

16 Days of Activism: A Mobile Vaani Network Campaign on Violence Against Women

November-December 2013



Gram Vaani Community Media Pvt. Ltd.

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1. Introduction

Jharkhand Mobile Vaani (JMV) has since the last one year emerged as a common platform for the people of Jharkhand to express their views, share their experiences and address their queries/questions/doubts on a myriad of issues they encounter on a day to day basis in their lives. In this capacity the callers and listeners of JMV have actively taken up issues pertaining to gaps in the service delivery systems of various government schemes, lack of awareness on social issues, better understanding of agricultural practices and others issues.

Gram Vaani conducted a campaign on Violence against Women (VAW) on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani and five Mobile Vaani partner CR stations - Kumaon Vaani Community Radio situated in Mukteshwar, Uttarakhand, Henvalvani Community Radio situated in Chamba, Uttarakhand, Radio Dhadkan situated in Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh, Lalitlokvani situated in Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh and Waqt ki Awaaz situated in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The campaign was organized by Oxfam India and was executed through the Mobile Vaani partnership program. The campaign started on the 25th of November 2013 and went on until 16th December 2013. The campaign aimed to focus on educating people about the various forms of violence against women, sections of women more prone to violence, reasons for violence against women, implication of violence on the lives of the women and laws protecting women from violence. This exercise was coupled by people from the four states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh voicing their perceptions and experiences on violence against women in their region and sharing their recommendations on curtailing the same.



2. The Rationale

The United Nations define violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”¹ Serious violations of women’s human rights happen when girls and women suffer from violence and its consequences because of their sex and their unequal status in society. Violence against women is by far the most rampant and yet under-reported violation of human rights.

In India, there has been a there is a 6.8 percent rise in the crime against women with pending trial rate in the court as high as 87 percent on an average, as per the statistics released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2012. Additionally, NCRB data also informs that the crime of rape is the fastest growing crime in India and has increased by 902 percent over 1971 to 2012. Moreover, the NCRB statistics highlight that one woman gets raped every 22 minutes in India. One child gets raped in every 76 minutes. Only one in every four accused in the crime gets convicted. Further according to statistics nine out of 10 times alleged culprits were known to the victim. No complaint is usually lodged as victims’ families worry about social shame.

However, violence against women isn’t restricted to crime against women carried out in the public sphere but also in the household, workplace and other areas where women spend their time. Therefore, to generate awareness about the various forms of violence against women; to sensitize people about the various sections of women that are more prone to violence than others; inform people about the reasons for violence against women, share implications of violence on the lives of the women and elicit the recommendations from the people to reduce the incidences of violence against women, this campaign was taken up by the Mobile Vaani Network in association with Oxfam India.



¹ UN General Assembly. Declaration of the elimination of violence against women. Proceedings of the 85th Plenary Meeting. Geneva: UN (December 20, 1993).

3. Executive Summary

The specific objective of the campaign was to sensitize the callers of the Mobile Vaani network about the widespread occurrence of VAW and informing them about the laws protecting women from violence. At the same time, the campaign was designed such that the contextual issues of the communities are elicited and recommendations are solicited from the callers in the most participatory and bottom up manner.

Information about the campaign

Duration – 25th November – 16th December 2013

Number of items published – 192

Total number of calls – 51,576

Outreach population – 6,11,287 people

Community Radio partners – Kumaon Vaani Community Radio, Uttarakhand; Henvaivani Community Radio, Uttarakhand; Radio Dhadkan, Madhya Pradesh; Lalitlokvani, Uttar Pradesh and Waqt ki Awaaz, Uttar Pradesh

Districts in Jharkhand from where callers participated on JMV – Bokaro, Chatra, Deoghar, Dhanbad, Dumka, East Singhbhum, Giridih, Godda, Jamtara, Koderma, Ranchi, Sahebganj

The campaign was spread over three and a half weeks. Issues such as forms of VAW, reasons of VAW, implications of VAW, laws and policies limiting VAW, sections of women more prone to VAW and recommendations to restrain VAW were discussed during the course of the campaign. The solicited reactions and views of the callers were categorized under six heads, namely - location of violence, perpetrator of violence, forms of Violence, reasons for violence, effects of violence on the lives of women and people's recommendations to limit violence against women.

