



## **RAPID RESPONSE TOOLKIT**

### **DARFUR WOMEN ACTION GROUP**

Darfur Women Action Group (DWAG) is taking a unique approach to fighting and preventing genocide:

- DWAG empowers the most affected communities by building strong leadership among those who are historically excluded and enables them to lead and foster positive change within their communities.
- DWAG connects survivors and their supporters by creating a citizen-led movement of anti-genocide activists within the United States and internationally
- DWAG mobilizes, educates, engages and empowers these activists to become a strong voice for those who have been silenced. We believe this will bring about sustainable policy changes needed to change the way the international community responds to genocide in Darfur and elsewhere around the world.

Therefore, we invite you to join us to bring our mission to reality. Together, we **can** make a difference!

#### **What is the situation? Past and present:**

The genocide that began thirteen years ago in Darfur continues today. Over four million of the Darfur population are severely affected. Over three million people have been displaced and live in dangerous conditions in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Darfur, where they have been since 2003.

Nearly one million people are refugees in neighboring countries. Over 373,000 in Chad alone, and countless others are scattered in South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Jordan, Syria, Israel and Egypt and living in deplorable conditions.

In recent years, the violence has increased and intensified more than at any time since the genocide began in the early 2000s.

In 2016, over 400,000 people were displaced and the Sudanese government increased the severity of its attack by using chemical weapons and dropped over 250 bombs over areas inhabited by civilians. In the first quarter of 2015, over 150 villages were completely destroyed and burned down by government forces, and over 233,000 people have been newly displaced. In 2013, over 460,000 people were displaced, and just last year more than 500,000 people were forced to flee their homes. Rape is used as a weapon of this genocide and not only inflicts pain on its victims, but is used to dehumanize the entire community. In October 2014 over 221 women and girls were raped and tortured by the Sudanese army. Many of the victims were still of elementary school age. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident but part of a well orchestrated plan by the government to exterminate the Darfuri people. Attacks are not only limited to physical death but are used as tactics for social death as well. Darfuri university students have been targeted by the government forces for speaking out; many have been kidnapped, tortured, raped, and killed. As a result, many students are now fleeing and leaving school for their own safety. In addition, about 60% of children in camps are of school age but have no access to schooling. The result? The inevitable creation of an entire uneducated generation of Darfuri children.

Sadly the response from the international community has been minimal, and many countries remain silent in the face of this escalated violence.

That is why Darfur Women Action Group is determined to both maintain the attention on the horrific human rights abuses in Darfur and to change the international community's lack of an effective response to Darfur and other genocides.

And so, the Rapid Response Network was created!

### **About the Rapid Response Network:**

The Rapid Response Network is a cohort of dedicated DWAG's volunteers from the United States and from around the world who refuse to remain silent in the face of genocide. They are using their voices and their talents to speak up, amplify the voices of the victims, and encourage others to join the fight against genocide. Rapid Responders also work to rally support for Darfur Women Action Group.

### **Who Can Join?**

We invite anyone who wants to be inspired and inspire others to make a difference in the lives of those who need it most to become a Rapid Responder. If you are enthusiastic, energetic and passionate about human rights, women's rights, genocide prevention and want to be an activist in one of these areas, this is the program for you.

As a Rapid Responder you will receive up-to-date information about the situation in Darfur which will allow you to educate yourself and those around you about the Darfur genocide. We are asking individuals from all walks of life to join our cause – whether an individual activist, college or high school student, working or retired adult – all you need is the desire to make a difference.

### **Goal of the Rapid Response Network Campaign:**

The overall goal of the Rapid Response Network is to promote continued awareness and provide education about the longstanding genocide in Darfur and to reach out to more people in order to rally support of individuals who will not tolerate silence in the face of genocide and who are willing to do something to help. We will utilize our Rapid Responders Support to change the international community's ineffective response to the genocide in Darfur, as well as any future genocides.

