the process of protection and prevention from violence against women and domestic violence. Therefore, this year's action appealed to individual, state and public services responsibility. The state and public institutions received a public appeal to adopt and implement accountable policy in combat against violence against women, because IN SERBIA, EVERY WEEK ONE WOMEN IS MURDERED BY HER PARTENR OR EX PARTNER.

This year's action opened new possibilities of cooperation with various sectors - media, business, state and cultural. The City Assembly of Belgrade recognized AWC as a responsible partner for the campaign's implementation and supported the initiative in the form of auspices.

As a mail goal of the campaign was raising public awareness that violence against women and DV are basic human rights violation, the media campaign presented a significant liaison between victims, NGOs and institutions responsible for carrying out the problem.

RESULTS

AWC distributed material (leaflets, TV and radio add) to 29 women's organizations from 23 towns: Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Niš, Vlasotince, Tutin, Vranje, Užice, Smederevo, Prijepolje, Leskovac, Sombor, Novi Bečej, Velika Plana, Bačka Topola, Valjevo, Loznica, Smederevska Palanka Kruševac, Priboj, Negotin, Novi Pazar, Zaječar, Novi Sad, Zrenjanin. At the local level, women's organizations succeeded to obtain 35 media sponsorships from 17 various TV and Radio stations, while in Belgrade 36 different media supported the campaign.

Summarizing media sponsorships received for the campaign "16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women", the total number of media that supported the action was 71, thereby they all contributed to the improvement of the problems' visibility

and accessibility of AWC, other women's NGOs and public institutions to women-violence victims in Serbia.¹

Having in mind that corporate social responsibility is significant component of all media, companies and public enterprises, this year AWC received sponsorships from:

- PE Posts Serbia, distributed in 10 posts in Serbia and 5 in Belgrade, on their info desks 15.000 AWC leaflets and posters
- Public Transportation Belgrade and media MASEL GROUP distributed 90 posters in 15 buses
- SERB Medija group broadcasted TV add in all minibuses, 3 times per hour for 16 days

This year we were particularly focused to the cultural sector, as a promoter of social values. It was a challenge for foreign and local artists as well as for AWC team, to organize the exhibition *Offbeat: Look and See Violence Against Women*. The exhibition had a great reaction among wide public and in media - total 47 media reports in electronic, print media and websites, not only in Serbia.

Thanking to the support of all media houses and visibility of the campaign, visits of AWC website www.womenngo.org.yu have increased during the preparation and realization of the campaign.

AWC PLANS FOR COMING PERIOD IN 2008.

In November 2006, the period when the campaign of the Council of Europe "Stop Domestic Violence Against Women" is launched, AWC took part and initiated a number of activities at the national and the local level. The CoE campaign will be finished in March 2008. Therefore AWC is in preparatory phase with its partners for the ending of the action. It will be the opportunity to summarize and present achievements in the field - at the national, regional and local level. We would like to invite you to take part in this coming action!

¹ TV (22), RADIO (25), NEWSPAPERS (5), PERIODICALS (6), MAGAZINES (8), WEBSITES (4) (commercial). Unfortunately, RTS didn't recognize its own responsibility toward female citizens in Serbia.