

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

25 November – 10 December 2022



The [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#) aims to engage people around the world and disarm all forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Small arms and light weapons (SALW) are used to perpetrate or facilitate GBV and cause serious violations of human rights. GBV involves the use and abuse of power and control over another person and is perpetrated against someone based on their gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender. The goal of this campaign is to raise awareness of the scope of gender-based violence and gun violence by urging officials to take effective measures to address these issues.

IANSA's theme this year is **"Challenge norms: Stop gender-based gun violence!"** It aims to challenge hegemonic masculinity norms and abusive masculine

behavior that negatively impacts women, girls, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as boys and men. These norms often characterise men as aggressive, independent, and dominant, and women as weak, dependent, and submissive. These harmful norms combine with the proliferation of firearms and other factors to fuel gender-based gun violence because SALW can be used to assert power and put lives in danger of those targeted and discriminated against because of their gender. Critically engaging with and transforming conception of masculinities that could lead to such violence is essential for effective arms control and disarmament.

IANSA has chosen to focus on four key policy points to advocate for this year's campaign. It is important for State governments and parliamentarians, civil society, and all significant stakeholders to work together to stop gender-based gun violence!

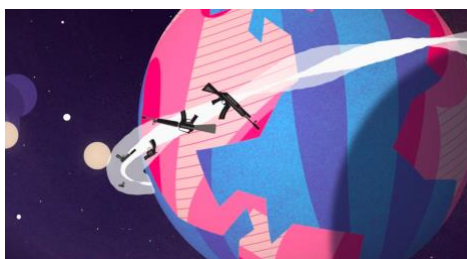
IANSA's key policy points to advocate this year are:

- Governments must develop gender-responsive controls to prevent the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons and to ensure the full and equal participation of women in those efforts.
- To establish public awareness and education programs to prevent gun violence and abusive masculinities.
- All States must implement strict controls to ban civilians holding military specification weapons and keep civilian-held guns to a minimum.
- To disarm and end gender-based and intimate partner violence by implementing legislation and programs to remove guns from homes.

Below we offer 16 ideas to participate in this year's 16 Days campaign, along with resources, publications, multimedia and more!

16 Ideas to participate in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

1. **Start a discussion!** IANSA has created an animated video “[All voices heard: United against gun violence](#)” and an “[Informative booklet on abusive masculine behaviour and gender-based gun violence](#)” for educators and young people to use to help stimulate their individual thoughts and group discussions about the ongoing causes and terrible impacts of gun violence and gender-based violence (GBV) in its various forms. Also, it highlights ways your country and community can contribute to the development and promotion of lawful methods to prevent gun violence and abusive conduct.



IANSA has paired these two resources together and we recommend viewing the video as an introduction and then using the interactive booklet for discussion and reflection. Gather youth and other members of your community together to unite against gender-based gun violence!

2. **Devise an advocacy strategy.** IANSA has created a toolkit on advocacy to provide its members with ideas and techniques they might need to raise their voices effectively and make strategic choices on targets, tactics and messages. This toolkit provides definitions to key terms, outlines relevant international instruments, offers a five-step process for devising an advocacy strategy and has nine useful tools and tips, as well as links to additional resources. Access the toolkit [here](#).

Learn from other organisations for ideas by reading IANSA’s report on our project on “building civil society dialogues with governments to promote national PoA priorities,” available [here](#).

3. **Engage children and youth!** Many young people are highly active in the movement to decrease gun violence in the world. However, their voices are often not being heard as they should. IANSA’s *Aim for Change* campaign amplifies youth’s voices through a two-hour workshop designed to share their stories through creative expression. Host an *Aim for Change* workshop in your community and share photos and ‘zines’ online! Learn more [here](#). Find UN Resources for Youth on Small Arms Control and Disarmament [here](#).



4. **Break the link between guns, violence and masculinity.** There is a complex relationship between masculinity and gun violence, one that has been systemically, culturally and politically shaped with deep roots in patriarchy as well as wider injustices, poverty, state repression, and organized crime. Abusive masculine behavior has been normalized around the globe, and this has caused women to be significantly harmed and disadvantaged.

Engage men and boys in ending GBV and share IANSA's list of [10 Things Men Can do to End Violence Against Women](#).

5. **Advocate for gender mainstreaming small arms control.** It is important to ensure that women's perspectives and experiences are taken fully into account in small arms and light weapons (SALW) control policies and gun violence reduction programmes. This was a significant issue raised by States and civil society during the eighth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (BMS8) and the UN General Assembly's 2022 First Committee deliberations and resolutions.

Read and distribute IANSA's paper on ["Women's Participation in Small Arms Control and Peace and Security Initiatives"](#).

6. **Transform gender norms.** Teach children in your family and community that it is okay to be yourself and not give in to gendered stereotypes. What it means to "be a man" is learned in childhood: boys are often told by others around them that they are not "real men" or are not "man enough" if they don't show aggression and domination but show sensitivity to feelings and stand up for gender equality. Everyone must challenge this norm! This can be done by engaging children and youth in awareness and education programs.

