Global Day of Action: Celebrating International Safe Abortion Day!

2016

#StepIntoOurShoes
Campaign Toolkit

“Abortion Stories as Diverse as Shoes, Step Into Our Stories, Step into Our Shoes!”
# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About September 28</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 2016 Theme</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Involved</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilizing at a local level</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe-A-Thon</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host an awareness raising activity</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press release</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in this year’s Photo-Shoe virtual mural</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo-Shoe Steps</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog About September 28</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print the Self-Care Coloring Book</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share the #StepIntoOurShoes video series</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Through Social Media</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Abortion Stories</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post September 28 messages</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Welcome! We are thrilled to have you on board in joining activists around the world speaking out for access to safe and legal abortion! This toolkit is designed to support organizations and advocates participating in the September 28 Campaign, providing information on different means of engagement at local and community levels, and through social media. Everyone should feel free to get involved in whichever way(s) works best for them!

In solidarity,
Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights in partnership with Love Matters

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the September 28 Campaign, please get in touch by e-mail: sept28global@wgnrr.org or visit the campaign website: www.september28.org

For updates on September 28, please follow WGNRR:
- Newsletter
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/WGNRR
- Twitter: @WGNRR

ABOUT SEPTEMBER 28

September 28 is part of campaigning and advocacy activities undertaken to build an international movement for universal access to safe and legal abortion, from a human rights and reproductive justice approach. September 28 has been a regional campaign for the decriminalization of abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean for nearly twenty years, before being taken on by SRHR activists all over the world as a Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion in 2011. WGNRR organizes September 28 annual campaigning activities in collaboration with its members, partners, and allies around the world, and as a member of the International Campaign for Women’s Right to Safe Abortion.
THE 2016 THEME:

Let’s challenge abortion stigma & gender stereotypes!
Step Into Our Stories, #StepIntoOurShoes

Have you ever thought: what if others – leaders and policy makers, friends and community members – were asked to “step into the shoes” of those who have had an abortion, or support access to safe and legal abortion?

How could this challenge abortion stigma, illustrate the range of reasons and diverse backgrounds of those who have had an abortion, and in turn shift attitudes and increase access to safe and legal abortion services?

This year, our thematic focus for September 28 is on countering abortion stigma and associated gender stereotypes, by challenging the socially constructed ideas of what “type” of individuals would have an abortion. We aim to do this through calling on the global community to “Step Into Our Shoes,” and sharing the varied experiences, stories, and storytelling initiatives of those who have had an abortion, and/or are supporters of the right to access safe and legal abortion. We are using shoes in September 28 signature actions as a symbol of agency and diversity.

Through these stories and actions from both restrictive and non-restrictive settings, let’s spur conversations and shift the narrative surrounding abortion, emphasizing:

- how abortion is a common experience during women’s sexual and reproductive lives, as well as for trans-men, gender queer, gender-non-conforming individuals and others of diverse gender identity who can and do get pregnant;
- the centrality of upholding individuals’ human rights, including the rights to self-determination, agency, and bodily autonomy, in order to achieve reproductive justice; and
- the resulting imperative of ensuring universal access to safe and legal abortion services, as a fundamental part of upholding individuals’ rights and achieving the necessary enabling conditions in their communities.

This September 28, we invite members, partners, and allies worldwide to join us in calling on the global community to #StepIntoOurShoes, through diverse abortion stories from all parts of the world, and in turn recognize access to safe and legal abortion for what it is: a necessary social good and a human right!

To learn more about this year’s thematic focus, check out our 2016 CALL FOR ACTION
GETTING INVOLVED

There are many ways you can take action this September 28! In this toolkit, you will find suggestions on how to spread September 28 messaging, either by launching community actions and mobilizing at a local level, engaging through social media, and/or by using September 28 materials. For illustrations and inspiration of past worldwide September 28 activities and reports, please visit http://www.september28.org/past-actions/.

REMEMBER TO SHARE YOUR INITIATIVES WITH US! TAKE PICTURES AND SHARE THEM ON SOCIAL MEDIA USING #Sept28 #StepIntoOurShoes

We encourage you to send us information about your event or activity to sept28global@wgnrr.org and we will share it through www.september28.org, social media and in the September 28 final report!

MOBILIZING AT A LOCAL LEVEL

Below you will find a list of possible activities that you can take part in to increase the visibility and impact of September 28. We also invite you to come up with your own innovative and creative ways to raise awareness about the Global Day of Action! If the Day of Action itself isn’t an ideal date to undertake an action in your community, feel free to undertake September 28 activities any day that week!

