

Ending Violence, Stigma, and Barriers to Care

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**16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
AGAINST GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE 2024: NOVEMBER
25–DECEMBER 10**

The global community launches its annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence on November 25, marking a coordinated international effort to address violence against women and girls. Running from November 25 to December 10, this year's campaign focuses on strengthening prevention and protection measures worldwide. The campaign is part of a broader movement, which, this year, is centered around the theme: "Every 10 Minutes, a Woman is Killed. #NoExcuse. UNiTE to End Violence against Women." This theme stresses the urgent need for immediate action to stop gender-based killings and ensure the safety of women and girls globally.



The campaign's historical roots trace back to 1960, when the Mirabal sisters were brutally murdered by order of Dominican Republic dictator Rafael Trujillo. The United Nations formally recognized the significance of this issue in 1993 when the General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the elimination of violence against women a global priority.

This culminated in the UN's official designation of November 25 as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, a date that has since become a focal point for the 16 Days of Activism

campaign.

The ongoing 16 Days of Activism serves not only as a call for action but also as a reminder of the historical struggles and achievements made toward ending violence against women. This annual initiative is a testament to the resilience of those who have fought and continue to fight for the safety and dignity of women and girls worldwide, calling on governments, civil society organizations, businesses, and UN partners to renew and accelerate their commitment to eliminating violence against women.

CMGI Gender Sensitization



On November 28, CMGI conducted a gender sensitization workshop for IIMA staff, led by Prita Jha, an external member of CMGI and president of the Peace and Equality Cell. Drawing from her extensive experience as a legal activist and researcher working on violence against women and girls, she guided staff through critical discussions on workplace harassment prevention and institutional policies. The session began with a welcome address by Vaibhavi Kulkarni, Chair CMGI, who briefly explained the responsibilities of the internal committee members in offering a safe space for anyone to come and inquire or make a complaint about an incident of sexual harassment. The session then delved into the background and fundamentals of sexual harassment laws in the workplace, the institution's policy, and the nuanced processes involved in addressing complaints. The workshop further underscored the critical need to break the culture of silence surrounding sex, sexuality, and consent in workplace contexts. By challenging deeply ingrained communication barriers, organizations can create more transparent environments where employees feel safe reporting inappropriate behavior and understanding their rights against workplace violence.

Session Highlights

- **Understanding the POSH Act, 2013:** Participants learned comprehensive definitions of sexual harassment, covering both quid pro quo and hostile work environment scenarios.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** An in-depth exploration of the CMGI/ Internal Committee (IC) functions was presented and the session detailed the steps for filing complaints while ensuring strict confidentiality.
- **Covered Key Aspects of Consent:** The workshop emphasized understanding "unwelcome" behavior and the critical importance of consent. Participants were provided with clear examples of sexual harassment through detailed case studies and short videos.
- **Looking Ahead:** CMGI plans to continue hosting such workshops for all its members, creating a safe workplace for everyone.



With the culmination of the U.S. presidential elections and President Donald Trump retaking office, global debates around reproductive health have once again intensified. Access to reproductive healthcare and bodily autonomy remains a central focus of feminist and queer advocacy, as millions worldwide still face significant barriers to basic reproductive care.

Geetika Sharma, Research Assistant with the CMGI, spoke to several students and staff regarding their experiences in accessing reproductive care. Here's what they had to say.

I have seen this with so many of my friends and boyfriends that they put off getting tested for STIs because of the fear of judgment; they would rather be ignorant and wait for the symptoms than be proactive about their health.

Ankush*, Student



I'm in my late 20s, and I look young, and because of that, I have also felt infantilized by my healthcare providers. It seems absurd that I should be lying if I am sexually active or not at this age.

Banhi*, Academic Associate



I got my PCOS diagnosis rather late, in my final year of UG, although I had been experiencing symptoms since school. When I was living with my parents, I couldn't even bring this up to my strict parents because merely wanting to see a gynecologist meant I was a tez ladki, possibly hinting at promiscuity.

Radhika*, Student

No one talks about privacy concerns when it comes to seeking healthcare. In a country like India, you are never sure of the biases your health care provider might have; all in all, most of them are parochial, and as a young person, the risk of being profiled looms over your head.

Deepika*, Research Associate



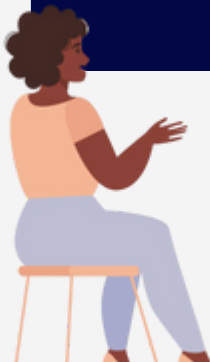
Being a woman over 35 and unmarried by choice, I've had gynecologists lecture me about my 'biological clock' without even asking if I want children.

Archana*, Staff



Even simple things like getting a pap smear become complicated. The forms don't have options for gender identity beyond male/female, and healthcare providers are just not trained to understand or respect diverse gender identities.

Silvy*, Student



As a queer person, I dread every visit because it means finding queer-affirmative providers who are sensitive to different experiences. Even then, it feels like a task—each visit involves explaining my identity, facing confused looks, and often educating the same professionals.

Faiq*, Student



*Names have been anonymised

The monthly newsletter from the Committee for Managing Gender Issues (CMGI) is an attempt to initiate conversations on discrimination, gender bias, sexual harassment, and related issues. We would love to have the community participate. Please reach out to Geetika Sharma at geetikas@iima.ac.in for queries, submissions, and/or feedback.

If you feel you have been subjected to sexual harassment or if you would like to make any suggestions regarding curbing sexual harassment or gender bias on campus, please reach out to us at: Email: chr-cmgi@iima.ac.in Phone: 97129 15533 Please note that any communication with the CMGI is strictly confidential.