Out of the total 192 content contributions received for this campaign, 22 percent share of items was contributed by women and the remaining 78 percent share of the items was contributed by men. Maximum number of people (82 percent of the content contributors) left opinionated content such as their views on the reasons behind violence against women, its implications on the lives of the women and recommendations for limiting the acts of violence against women. This was followed by 11 percent people leaving content that was informative in nature such as current statistics of violence against women, laws to protect women from violence etc. Around 7 percent people contributed content of a personal nature, wherein they shared their personal experiences and stories of known women who have suffered violence.

4. The Campaign

The campaign was spread over three and a half weeks, covering seven sub-topics. Half a week was dedicated to spread awareness and open the discussion for each sub-topic. For every sub topic a short promo informing people about the sub topic to be discussed in the next episode was aired beforehand so that people could start sharing their views and experiences for the episode. Following the short promo, a 10-12 minute episode detailing the sub topic with more information, statistics, people’s perceptions and experiences was prepared on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani, while the Community Radio stations did their independent pre-recorded and live programming on the issue. A total of seven promos and episodes were created for the campaign.

S. No.	Episodes
1.	Establishing importance of the discussion on violence against women – What are the various forms in which violence is perpetrated on women? Statistics about the grave situation of violence against women at the national level followed by situation at urban and rural level. http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/90223/
2.	Information to be provided on sections of women more prone to violence such as Muslim, Adivasi and Dalit women and reasons for the same. http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/91840/
3.	Reasons for violence against women http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/93750/
4.	Implication of violence on the lives of women http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/95591/
5.	Information about laws protecting women from violence and people’s recommendations for a violence free world http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/95323/
6.	Information about the autonomous organizations working on following up the issues of violence reported by women and helping them in becoming self sustained- Interviews of the chairperson of State Commission for Women and Mahila Samakhya Society http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/99250/
7.	Information about the initiatives of civil society organizations and autonomous organizations in helping the (women) victims of violence in getting justice http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/100822/

The major findings from this campaign have been categorized as –

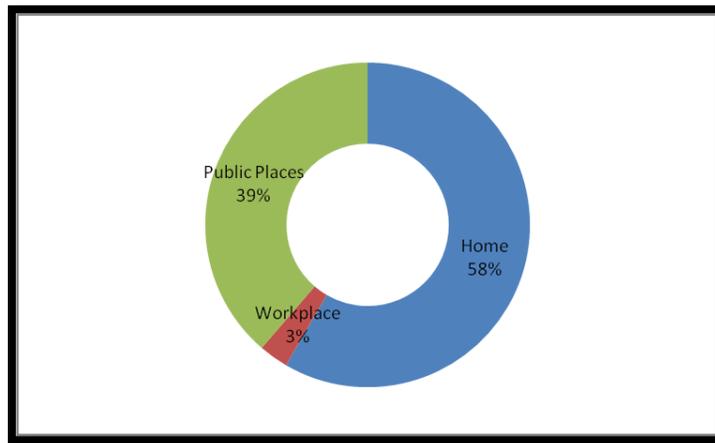
1. Location of Violence
2. Perpetrator of Violence
3. Forms of Violence
4. Reasons for Violence
5. Effects of Violence on the lives of women