1. **SHOE-A-THON, Artistic Installation or Public Action**

Organize your local community network of reproductive justice activists for an artistic installation! Bring your shoes to a strategic location. Try to create the longest line possible with as many shoes as you can bring, as a symbol of the number of people in your community who support access to safe abortion services. Alternatively, arrange your shoes into a visual display of the words “Sept 28”!

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1 We recommend that members and partners assess the current situation within their respective contexts, so that these activities can be undertaken in a way that is engaging and captivating, whilst also ensuring the safety of the event organizers and participants.
You can also hang the shoes as a display, with abortion stories or testimonials placed inside them, for passersby to read.

**Or...**

- You can also organize a press conference to talk about the importance of this symbolic act, and/or discuss how gender stereotypes and abortion stigma hinder access to safe and legal abortion in your country.
- In order to attract media attention, timing is very important so it would be best to time the action when no major event is happening (e.g. perhaps the morning or early afternoon), so that there will be less competition for media attention. You may want to send out media alerts ahead of time about the planned media stunt, by sending out invitations or posting event information on social media for your networks. You can also contact the press directly, by calling, emailing and even tweeting to them. If press representatives are not able to attend, be your own press by taking photos, drafting a press release and circulating it to different media outlets! You can also make sure your presence on social media is heard by sharing photos and information.
- You can also mobilize your network of activists for a public action with #StepIntoOurShoes storytelling as the central topic and inspiration. This can be:
  - A public demonstration raising awareness about the stories surrounding abortion, such as rallies or a sit-in.
  - Photo/videos/art exhibit displaying different abortion stories. You can do this in a public space or in a rented space. Just make sure that there is a diverse range of exhibits that can also inspire discussions and conversations.

**2 Host an Awareness-Raising Activity**

- Host an awareness raising activity, forum, meeting, workshop or cultural event to discuss the most prevalent gender-related stereotypes surrounding abortion in your community, and how they contribute to abortion stigma and restrict access to safe and legal abortion. Some of these topics could include, for example: unpacking the gender stereotype that all women want to or should become mothers; discussing the social constructed stigma surrounding abortion, and contributors to it; discussing how gender stereotypes contribute to restrictions such as parental or marital consent requirements ...and many more other talking points.
- You could also host a safer space event, where participants could share abortion stories from your community in a safe and supportive environment. As part of the activity, you could do a collective creative activity, where you gather around with close friends and/
or colleagues and engage in a relaxing activity such as colouring the September 28 self-care book while talking about your personal experiences and why you support access to safe and legal abortion.

3 Press Release!

- If you don't have the time or the resources to organize a press conference or media stunt, you can simply send out a press release discussing the power of storytelling and sharing abortion related testimonials and stories. You can find a lot of this information in our website but you are also free to come up with ideas of your own. You can also talk about the negative impact of gender stereotypes and abortion stigma on an individual's health in your community or country, and the importance of ensuring access to safe and legal abortion. Make your press release more compelling by using real-life examples and testimonies.

4 Participate in This Year's Photo-Shoe Virtual Mural!

- In past years, activists and advocates shared selfies explaining why abortion should be safe and legal in their countries, and why they were speaking out against abortion stigma. Out of their submissions, we created beautiful Virtual Murals.
- This year, we are continuing the efforts of collecting pictures and photos from all around the world so we can create a #StepIntoOurShoes mural of abortion stories.
- You can send a photo of your shoes together with your story of why you chose to have an abortion, or why you support access to safe abortion services. You can make this as personal as you want.
- *Feel free to choose any shoes, boots, sandals, or footwear that you wish – you can even go barefoot! You are free to share as much as you wish in the photo so long as we can see the shoes.*
- This will lead to an interactive, artistic and visual collection of stories which you will be able to see, read and share.

Photo-Shoe Steps:

1 Write down your own story of why you decided to have an abortion, or why you support access to safe and legal abortion. Make this as personal as you like. You can share details such as your age, country, first name (or pseudonym), or you can keep your submission as anonymous as you want.

2 Snap a photo of your shoes! Then email the photo of your shoes together with your story to sept28global@wgnrr.org. All photo contributions will be a part of the shoe virtual mural. Photos and stories will also be posted on the September 28 website and WGNRR Facebook page.
5 Blog About September 28 Topics!

