

Friday, 25 November 2022  
Abahlali baseMjondolo press statement

## 16 Days of Activism

To be in movement means to be in permanent struggle, every day, every week, every year. For us this includes working to build democratic women's power in struggle and in movement. However, it is important for our movement to connect to annual national campaigns when they align with our goals.

The Abahlali baseMjondolo Women's League will hold an event in support of the 16 Days of Activism campaign on 27 November 2022 at Dennis Hurley Centre. The programme is starting at 9:00am and will run to 15:00 pm.

We all know the seriousness of the crisis of systemic violence against women in South Africa. During the national summit on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) the government promised to be accountable, to prioritise the crisis and to build more shelters for survivors.

However, they are failing to keep these promises, and they continue to illegally and violently destroy the homes of poor women who are living in shacks. Some women have moved to shacks to escape from violence and abuse and are then retraumatised and re-abused when the government destroys their shacks.

The point of the workshop is to build confidence and solidarity among women so that they can break the silence about all forms of abuse. We will also discuss how to build open and supportive relationships between parents and children so that children are able to disclose abuse to their parents.

We will also discuss how the law enforcement system is failing women and share information about how to navigate the legal system when dealing with abuse.

HIV remains a crisis in South Africa and while it no longer gets the attention that it used to we need to keep conscientizing, organising and mobilising on this issue. We will deal with this issue too including sharing the latest medical knowledge, working around reducing stigma and looking at the relationship between HIV and violence against women.

We have invited comrades in other progressive organisations to participate in the event, and have decided to invite men to the event too, as violence against women and HIV are general social problems that require all of us to act to try and build a safe and just society, one in which everyone's humanity is recognised and affirmed.

Of course all of this has to be understood in the wider struggle to end patriarchy and build real equality.

Housework and commitment to and participation in struggle must be shared equally between men and women.

As Thomas Sankara said:

“Comrades, there is no true social revolution without the liberation of women. May my eyes never see and my feet never take me to a society where half the people are held in silence. I hear the roar of women's silence. I sense the rumble of their storm and feel the fury of their revolt.”