Reflection of People's reaction: An analysis of the data

Location of Violence

Major locations of violence shared by callers were found to be –

1. Home
2. Public Places
3. Work Place



No place is safe for women

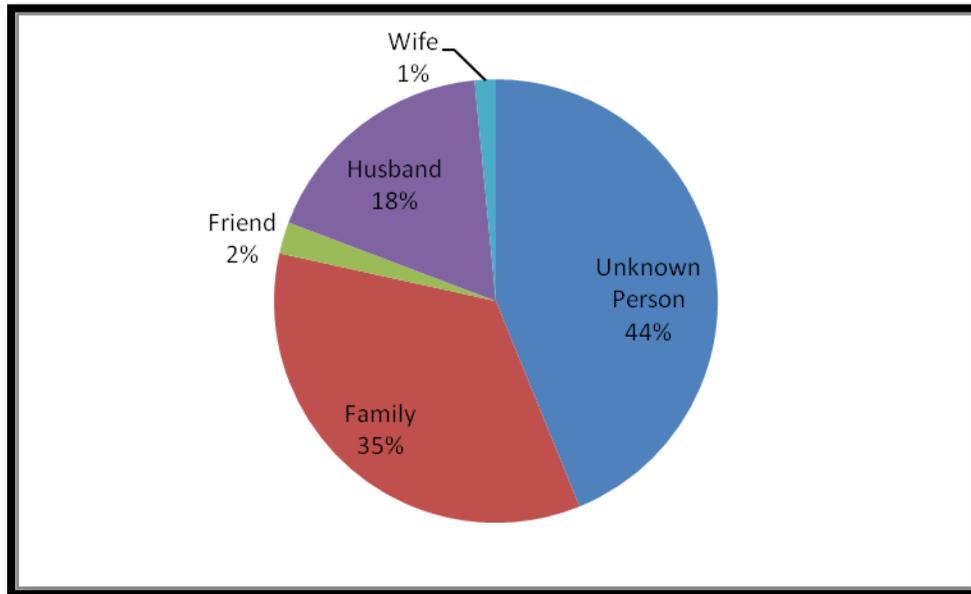
Shiv Pujan hazari from Baghmara Dhanbad talks to Mohammad Miraj Alam (Baghmara, Ansari) about the instances of sexual harassment of women that take place at his village. Mohammad Alam tells us that women's security is a big issue in his village. Today, no place could be assumed as a safe haven for women. House wives are victimised by alcoholic men, working women and even school girls have been known to be the victims of sexual harassment. He therefore, suggests that the women should be allowed to leave early from their offices to make them safe. Shiv Pujan Hazari at the end realises the need of the government to work in this area and make the lives of women safer and better.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/97346/>

Perpetrator of Violence

Perpetrators of violence as reported in the content contributions were –

1. Unknown People
2. Family
3. Husband
4. Friend
5. Wife



In-laws and husband harass a girl over dowry and son preference

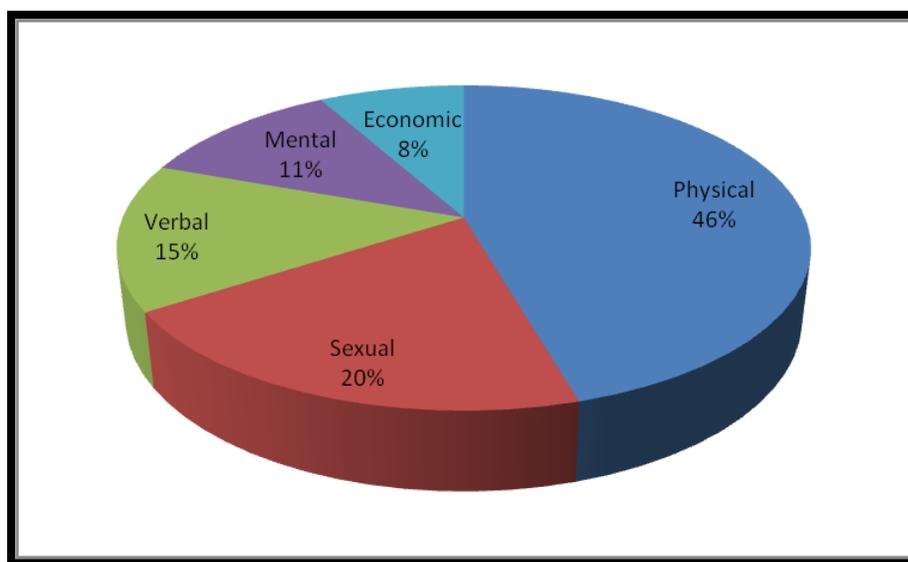
Ramesh Mahato from Baghmara, Dhanbad talks about an incident which occurred two decades ago but still echoes the woes of the present world, that being Dowry. He narrated an incident in which a girl got married and then after some time her in-laws started harassing and humiliating her for dowry. After some time, when she gave birth to a girl child, her in-laws and her husband blamed her for not conceiving a son and she was taken by her father back to her maternal home. The father requested the Women's Association to look into the matter and resolve the issue so that his daughter could back to her husband, but all in vain. He even filed a police complaint against in-laws's family, but till date, justice has not been done to his daughter and they are still waiting for the justice to be done.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/96980/>

