Create public consciousness against sexual violence by working at the grassroots and within the middle class too in colleges and others venues. A sustained information campaign needs to counter the misinformation spread by police and a desperate state about the realities of these areas through public meetings, pamphlets and posters as well as media reports.

Demand accountability from the State and National Commissions, as the state commissions (SC-ST, SHRC, SCW) have largely been inactive. Our experiences in many states have shown that many times state commissions also tend to align with the ruling party in such issues.

Bring about changes in the legal structure to reflect the reality of sexual assault on women, which would make convictions possible. Provide legal support and other support as well as solidarity for women to pursue justice.

Hold meetings in affected states, build pressure on the local government by adding to the strength of the local groups and offer our solidarity.

Our activities to date include:

A two day solidarity meeting to support the struggles of Chhattisgarh women was held in Raipur on 12th & 13th December, 2009.

In December 2009 a large delegation of WSS women activists attempted to go to Dantewada from Raipur to show solidarity to the women who had filed private complaints of rape. This proved to be unsuccessful as it was stopped by the police and state-sponsored hooligans.

A two day solidarity meeting was held in Imphal on 5th & 6th November, 2010 to understand the struggles of Northeast women and extend nationwide solidarity. The meeting in Imphal was organized to coincide with the 10th anniversary of Irom Sharmila’s fast.

Campaign against the CBI on the Shopian rape and murder case where the CBI has exonerated the police, but charged all others who dared to call it a crime.

Open letter campaigns and protests against illegal detentions and custodial harassment and rape of women in conflict areas, and also against inaction and active connivance of the local administration.

A symposium in Delhi on 30th October, 2010 to enhance the legal understanding of medical and forensic evidence collection in sexual assault cases.

Our Fact Finding (FF) Reports include:

A FF report on the Gajapathy (Orissa) gang rape case of a Kondh Adivasi woman by a police party. It also analyses the larger political context of the region.

A FF report highlighting the sexual assault, illegal detention under laws like UAPA etc and other problems being faced by women under Operation Green Hunt in Jharkhand.

A FF mission of women being molested during a combing operation in Narayanpatna (Orissa) could not be completed due to police harassment. This mission was not a WSS initiated mission, but WSS members participated in it.

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Please contact us at: againstsexualviolence@gmail.com or at:

STOP MILITARIZATION
ROLL BACK GREEN HUNT

You can join hands with us and:

• organize meetings in all states to discuss the issues of sexual violence and state repression against women.
• disseminate fact-finding reports among interested groups and individuals.
• join fact-finding teams to probe cases of state violence against women.
• encourage other women, youth and activists to join us to put an end to sexual violence and state repression.

Please contact us at: againstsexualviolence@gmail.com
Sexual violence against women has become a regular feature in the context of sustained and unchecked state repression across all states in India today. Women against Sexual Violence and State Repression (WSS) is a non funded effort, started after a meeting in Bhopal in November 2009, to put an end to the violence being perpetrated upon our bodies and societies. We are a nationwide network of women from diverse political and social movements comprising of women’s organizations, mass organizations, civil liberty organizations, student and youth organizations, mass movements and individuals. We unequivocally condemn state repression and sexual violence on our women and girls by any perpetrator(s).

Areas of the North East and Kashmir where the Indian army has been deployed for several decades, have witnessed numerous instances of custodial rape, sexual violence, indiscriminate arrests, torture and killings. Armed forces in these areas continue to enjoy impunity for their crimes due to draconian acts such as the 1958 Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA). In the rape and murder cases of Manorama in Manipur, and Nilofer and Asiya Jan at Shopian, justice has been mocked in spite of remarkable mass movements. Mass protests against sexual violence during police raids have led to severe backlash. Even fact finding groups of women seeking to investigate these incidents have not been spared.

In the Advasi inhabited areas of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, the offensive launched by the Government of India in the name of curbing ‘Maoism’ and ushering in ‘development’ has also been accompanied by rampant sexual violence by armed forces as well as by other state-protected vigilante groups and private armies. In addition to encounter killings and arbitrary arrests of activists, sexual violence against women has become integrated into combing operations of state forces in these areas.

