



Key Messages

16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in Myanmar 2025

UNiTE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls

Digital violence is real violence. It is part of the same continuum that includes physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse. Online attacks often mirror and reinforce the offline inequalities and harmful norms and contexts that enable violence against women and girls.

Recognising digital harm as gender-based violence (GBV) is critical to ensuring survivors receive equal protection, access to justice, and comprehensive support, both online and offline.

These key messages have been developed to support joint advocacy during the 2025 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, under the theme *UNiTE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls*. They are designed for partners, UN agencies, and community organizations to adapt across their diverse channels, including social media, campaigns and awareness activities. Each message includes a clear headline, core narrative, and short closing line that can stand alone for quick communication or be expanded for longer advocacy materials.

KEY MESSAGES

1. Digital violence is real violence

Digital violence is being used to shame, threaten, and silence women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ people in Myanmar — deepening fear and inequality. Online gender-based violence is not “virtual harm,” it’s a violation of people’s rights and safety.

Recognizing digital harm as GBV is key to ensuring equal protection and justice for survivors.

2. What happens online doesn’t stay online

Online gendered violence puts people at risk far beyond the screen, especially in times of crisis. It mirrors the same inequalities and harmful norms and practices that enable gender-based violence in homes, schools, and workplaces, and often escalates into real-life violence, coercion, or social exclusion.

Protecting digital safety is protecting lives.

3. Silence helps violence grow

When online abuse goes unchecked, it becomes part of everyday life — normalized, ignored, and unchallenged. Digital violence often spreads through misinformation, hate speech, and public shaming, especially against women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ people.

Breaking the silence means standing with survivors and making online spaces safe for all.

4. Online abuse causes real harm

Online violence can cause depression, anxiety, isolation, and even self-harm. Across Myanmar, women, girls, LGBTIQ+ people, and others targeted by hate and harassment face lasting emotional harm and fear.

Online abuse is real violence that demands accountability.

5. Digital violence deepens inequality

Online abusers in Myanmar often target women, LGBTIQ+ people, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities. The violence is often sexualized, public, and persistent – reinforcing stigma and exclusion.

Make online spaces equal, safe, and accountable.

6. Women and youth led groups in Myanmar are reclaiming online spaces to unite, rather than divide

Despite the risks, women, youth and grassroots groups across Myanmar are using digital platforms to speak out, support survivors, and push for justice. Their voices show that online platforms can be used to advance equality.

Protect online civic space, promote digital rights, and make the internet a safe place for every voice.

7. Women's leadership belongs everywhere – including online

Across Myanmar, manipulated images, deepfakes, and smear campaigns are used to shame and discredit women, especially those in public life. These tactics are designed to silence women, limit their leadership and weaken their participation in public and community life.

Protect women's voices. Safe digital spaces allow women to lead, participate, and thrive.

8. Digital inequality fuels gender-based violence

When women lack digital literacy or safe, affordable access to technology – especially in rural and conflict-affected parts of Myanmar – they are more vulnerable to online scams, harassment, trafficking, and exploitation.

Digital safety is protection. Every woman deserves to be safe, online and offline.

9. Crises and disasters magnify the risks of gender-based violence

Conflict, displacement, and disasters – including this year's earthquake and flooding – have left people across Myanmar facing heightened risks of gender-based violence, exploitation, and abuse. When a crisis hits, protection systems often collapse, leaving survivors with nowhere to turn.

Safety and dignity are rights, not privileges – including during crises.

10. Stress is never an excuse for violence

Across Myanmar, conflict, severe poverty, and widespread displacement are putting families under immense strain – but violence is never an acceptable response. Every woman and girl deserve safety and respect, including during a crisis.

Strong families are built on care, not fear.

11. Every survivor deserves justice

Too many survivors of gender-based violence in Myanmar face silence, stigma, or blame when they seek help. Justice begins with listening – with believing survivors, protecting their privacy, and ensuring they can safely report violence and access support.

Justice and accountability for gender-based violence aren't privileges—they're rights.

12. Women-led organisations are leading Myanmar's GBV response

Across Myanmar's conflict and disaster zones, women-led and community-based groups are delivering lifesaving GBV services under immense risk. They are the backbone of prevention, protection, and recovery.

Fund and protect women-led organisations. Their leadership sustains safety, dignity, and change.

13. A survivor-centred approach saves lives

Survivors of gender-based and digital violence need safe, confidential, and coordinated care. Frontline responders must be equipped to recognise digital abuse, provide survivor-led support, and link services across health, legal, psychosocial, and digital safety systems.

From recognition to response – every system must protect survivors.

14. Men and boys are essential allies

Violence is not strength. Men and boys in Myanmar can help end gender-based violence by modelling respect, accountability, and equality both online and offline.

Respect and empathy support safe communities.

15. Data and evidence drive accountability

Gender-based violence, including digital abuse, is severely underreported in Myanmar due to fear, stigma, and lack of safe reporting channels.

Invest in ethical, survivor-centred data to expose risks, improve services, and strengthen advocacy.

KEY MESSAGES: AWARENESS DAYS DURING THE 16 DAYS

25 November – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Violence against women and girls remains one of the most pervasive human rights violations in Myanmar and around the world. Ending it takes collective action – from challenging harmful norms to supporting survivors and holding perpetrators accountable.

Together, we can end gender-based violence.

1 December – World AIDS Day

Gender-based violence and HIV are deeply linked. In Myanmar, stigma, poverty, and conflict prevent marginalised people, including women, girls, LGBTIQ+ people, and sex workers from accessing testing, treatment, and care.

Ending violence means removing barriers to health and dignity for all.

3 December – International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Women and girls with disabilities in Myanmar face higher risks of gender-based violence and greater barriers to seeking help. Stigma, exclusion, and inaccessible services too often leave them without the support they need.

GBV prevention and response must be inclusive and accessible to all.

10 December – Human Rights Day

Freedom from violence is a fundamental human right. Across Myanmar, women and girls – including those speaking out online – must be protected from threats, stigma, and abuse.

Safety, dignity, and justice are rights – not privileges.

Important notice: A survivor-centred approach is essential for both the prevention of and response to digital violence. The experiences, perspectives, and leadership of survivors must inform all initiatives, encompassing service provision, advocacy, prevention strategies, and accountability mechanisms. The eradication of digital violence necessitates a collective dedication to eliminate all manifestations of gender-based violence.

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