Forms of Violence

The forms of violence reported during the campaign were –

1. Physical
2. Sexual
3. Verbal
4. Mental
5. Economic



Incidence of Physical and Mental Violence

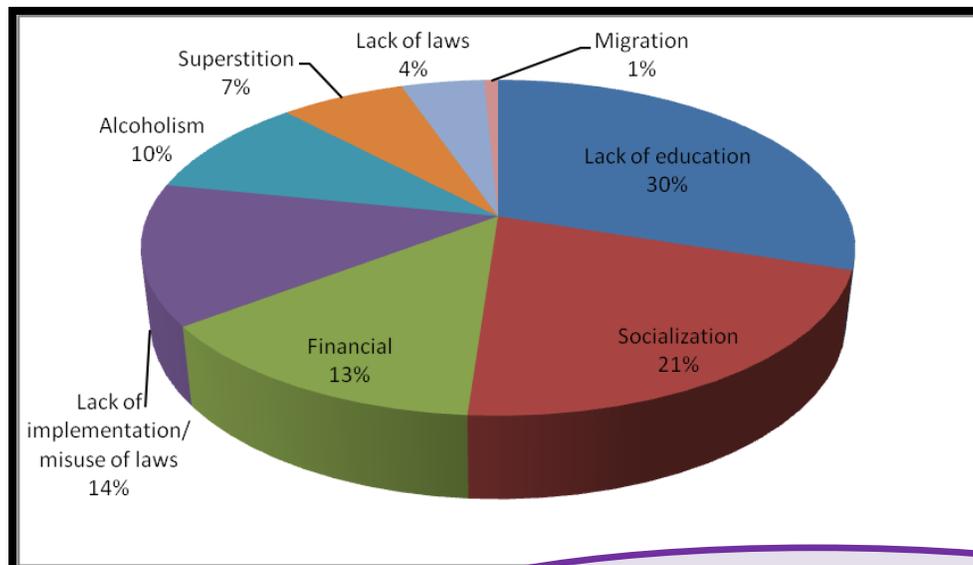
Krishna Murmu, a resident of Kathikund, Dumka, is a victim of domestic violence in her home. Although a teacher by profession, her husband repeatedly beats her and even threatens to kill her. According to the victim, the couple is married for 15 years, and their marital is not going well because, the husband is involved in an extra marital affair. Thus the tension between the couple grows and finally it breaks on the wife in the form of domestic violence. The victim also said that her husband follows her everywhere and beats her at every given opportunity. The victim now wishes peace and wants her husband to not to disturb and to leave her alone.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/90105/>

Reasons for Violence

Reasons for violence reported by the content contributors were –

1. Lack of Education
2. Socialization
3. Financial
4. Lack of implementation/misuse of laws
5. Alcoholism
6. Superstition
7. Lack of laws
8. Migration