- You can write a blog post sharing your abortion story and/or the reasons why you support access to safe and legal abortion. You can even use your Photo-Shoe ideas and photos!
- In addition, you can write a blog post on:
  - the ways abortion stigma and associated gender stereotypes have negatively impacted and further stigmatized abortion itself, and/or individuals who seek or have had an abortion;
  - Your experience as someone who stands with abortion seekers, such as a supportive partner, guardian, or family member;
  - Your experience as someone who works in abortion care, and/or who actively supports or advocates for abortion rights.
- You can also blog about the enabling conditions needed in your community, in order to ensure that all people have the social, political, and economic power and resources to make healthy decisions about their gender, bodies, sexualities and families.²

>>> PLEASE SHARE YOUR BLOG WITH US! SEND A LINK TO YOUR BLOG TO SEPT28GLOBAL@WGNRR.ORG AND WE WILL SHARE IT ON OUR FACEBOOK AND TWITTER PAGES AS WELL AS ON THE SEPTEMBER 28 WEBSITE.

6 Print the Self-Care Colouring Book!

Colouring books are not only fun and interactive, they are becoming a new form of mindful activity to allow yourself to relax and create at the same time. We invite you to print the #Sept28 self-care coloring book (link): grab some coloured pencils/crayons/markers, anything you wish and relax with this beautiful, therapeutic book. We created it just for you with the #StepIntoOurShoes theme. It also features quotes related to bodily autonomy, the right to choose and reproductive justice! You can choose any colors and style you like... just make sure to relax. You can also use the colouring book as part of a workshop or discussion group activity for September 28. Feel free to share with us your creations!

7 Share the #StepIntoOurShoes Series

Together with Love Matters, we’ve created a series which features excerpts from stories of individuals who have had an abortion, shared by partner organizations such as Advocates for Youth, Fondo MARIA, The Abortion Diary, and Trust for Indigenous Culture & Health (TICAH). The series showcases a diverse array of experiences, settings and circumstances, aiming to take the readers through a journey of empathy and understanding, and asking them to #StepIntoOurShoes. The series will be available later in September; you can take action by sharing the series widely on social media and making empathy go viral!

² Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice (ACRJ), What is Reproductive Justice?
## Engaging through Social Media!

### HASHTAGS

**MAIN:**  
#StepIntoOurShoes  

**SECONDARY:**  
#BreakTheStereotype  
#Sept28

### WGNRR PLATFORMS

- Twitter: @WGNRR  
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/WGNRR  
- WGNRR WEBSITE: www.wgnrr.org

### OTHER HASHTAGS USED BY PARTNERS

- #Notacriminal
- #Nomoreprosecutions
- #Trustwomen
- #FightAbortionStigma
- #abortionrights

### MEDIA

- Inter Press Service: @ipsnews, @ipsnoticias  
- BBC World: @BBCWorld, @BBCMundo  
- Al Jazeera: @AlJazeera, @AJEnglish  
- Women's E-News: @Womens_eNews

### TWITTER HANDLES FROM PARTNERS

- @Safe_Abortion  
- @asapasia
- @RNW
- @IPAS
- @ARROW
- @PathfinderIntl  
- @ReproRights
- @AWID
- @IPPF
- @federapl
- @inroadsGlobe
- @PopDevProgram
- @CLPPTweets  
- @IPPF_WHR
- @ElgieRed  
- @AbortoPORlaVIDA
- @Unaporlas17
- @Sept28abortion
- @RSMLAC  
- @NaCSafeAbortion
- @YouAct
- @abortionpil
- @tarshingo
- @WomenOnWaves
- @WomenHelpOrg  
- @SeaChangeProg
- @ReproChoiceAu  
- @mesaporlavida
- @youth_coalition
- @balancejoven
- @ASTRANetwork
- @ASTRAYouth
- @ReproRights
- @AdvocatesTweets
- @awaregirls
- @InfoClacai  
- @decidirlibres

### UN AGENCIES

- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon: @seegen  
- UN General Assembly President John W. Ashe: @UN_PGA  
- UN Development Program: @UNDP  
- UNDP Administrator Helen Clark: @HelenClarkUNDP  
- UNFPA: @UNFPA  
- UNFPA Executive Director Babatunde Osotimehin: @BabatundeUNFPA  
- UNFPA Deputy Executive Director Anne-Birgitte Albrectsen: @ABAlbrechtsen  
- UN Women: @UNWOMEN; @ONUMujeres  
- UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka: @phumzileunwomen  
- UN Women Africa: @UNWomenAfrica
Tweet and retweet September 28 messages throughout the month of September!
Use September 28 hashtags:
• #StepIntoOurShoes: use this primary hashtag when:
  - You want to call on leaders, advocates and general audiences to step into the shoes of the individuals sharing their diverse stories;
  - You want to share your own abortion story; or
  - You want to share your reasons why you support access to safe and legal abortion
• #BreaktheStereotype: use this secondary hashtag when you want to address gender stereotypes that negatively impact the discourse surrounding access to safe abortion.
• #Sept28: use this secondary hashtag when you tweet about September 28 activities, actions, and/or share messages on safe and legal abortion.

