

## Human Trafficking Survivors

A #16DaysActivism programme was conducted in 3 women shelters for survivors of trafficking, forced labour and other violence. A total of 54 women participated in the activities.

The session was focused on creating awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) and its prevention.

A briefing on some of the violence faced by women and girls around the world brought some of the women to realization that they themselves are survivors of such a predicament. This rings true of many women in patriarchal societies, where they see themselves as always the victim, their roles in the family and community merely to serve the selfish interests of men.

Some others were shocked and slightly disturbed by the facts presented; but being the survivors that they are, this only fanned the fires of their determination to take action against GBV against women and girls.

In the group discussions that followed, armed with their new-found knowledge and awareness, the women were able to provide good solutions to prevent GBV; such as teaching children about safe and unsafe touch, the need for parents to practice gender equality at home, the importance of creating awareness about where to get help either at home, school and other places; and also the role of government in inculcating gender equality and strengthening the criminal justice system as well as social support systems.

Although the topic was a sensitive one and could be quite triggering for some women, they managed to rise up from their anxieties. It was incredibly heartwarming to see them stand up and present their points with confidence; and even more gratifying to hear their unified voices of affirmation.

They promised to share this awareness amongst their family and friends back home – that eliminating violence against women starts from the home and it starts with the children regardless of gender. That everyone in society play an active part to stop violence against women and girls. They will share about gender equality – equal rights and human rights for all.

It is hoped that these women continue to use this empowerment not only as a healing mechanism, but also to become agents of change in their community.



The fun activity at the end was imprinting their orange-painted palms on a poster to pledge their support and action to eliminate violence against gender-based violence.