Superstitious practice of witch-hunting led to the formation of a law

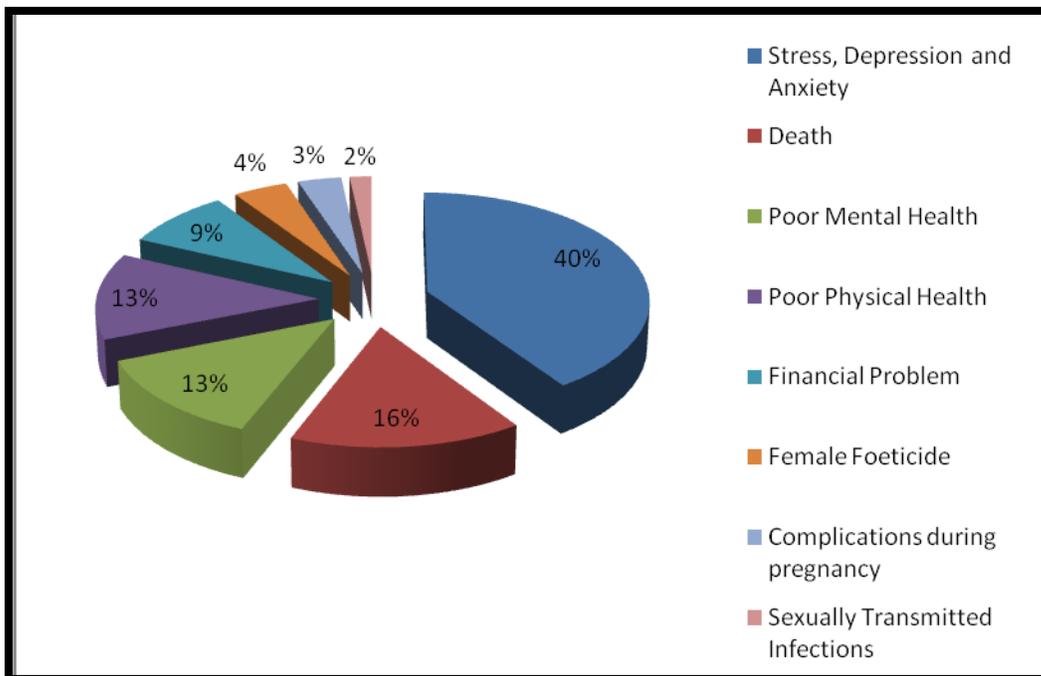
Farkeshwar Mahato from Khedabeda village, Topchanchi block, Dhanbad narrates an even which took place 14 years back. In this incident, a woman was suspected to be a witch. She was greatly humiliated along with her children and was paraded naked in the village. She was also beaten and a glass bottle was inserted in her private parts. Women are often declared as witches in Jharkhand by their relatives and neighbours when they have a lot of property on their name and no male member to protect them. When this incident took place, it was printed in the newspaper by the media, and then subsequently, the police station of the area filed a case against the atrocities committed against her which was followed up by various women's organisation and even some human rights organisations. These organisations met with the victim after which this issue was raised in the Upper house of the parliament. Thus it became the basis for the Daayan Act. This incident was also talked about in the textbook of class 3 but till date, no justice has been served to the victim.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/90905/>

Effects of Violence on the lives of Women

Following effects of violence on the lives of women were reported during the campaign-

1. Stress, depression and anxiety
2. Death
3. Poor mental health
4. Poor physical health
5. Financial problem
6. Female foeticide
7. Complications during pregnancy
8. Sexually Transmitted Infections