Armed offensive has proven to be no solution to any situation of unrest. Although the use of force for more than half a century has not brought peace or development to the people of Kashmir or the North East, the state continues to justify its armed offensives including Operation Green Hunt in Advasi areas as a way of “restoring democracy.” Sexually assaulted women on the other hand, are denied their democratic right to even lodge complaints against the state forces and/or other perpetrators.

Extra juridical violence of the state continues to be supported by draconian laws such as AFSPA, Disturbed Areas Act (DSA), Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act (CSPSPA), Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), National Security Act (NSA) and National Investigative Agency Act (NIA). These laws are being used to suppress the peoples’ resistance against land acquisition and privatization of other resources as seen in the Operation Green Hunt areas. While the armed offensives are ostensibly presented as combating insurgency and/or left-wing extremism, the state is actually facilitating mining and other corporate grab of land and other resources. A ‘cleanse’ of the indigenous populations of the area is also part of the state agenda in some states. Women, who have been at the forefront of democratic movements in these areas, have borne the brunt of the violence and even youth have not been spared.

Despite the advances the women’s movement has made against rape and violence in India, we lack trust in police personnel and find police stations most unsafe for women even under ordinary circumstances. In conflict zones, reports of custodial rapes are increasing. The government inaction is evidence of the state attitude towards women, especially Dalit, Advasi and working class women. We view the assaults on women during the Gujarat carnage, the miscarriage of justice in Kharilanj, Kandhamal, the parading naked of elected Dalit representatives, honour killings ordered by the khap panchayat and the rapes in the Northeast and Chhattisgarh as part of the same continuum.

We strongly assert that:
- Sexual assault is a crime and cannot be justified using political identity, criminal conduct, occupation or any other excuse in any situation or location.
- There is a significant voice in this country, which stands unified with us in the cause of peace, equality, and truly democratic societies. The state however, has opted to label all who make the above assertions as terrorists, extremists, anti-national and/or anti-development. We resist such labeling and strive to end the sexual violence and state repression to move towards a more democratic, peaceful and equitable society.

We must unite across all states and raise our voices against:
- The increasing use of rape by the state forces and other perpetrators as a means to intimidate the community and suppress struggling women especially in areas and situations of conflict.
- The police who do little to secure justice for victims of rape and consistently undermine women’s struggle for justice by fouling up investigations.
- The draconian laws that permit the presence of and provide impunity to the armed forces amidst civilian populations, which have been responsible for the burgeoning of sexual crimes against women, torture and killings, and also led to the complete disruption of normal life.

And strive to achieve the following:
- Immediate legal and punitive action against all accused and perpetrators of sexual assault against women that have been registered in AFSPA zones, under Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and under Indian Penal Code section 376 (A) and 376 (B). Action against the administration in case of miscarriage of justice and/or inaction.
- Justice in the rape complaints made before the NRHC from Chhattisgarh, and other cases that have been filed against the security forces in Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh.
- Repealing all draconian laws including AFSPA, CSPSPA, UAPA, NSA, etc and all armed offensives against the people in North East, Kashmir and Advasi areas and replace these with political initiatives and peace dialogues with local communities, concerned activists, civil society representatives and the state.
- Disbanding of outfits like Salwa Judum, Special Protection Officers and other state or private sponsored militia.
- Ending witchhunts of individuals, jai sanghautam, human rights defenders and other activists and releasing all political prisoners and activists who have been arrested while struggling for social and political justice.
- Repealing the SEZ Act and launching a public enquiry into cases of land transfer under it.
- Rendering void all MOUs that have accorded rights of land and other resources in Advasi and other areas to corporations and private parties from India or outside and restoring land and rehabilitating the displaced people, for e.g. in Chhattisgarh as per the Supreme Court directives.
- Promoting democratic values that ensure justice and equity for all, where Advasi, Dalit, working class and other women and youth will not be subjected to sexual or other forms of violence.

A democratic Government must also address the long-standing socio-economic grievances of the people in these areas. The development that people want can take place only if we strive to create the space and conditions for truly democratic societies.

WSS campaigns aim to:
- Reveal through reports and investigations not just specific incidents of sexual violence, but also the larger political context of a region as it manifests in the types of violence it faces. For e.g.; In Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa, the agenda of the government-corporate nexus is to plunder the natural resources of the Advasi dominated forest areas and ‘cleanse’ the area by removing these populations.

Stop sexual assault and killings in the name of Development.