It is vital to give an alternative meaning to manhood and masculinity that is not equated with violence and aggression but rather with a state of maturity of becoming a man, promoting courage, strength, self-awareness, and caring about yourself and others. Give meaning to manhood that does not involve guns, aggression, or violence. Share IANSA's ["Be Yourself" coloring book](#) with children.



7. **Advocate for better firearm laws and gender considerations.** Hold a meeting (in person or virtually) with a government official of your country (parliamentarian, mayor, assembly person, police chief, etc.) to advocate for laws, policies, and programs that are gender responsive and effective at addressing GBV. Use this [handbook](#) to help identify gaps in your national legislation and call for stronger controls on the civil possession of firearms, strict licensing criteria, improved storage requirements and criminal sanctions that adequately reflect the severity of crimes committed with a firearm.

8. **Share experiences and solutions with your community.** Organize a webinar, seminar or workshop and invite panelists to discuss challenges and solutions to GBV and SALW issues in your country or community. Invite people who have been affected by gender-based violence and gun violence to share their testimonies and provide a platform for their voices to be shared.

IANSA has interviewed five women campaigners to share their various experiences from around the world and created this publication to help offer a range of opinions and advocacy approaches, available [here](#).

9. **Be an ally and engage online!** IANSA has created a social media toolkit with examples of possible posts and graphics, available on our webpage [here](#). Post online with the hashtag #16Days! If you also tag three friends or community members in your online posts for them to do the same, your posts will be seen by a wider audience.



10. **Support survivors of GBV.** Provide a safe space in your community for survivors to share their stories and be heard. Urge your governments to provide proper health care to those who suffer injuries, trauma, and disabilities from gun violence in all its forms; adequately fund gun violence reduction programs; and develop and/or strengthen gun violence survivors' support networks that include law enforcement, social support systems, education systems, and civil society organisations.
11. **Write to your government and promote gender-responsive small arms controls and strict controls on civilian-held guns.** Write or email governmental officials in your area and country. Urge them to require comprehensive background checks before giving someone a gun license or recruiting them into the law enforcement agencies and armed forces; prohibit domestic violence offenders from owning a gun; and treat intimate partner and family violence as a serious crime.

Ensuring national laws and regulations on the possession and use of firearms conform to the highest standards including the UN standards for law enforcement and the standards for members of the armed forces set out in international humanitarian law. This can be done by contacting relevant legislators to discuss potential law reform for gun control, such as to remove guns from the hands of perpetrators of domestic violence. Read and share IANSA's publication on strengthening civilian-held small arms controls, available [here](#).

12. **Advocate to disarm domestic violence.** Intimate partner violence is a major form of violence in women's lives worldwide. At least one in every three women will be physically abused at least once in their lifetime. Outside armed conflict situations, women are more likely to be abused in their own homes than anywhere else, and their abuser is most likely to be a husband, boyfriend or other male relative. Read and distribute IANSA's ongoing [Disarm Domestic Violence campaign](#).

Read IANSA's paper that examines five countries' current strengths and gaps in legislation to assist your campaign for more wide-reaching laws and stronger policy implementation in gun-control, available [here](#).

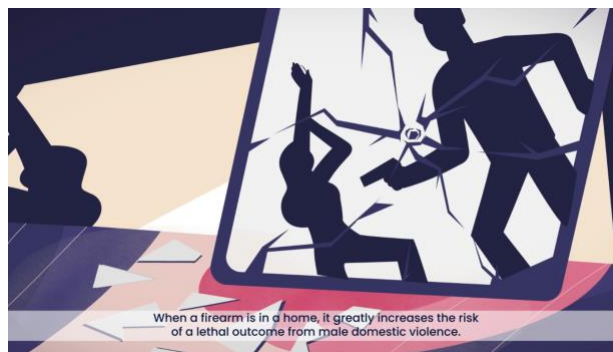
13. **Promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).** SDG 5 is focused on achieving gender equality. SDG 5.2 sets the goal of ending all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. Report and call for your government to enact or implement legislation on GBV. Visit the SDG UN website for more info and facts on SDG 5 [here](#).



14. **Promote the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda with your government.** There is a growing awareness that SALW-related violence is highly gendered and that a gender perspective is needed for effective SALW control. As one third of femicides are committed with a firearm, SALW control is necessary to protect the lives of women and girls.

Read and distribute IANSA's publication: "[Strengthening the Connection Between Small Arms and Light Weapons Controls and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.](#)"

15. **Advocate to take firearms out of the home.** Dismantle the myth that guns in the home provide protection. A gun in the home does more to expose women to danger than offer protection. It makes her more likely to be hurt or killed. Family killings are the only category of homicide in which women outnumber men as victims. Read and distribute [IANSA's Information Kit on Women, Guns, and Violence in the Home](#).



16. **Encourage your government to complete its PoA National Report, specifically the section on gender considerations and the collection of disaggregated data.** Under the PoA, states agree to submit a national report on their implementation of the PoA and International Tracing Instrument (ITI) every two years. National reports also support data collection for the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Check whether your country has submitted its 2020 PoA report and whether it has completed the gender consideration section [here](#).

For additional ideas, check out IANSA's report highlighting members' activities from the [2022 Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence](#) and the [2021 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#).

All IANSA publications are available on our webpage [here](#).