Repetitive violence led to Poor Mental Health

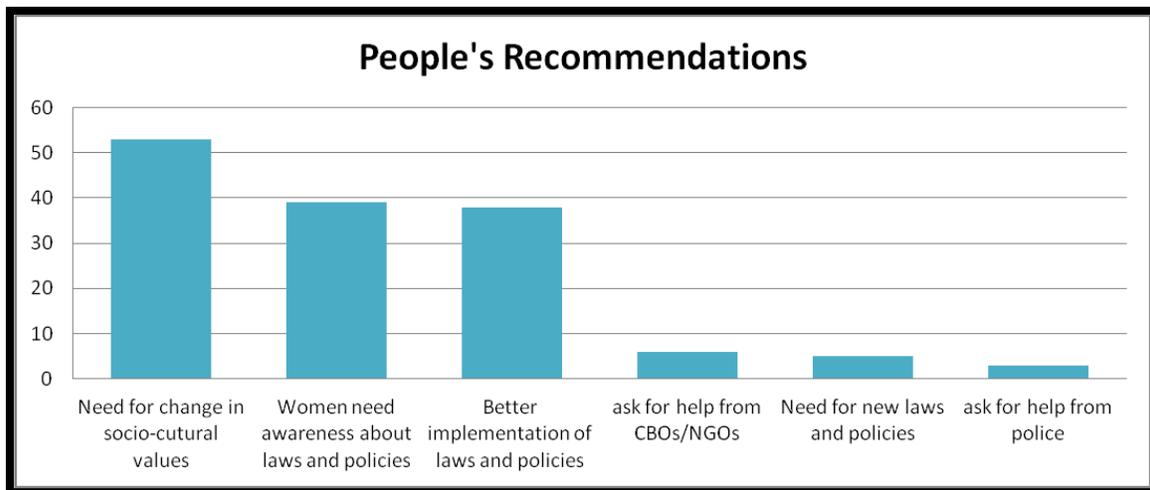
Himanshu Kumar Bhagat, From East Singhbhum, narrates an event from one of the nearby villages. In the incident, since the first wife was not able to conceive a son, her husband married another woman. After the second woman gave birth to 2 sons and a daughter, first wife was tortured, harassed, and physically abused by the husband and his family. Eventually she was thrown out of the house. She worked at houses for her survival, but she was always harassed and verbally abused. All this led her to be mentally disturbed and then after some time she went missing but no step has been taken to find her and she is missing till date. According to Himanshu Kumar Bhagat, since she did not go to the police to raise her voice against the injustice happening to her, it instead encouraged the people to exploit her more and destroy her life.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/95519/>

5. Recommendations

People advised following solutions to reduce the incidences of violence against women -

1. Need for a change in the socio-cultural value system
2. Women need to be made aware about the various laws and policies protecting them from violence
3. Better implementation of laws and policies is needed
4. NGOs and CBOs can be asked for help
5. New laws and policies needed for protecting women from un-anticipated forms of violence such as virtual world crime
6. Police should be contacted in case of violence or fear of violent attacks



Need for a change in our socio-cultural perspective toward women

Ramesh Kumar Maiti from Chas, Bokaro, wishes for a world in where women are safe and lead a better life free from any kind of violence against them. This world can only come into existence when women are given an equal status, good education, equal employment opportunities and when no one is inferior to others. In this world, the women should be respected equally to their men counterparts and should not be considered as a liability. Mr. Maiti is also of the view that the birth of a daughter should not be seen as starting of a miserable life, instead should be celebrated by regarding it as the birth of a life giver, without whom, the human race could not exist. Also he suggests to make the woman more independent, both financially and emotionally so that they are able to live their lives on their own terms.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/10/show/detail/97092/>

6. Conclusion

This campaign running across four states, five Community Radio Stations and Jharkhand Mobile Vaani sparked similar concerns towards the safety of women which gave us an idea that women face similar challenges in these states and are unable to live a life free of violence and/or the fear of violence. The need for change in socio-cultural norms and awareness about various laws and policies protecting women from violence was voiced across all the states where the campaign was done. Interestingly, more and more people felt the need for creating new laws and policies which directly or indirectly would contribute towards curbing violence such as keeping a check on the sales of alcohol and tobacco, cyber crime etc. An inter-sectoral approach with all stakeholders on board such as government organizations, non-government organizations, and citizens participating in their own ways in restraining violence against women would immensely help in controlling actual violence towards women and the fear of violence among women.

Mobile Vaani Network Partnership

Along with being active on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani (JMV), this campaign was also taken up by five Mobile Vaani partner CR stations - Kumaon Vaani Community Radio situated in Mukteshwar, Uttarakhand, Henvaani Community Radio situated in Chamba, Uttarakhand, Radio Dhadkan situated in Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh, Lalitlokvani situated in Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh and Waqt ki Awaaz situated in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh. These CR stations ran promos asking people about the reasons, implications and solutions for violence against women. A range of different activities such as doing live broadcasts and program production around this issue were also done to solicit people's opinion and initiate a discussion in the community about the issue.

