

## STRATEGY PAPER

### Creating memes for empowerment of women survivors

#### BACKGROUND

This activity was envisioned at the WAVE Training Institute in December 2016. The participants came to the conclusion that it is necessary to engage and create awareness among young people (18-25 years old) in the field of preventing and combating violence against women as well as domestic violence. The medium for that engagement and awareness-raising would be a meme “competition” (contest) on national levels. The best memes would then be shared, both through social media and through a (physical) exhibition. In order to keep the message positive and educational (and rather subversive, since memes, as a medium, can often become a field to insult Others), and in order to sensitize target audiences, a common theme of **RECOVERY (after suffering from violence)** was chosen. The memes should deal with relevant topics regarding recovery, such as **support services, the right to live free from fear/violence, empowerment of women, giving survivors a voice, the needs of women survivors of violence**, etc. The question remained – how to make the best use of this medium, to make it serve our purpose, ideas, and the campaign as a whole. We have decided to synergize the Meme contest with the other wide-reaching activity in this year’s campaign – the activity which aims to be seen, experienced, and loud, that is the Peace Day Protest (taking place on 21 September).

#### GUIDELINES FOR THE MEME CONTEST

**Important: to emphasize that violence has nothing to do with fun. We do not want jokes about violence. Instead, we want to sensitize our audiences, with a special emphasis on young men. That way, memes can become tools in an awareness campaign. Because violence needs to be addressed. Speaking out about violence is better than staying silent.**

Keep in mind that it would be best to collect memes which could be used in the campaigning work of your organization.

**Due:** 12 August 2017 by 23:59 (local time). No exceptions.

**Who can enter?** Creative individuals and groups.

**How many entries can you submit?** As many as you want.

**What kind of memes are eligible for this contest?** Picture memes in form of .jpg, .png, or similar. Text only is allowed, but no animated gifs or videos.

**How can memes be submitted?** All memes need to be emailed to national campaigners (write down your e-mail).

**Are there any specific requirements for the meme content?** Must follow the theme – recovery, empowerment, support services, the right to live free from fear/violence, the needs of women - survivors, etc. Authors need to submit their work / meme that will be judged by national campaigner(s). Please make it explicit that it is not allowed to use profanity or derogatory language. Memes should contain a positive,

#### Tools for creating memes

Though tailoring a good meme takes some effort, a meme itself is simple to create with these tools:

[Meme Generator](#)

[Meme Crunch](#)

[Quick Meme](#)

inspired / inspiring message.

**We suggest to create 2-3 categories for the contest, for example:**

“Best use of theme – Recovery & Empowerment”

“Most original use of a well-known meme source”

“Most creative meme”

**How many memes can be chosen to get the certificate?** As many as you see appropriate. It is not necessary to announce best memes in each of the category.

**Are there prizes?** Yes.

**What are the prizes?** This is up to the national campaigners to decide. WAVE Office will provide certificates acknowledging the authors for their submission (mailed as pdf files). Best entries will also be published online, exhibited on the WAVE conference, and possibly used in the work of the campaigners and member organizations.

### Important dates

**5 May** – Activity announced and the meme contest is launched in participating countries

**12 August** – International Youth Day – deadline for meme submissions

**18 September** – best memes announced by campaigners and shared via social media

**October** – presentation of best memes at the WAVE Conference

## WHAT IS AN INTERNET MEME?

Internet meme is one of the most popular genres of Facebook postings by adults. Memes are usually not produced by Facebook users, but rather they tend to be shared from popular internet sites. People who don't want to express their opinions directly share moral memes that indicate their values and beliefs. These may be quite personal, as are the comments they subsequently receive from others. Memes provide a subtler way to hint at how a person feels and how they themselves would like to be seen by their friends.

For the purposes of our campaign, we will concentrate on **moral memes**, which are today one of the more popular visual postings. By sharing moral memes, people hope to express deeply felt feelings that others will share and support. The indirect quality of the meme also means that people feel able to publicly share some political criticisms (e.g. of their government) that previously they would have only shared privately with their family and close friends. The consequence is that much more people are encouraged to participate in the public sphere that was previously reserved to just a few-- local politicians, intellectuals, and other people with higher cultural capital. This is the point we want to capitalize from in our meme contest. The content should reflect the values we support in this campaign!

### Definition of a meme

“A meme consists of any idea or behaviour that can pass from one person to another by learning or imitation. Examples include thoughts, ideas, theories, gestures, practices, fashions, habits, songs, and dances. Memes propagate themselves and can move through the cultural sociosphere; they are contagious.” ([source](#))