### **Campaign Objectives:**

- Identify interested individuals for short and long-term engagement in our advocacy.
- Mobilize resources for Darfur Women Action Group.
- Build a foundation for long-term movement building.
- Promote and increase genocide awareness and education via survivors and first hand witnesses.
- Strategize outreach processes to individuals and groups.
- Develop leadership among anti-genocide activists.

### **Joining the Rapid Response Network:**

1. To sign up to be a Rapid Responder, e-mail [outreach@darfurwomenaction.org](mailto:outreach@darfurwomenaction.org) and provide your name, e-mail, city and state of residence.
2. Be trained by DWAG leaders to be a DWAG ambassador in your state.
3. Once becoming a trained member, you may utilize our suggested ideas of engagement or create your own to help raise awareness.

### **Engagement Plan of Action:**

The following steps will act as a guide to help individuals in working towards the campaign's goals:

#### **Online:**

Rapid Responders operate largely (but not exclusively) on social media to increase the scope of their influence. We ask that Rapid Responders engage with DWAG's social media accounts, as well as utilize their own, to expand the scope of their audience. Rapid Responders are encouraged to share news articles and events on Facebook and

Twitter. We encourage Rapid Responders to share their own stories about how they got involved in anti-genocide advocacy. Through social media attention, we can increase awareness and work toward ending this long-standing genocide.

DWAG's Online Presence:

- Twitter: @DWAG6
- Hashtag: #Respond2Darfur
- Facebook: DWAG Rapid Response Network
- Facebook: Love Darfur
- Facebook Darfur Women Action Group
- Website: [www.darfurwomenaction.org](http://www.darfurwomenaction.org)
- Join e-mail list for weekly updates

### **Offline:**

In addition to online engagement, we encourage our Rapid Responders to engage in a number of other activities, all with our assistance and resources, such as the following:

- Organize movie screenings of survivors' stories to see how genocide has devastated people's lives and the region as a whole.
- Send letters or make appointments to speak to your elected officials to express your concerns about the situation in Darfur.
- Participate in DWAG's monthly conference calls/policy briefings to receive up-to-date information on Darfur and upcoming events, as well as train to become an anti-genocide activist.
- Hand out DWAG's educational materials to family, friends, classmates, co-workers, and anyone else who might be interested in learning about this genocide and helping the people of Darfur.
- Participate in our DWAG events, such as protests, rallies, movie screenings, our annual symposium, and more.
- Host your own DWAG events, such as inviting a DWAG speaker to discuss being a genocide survivor or organize a fund-raiser event to support our life-saving projects on the ground in Darfur.
- Join our team of volunteers. We have opportunities for all levels of dedication.
  - One Time Volunteers: website design, photographer and videographer for an event.
  - Ongoing Volunteering and Internship Opportunities: Marketing, graphic design, grant writing, event and fundraising, communication and media relations.

If you would like to participate in any of the aforementioned events or find more information on volunteering opportunities, DWAG members are able and willing to assist

you every step of the way. We will provide materials, resources, and any additional assistance you may need. We are also available 24/7 to answer any questions you may have. We want to help you in every possible way so that together we can raise awareness to ultimately end the first genocide of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – the longest genocide in history.

### **Reward and recognition of Rapid Responders:**

DWAG will reward outstanding Rapid Responders who recruit or mobilize the most people or who become actively involved by granting the following:.

- Sponsor your travel and accommodation to our annual symposium.
- Feature you in our website and possible other media platform as a DWAG hero.
- Provide you with our Certificate of Recognition that you can use for your future reference for job, school or any other professional opportunity.

### **Conclusion:**

Since the Holocaust, modern world leaders have failed to respond to genocide, whenever and wherever it occurs. Genocide is the ugliest form of inhumanity and DWAG aims to change how the world reacts to it, starting with Darfur. Every action, big or small, makes a difference for the women, men, and children living in these horrific conditions. Our Rapid Responders have chosen to help the millions of suffering Darfuris by amplifying their voice, taking action, and joining Darfur Women Action Group's Rapid Response Network. Only with our collective effort can we make the world's promise of "Never Again" a reality.