Community Radio Kumaon Vaani 90.4MHz

Locale – Supi Village, Mukteshwar, Uttarakhand; **Outreach** – Around 42,704 people

Language of Broadcast – Kumaoni and Hindi; **Duration of Broadcast** – 8 hours

Summary of activities taken up during the course of the campaign –

- **Promos** – A total of seven promos was aired by Kumaon Vaani to inform people about the different aspects of this campaign. The content of the promos was similar to the ones aired on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani. These promos were put up for broadcast on the FM channel as well as on their mobile vaani number.
- **Live Slot** – For the time when the RJs of Kumaon Vaani do live calling and accept phone calls from the people of the community, they initiated a discussion on the issue of violence against women. Since live slots are proper conversations, there is a two way exchange of opinion that enriches the discussion. Many people

called to share their concerns about the security of women and their status in society and an interview with an advocate was also done to inform people about the legal provisions for restraining violent activities against women.

- **Mobile Vaani** – While the activities mentioned above were carried out only during slotted times on the FM, the station was also given their own mobile vaani number where people could call and be a part of the discussion 24x7. People frequently called to record their views and listen to the opinions left by others. The calls received on the mobile vaani platform were regularly moderated by the station staff.
- **Program** – The Kumaon Vaani team produced and broadcasted four perspective sharing programs providing information to the community and sharing the views of people.
-

People's speak – Taradutt Tiwari Hartola from Almora called up to express his opinion on the degradation in the status of women in the present times. He said that earlier women were looked up as goddesses and the extreme form of violence against them was physical violence. But in the modern times, there is an array of violent activities such as sexual violence, mental violence etc. that perpetrators use to frighten women. Therefore, he requests the government to look into the rising cases of violence against women and come up with better policies and implementation of law to protect them and hence encourage more women to speak up against violence.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/79/show/detail/94298/>

Community Radio Henvaivani 90.4MHz

Locale – Chamba, Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand; **Outreach** – Around 20,096 people

Language of Broadcast – Garhwali and Hindi; **Duration of Broadcast** – 6 and a half hours

Summary of activities taken up during the course of the campaign –

- **Promos** – Henvaivani put up seven promos to inform people about this campaign. The promos were played on the similar sub topics of violence against women as on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani. These promos were broadcasted on the FM channel as well as on their mobile vaani number.
- **Live Slot** – Henvaivani invited general people to call in live during their program and discussed different facets of the issue in detail, such as alcoholism, patriarchal norms, lack of awareness among women about the laws protecting them from violence, parents' safety concerns for girls, etc.

- **Mobile Vaani** – While the activities mentioned above were carried out only during slotted times on the FM, the station was also given their own mobile vaani number where people could call and be a part of the discussion 24x7. People frequently called to record their views and listen to the opinions left by others. The calls received on the mobile vaani platform were regularly moderated by the station staff.
- **Program** – During the campaign duration, four perspective sharing programs providing information to the community and sharing the views of people were produced by the Henvaani team. Those programs were then broadcasted on their FM channel.

People's speak – Ravi Gusain from Tehri Garhwal condemned the acts of violence against women and expressed his views on the issue. He said that the situation of women in the society is very worry-some, in the light of the various kinds of violence done against women. He further says that our society has progressed so much with more people being educated and aware, still various acts of physical and mental violence happen. He feels that due to the patriarchal structure of our society men get away with whatever they do with women be it a small incident of eve-teasing or the unforgivable crime of raping women. Talking about the Garhwali community, he says that earlier women were considered less competent as compared to the men in their society, but now he feels that slowly change is seeping in, but it will still take a while for everyone to completely come out of the patriarchal mindsets. Additionally he feels that women in his society lack information about various laws protecting them from violence.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/80/show/detail/97003/>

Community Radio Dhadkan 107.8MHz

Locale – Shivpuri District, Madhya Pradesh; **Outreach** – Around 42,955 people

Language of Broadcast – Hindi; **Duration of Broadcast** – 12 hours

Summary of activities taken up during the course of the campaign –

- **Promos** – To inform their community about this campaign, Radio Dhadkan played seven promos. The content of the promos was similar to the ones aired on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani. These promos were put up for broadcast on the FM channel as well as on their mobile vaani number.
- **Live Slot** – The discussion on Radio Dhadkan during the live slot was centred around the issue of violence against women. College girls were called in the studio to speak about their experiences on this issue.

