

GET PEOPLE TALKING
ABOUT DEMAND DIGNITY

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SPEAK OUT FOR DIGNITY



Eriberto Ayala, a representative of the Sawhoyamaya Indigenous community of Paraguay, talks to a participant at the World Social Forum, Belém, Brazil, January 2009.

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A 'SPEAK OUT FOR DIGNITY' EVENT CAN GIVE PEOPLE THE CHANCE TO TALK ABOUT WHY IMPROVING HUMAN RIGHTS IS ESSENTIAL TO DEFEATING POVERTY

It's a good way of listening to what people have to say as well as generating public and media interest.

ACTION

Organize an event where people can discuss the connection between dignity, human rights and poverty. You could also pick some of the key Demand Dignity issues and themes – such as the right to maternal health, the right to housing and the right to a healthy environment.

Your event could be a day, a half day or an evening. Alternatively, you could hold a series of events – over a few weeks or in different villages, towns and cities. If you do this, you could promote the events together as a wider initiative.

GETTING STARTED

Think about how you can encourage people to join in the debate while keeping it focused on the campaign and its issues.

IDEAS

- Decide what themes or issues you want to discuss. Do you want the debate to focus on the main campaign theme or specific issues?

- Do you want to invite guest speakers? Can you get people who are directly affected by the issues to speak about them?
- Think about where you could hold your event. Can you convert a public place into a “dignity space” by marking it out with banners and displaying the campaign symbol? There might be places that have special significance or that are associated with debating – for example, under a tree, in an open space, the village hall, the chief's house, a town square, a café. It could be anywhere where people might associate the space with public speaking and debate.
- You could invite key decision-makers and policy-makers and ask them to respond to the issues being discussed. Or, if you run a series of events, you could collect some of the testimonies and show them to decision-makers and policy-makers at regional or national events.

SHARE IT

Getting people to talk about what dignity means to them is an important part of the campaign. Write down, record and film your debate, individual speeches and testimonies.

PRACTICAL ISSUES

- How can you make a space that will encourage people to speak out? Make sure it isn't too intimidating.
- Make sure that speakers can be heard, particularly in an open space. You might need to set up a stage or use microphones.
- You will need someone to host the event and introduce the speakers.
- Think about how long you want people to speak for and how you can make sure the debate moves on so that you cover everything that you want to.
- Think about how you can encourage people who attend the event to join the debate. Will there be a chance to ask questions or to have their say about dignity. Would you like people to get into groups and talk about specific issues?
- Make sure the campaign symbol and slogans can be seen.
- Set up a stall or have activists on hand who can sign people up to Demand Dignity and Amnesty International.
- You might need to get permission to hold your debate in a public place.
- Make sure the media know about what you are doing – see Action card 4.