To support our campaign, we have developed some sample tweets to be shared during the whole month of September and especially on September 28.

On Abortion Stories

Abortion stories as diverse as shoes, this #Sept28 step into our stories. #StepIntoOurShoes

‘It’s not as simple as ‘bad girls get abortions and good girls have families.’ #BreaktheStereotype #StepIntoOurShoes http://goo.gl/ygr5sC

‘We are the same women at different times in our lives, each making decisions that are the best for us’ #BreaktheStereotype #StepIntoOurShoes http://goo.gl/pXLjIA

‘Women are not “immoral” for making the choice that is best for their families’ #BreaktheStereotype #StepIntoOurShoes

We choose our futures, we decide our stories #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

Gender stereotypes feed #abortionstigma & discrimination. #BreaktheStereotype #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#StepIntoOurShoes this #Sept28 and fight #AbortionStigma & #GenderStereotypes

#StepIntoOurShoes look for facts, listen to stories, challenge your misconceptions and #BreaktheStereotype. #Sept28

#AbortionStigma limits access to safe abortion services #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#AbortionStigma forces women to seek clandestine and unsafe procedures #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#AbortionStigma criminalizes women who seek abortions #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#AbortionStigma and discrimination force individuals to carry unwanted pregnancies against their will #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#StepIntoOurShoes and realize access to safe and legal abortion is a human right and a social good. #Sept28

#StepIntoOurShoes to understand that queer, trans & intersex individuals also need access abortion services. #Sept28
#StepIntoOurShoes 90% of individuals who had an abortion reported that they were relieved. #Sept28 https://www.guttmacher.org/news-release/2013/one-week-later-women-denied-abortion-feel-more-regret-and-less-relief-those-who

#AbortionStigma is pervasive and endangers women’s health & lives #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#StepIntoOurShoes and support safe and legal abortion services! #Sept28

#Women have the right to make free & informed choices in their sexual & reproductive lives. Speak out against #AbortionStigma! #StepIntoOurShoes

Because of #AbortionStigma women resort to unsafe abortion even in countries where abortion is legal #Sept28 #StepIntoOurShoes

#abortion IS NOT shameful. Speak out against #AbortionStigma and #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#AbortionStigma is directly related to increasing restrictions on the right to access safe & legal abortion. #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

#abortions are a common experience in women’s sexual & reproductive lives. #AbortionStigma #BreakTheStereotype #Sept28

Access to safe & legal abortion is a humanright. This # Sept28 speak out against # AbortionStigma! And # StepIntoOurShoes

#AbortionStigma NOT abortion is detrimental to our mental health. #StepIntoOurShoes

#StepIntoOurShoes to help create safer spaces to talk about abortion stories. #Sept28

#StepIntoOurShoes to understand just how diverse our stories are #AbortionStigma #Sept28

Young, poor & unmarried women are disproportionately affected by the stigmatization of abortion #StepIntoOurShoes #Sept28

There is not one same abortion story. Fight # AbortionStigma. Everyone deserves safe and legal abortion access. #StepIntoOurShoes

There is a not one “type” of person who gets an abortion #BreakTheStereotype #Sept28

1 in 4 women worldwide will have an abortion by age 45. It should be safe and legal. #AbortionStigma #Sept28

You can also engage by sharing our social media images and banners which can be found on: www.september28.org
Update your profile picture

Let's challenge #AbortionStigma & #GenderStereotypes!

Step into Our Shoes

#StepIntoOurShoes

Update your cover photo

"Abortion Stories as Diverse as Shoes, Step Into Our Stories, Step into Our Shoes!"

28th September Global Day of Action:
International Safe Abortion Day

Join the Campaign!

Show your support for September 28 by updating your cover photo and profile picture!

To download posters and social media images, please go to
www.september28.org/visual-resources/
Post September 28 messages!

Post messages using #Sept28 and #StepIntoOurShoes! You can upload the September 28 logo together with your message! The September 28 logo is available in French, Spanish and English.

To download the September 28 logo, please go to www.september28.org/visual-resources/

**Diverse Actions, Different Places, One Demand: Access to Safe & Legal Abortion NOW!**

This September 28, join us in fighting #AbortionStigma and discrimination, by calling on the global community to #StepIntoOurShoes. Let’s counter abortion stigma, challenge gender- and abortion-related stereotypes recognize access to safe and legal abortion for what it is: a necessary social good and a human right!