- **Mobile Vaani** – While the activities mentioned above were carried out only during slotted times on the FM, the station was also given their own mobile vaani number where people could call and be a part of the discussion 24x7. People frequently called to record their views and listen to the opinions left by others. The calls received on the mobile vaani platform were regularly moderated by the station staff.
- **Program** – Radio Dhadkan produced a comprehensive program by stitching together women’s experiences on this issue. The program was broadcasted by Radio Dhadkan on their FM channel.

People’s speak – Asha, a college student shared her views on this issue, where she told that violence sees no caste, creed or religion, the common denominator in this case is a woman. She reports that in her area she knows of women who are physically abused for dowry, women who are beaten up because their husbands drink alcohol.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/26/show/detail/115878/>



Community Radio Lalitlokvani 90.4MHz

Locale – Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh; **Outreach** – Around 60,790 people

Language of Broadcast – Hindi; **Duration of Broadcast** – 12 hours

Summary of activities taken up during the course of the campaign –

- **Promos** – To inform their community about this campaign, Lalitlokvani played seven promos. The content of the promos was similar to the ones aired on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani. These promos were put up for broadcast on the FM channel as well as on their mobile vaani number.
- **Live Slot** – During the live slot, Lalitlokvani arranged for a discussion on this issue. They discussed on the lines of patriarchy and societal norms.
- **Mobile Vaani** – While the activities mentioned above were carried out only during slotted times on the FM, the station was also given their own mobile vaani number where people could call and be a part of the discussion 24x7. People frequently called to record their views and listen to the opinions left by others. The calls received on the mobile vaani platform were regularly moderated by the station staff.
- **Program** – Lalitlokvani produced six programs for the entire duration of the campaign. The programs incorporated information, discussion, radio drama and songs on this issue. These programs were broadcasted by them on their FM channel.

People's speak – Devendra Pratap Singh from Lalitpur called up to say that substance abuse such as alcoholism and tobacco consumption in villages are the primary reasons for escalating violence against women. He further says that since he has observed these issues in his village, he requests the government to come up with better policies on restraining excessive alcoholism and tobacco consumption.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/27/show/detail/93713/>

Community Radio Waqt ki Awaaz 91.2MHz

Locale – Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh; **Outreach** – 3,64,742 people

Language of Broadcast – Hindi; **Duration of Broadcast** – 5 hours

Summary of activities taken up during the course of the campaign –

- **Promos** – To inform their community about this campaign, Waqt ki Awaaz played a total of seven promos. The content of the promos was similar to the ones aired

on Jharkhand Mobile Vaani. These promos were put up for broadcast on the FM channel as well as on their mobile vaani number.

- **Live Slot** – The discussion on Waqt Ki Awaaz during the live slot was information centric. The informed people about the various aspects of the issue and elicited experiences on this issue from the community.
- **Mobile Vaani** – While the activities mentioned above were carried out only during slotted times on the FM, the station was also given their own mobile vaani number where people could call and be a part of the discussion 24x7. People frequently called to record their views and listen to the opinions left by others. The calls received on the mobile vaani platform were regularly moderated by the station staff.
- **Program** – Waqt ki Awaaz produced four programs during the entire duration of the campaign. Through their programs they informed people about the forms of violence, reasons and implications of the same and solicited feedback from the community. Upon receiving case studies of violence as feedback to their programs they prepared radio drama on the victim's story and sensitized their audience about the various forms of violence and the ways to protect them. These programs were broadcasted by Waqt ki Awaaz on their FM channel.

People's speak – Jiten from Kanpur called up to share his opinion on domestic violence. According to him lack of education and sensitivity towards understanding of domestic issues gives birth to domestic violence.

<http://voice.gramvaani.org/vapp/mnews/81/show/detail/100573/>

7. Abbreviations

CR – Community Radio

CRS – Community Radio Station

JMV – Jharkhand Mobile Vaani

MV – Mobile Vaani

NCRB - National Crime Records Bureau

VAW – Violence against Women

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