

Someone's Daughter Launches the Mobile App "Voice It"

A woman is subjected to various physical and mental afflictions in society. The Rotaract club of University of Sri Jayewardenepura launched a project violence against women, called **"Someone's Daughter"**. In the modern world, social media plays a pivotal role in facilitating communication. The campaign waged on social media was capable of impacting the community to a great degree that it eventually was awarded as the **Most Outstanding Social Media Campaign for the year 2019-20 at the 30th Rotaract District Assembly last year.**

On the 9th of January, this year **"Voice It"** the Android Mobile Application developed by Someone's Daughter was launched as an across-the-board attempt to facilitate the process of lodging complaints against acts of violence against women. **"Voice It"** is developed with the approbation of the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs of Sri Lanka by Mr. Dulanga Chamath, fashioning a virtual help agent for the people, especially women and girls to seek succor, consultation, and other essential services both at the scene and in the backwash of violence and injustice. **The user of Voice It gains the opportunity of contacting the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs at any instance, professional support is required which is the most significant feature of the app.** That is, one can contact the Ministry through just a single touch on their phone. It is the hotline **"1938"**, available around the clock for anyone to reach for help at any time. The app includes a listicle of contact details of counselors from each province and other useful contact numbers that can come to anyone's rescue straight away forbye.

The prime objective of introducing this app expected to serve as an effective countervailing force against such gratuitous and appalling acts is to take the edge off and in the fullness of time to preclude violence against women and girls. This Android app is available on Google Play Store for free download. Following are the threefold features of the app in detail.

Feature 01- Tolerating violence in blind silence is not going to stop the violence, it only gives it wings. This feature of the App allows one to directly contact the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs to report any scene or act of violence with just a tap at their fingertip. This is directly connected to the hotline 1938 which is available around the clock for anyone from any corner of the island to reach for immediate professional help and succor.

Feature 02- Most of the time, people are not aware of the existence of helplines and this only worsens the issue. The second most significant feature of this application is that it gives you

access to a list of multiple helplines which you can contact anytime in need, such as 1919 (National Information Centre), 1938 (line for immediate assistance on women affairs), etc. With this feature, you no longer have to scour for helplines and hotlines anywhere which are available at hand to lend you a helping hand in the face of mishaps.

Feature 03- It is about time we realized the paramount importance of counselling to help fight the psychological trauma caused by all kinds of violence and harassment: psychological harassment, physical harassment, statutory rape, incest, female genital mutilation, and suchlike. This feature of the Voice IT App incorporates a list of various counselling centers administered by the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs available across the island and their hotlines for anyone to reach for professional counselling services provided by licensed counsellors and psychologists.

The ‘**Voice It**’ Android Mobile Application was a tremendous turning point of the project Someone’s Daughter and throughout the past years we have executed various initiatives to stop violence against women.

Last year the project, “Someone’s Daughter” was launched under two phases. In the first phase, a two-fold social media campaign was mounted. Twelve renowned personalities expressed their opinion on violence against women and in addition to that, an online quote challenge was issued to the Rotaractors across the island to express their opinions regarding this. Then, a series of articles was published emphasizing the public perspective on the violence experienced by women.

In the second phase, the Yeheliya foundation partnered with the project as the knowledge partner and released three important videos on cybercrime, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. Furthermore, another video on seeking legal advice to take action against violence against women was also released online.

Then, by collaborating with seven other Rotaract clubs, a series of videos featuring personal opinions and perspectives of Rotaractors was made available to be streamed. Next, a public survey was done to measure the awareness and knowledge of the general public regarding this prevalent issue. As the next step, a series of videos featuring the stories of some people who had fallen victim to violence was posted online without revealing their true identity, which enabled them to go public incognito with their poignant stories.

The series also featured all the hotlines and other relevant details of organizations that are capable of taking action against violence against women and support women who are afflicted. The digital magazine of Someone's Daughter was published online as a compilation of articles and transcripts of the videos in phase one with an analysis of the public survey.

The project is currently being run for the third consecutive time with some changes to its main body. This time the project's primary focus is on empowering women to fight for their freedom and emancipation to stand up on their own feet to become who they want to be. In this crusade for gender equality, the project is currently carrying out its initial digital campaigns on social media.

At the moment a video series called “**Think**” is streamed both on Someone's Daughter's Facebook page whom more than two thousand people have liked and on YouTube. “Think” the sporadic video series focuses on the discrimination, sexism, and male chauvinism that the majority of women suffer. Apart from Think, a video podcast series titled “**Let 'em Have Power**” is broadcasted featuring exemplary female figures of the island to empower all aspiring female professionals out there. The public plaudits and feedback received on both the podcast and “Think” are highly constructive.

In fine, Someone's Daughter is carried out to attain the goal of debunking misogynistic and male-supremacist ideas from the society and redress the balance for women to stand on their own feet without being dependent on anyone. Due to the resurgence of Covid-19, almost all the physical activities associated with the project have been pulled out. Be that as it may, all the other virtual activities are being done as planned without letting the project's impact dwindle in any way. Not only the women who are already on the receiving end but also the ones who can undergo the slings and arrows of violence down the road will benefit from Someone's Daughter the project.

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