

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence - The Importance of Tech Allies in the 16 Days of Activism

By Kim Chandler McDonald

During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, one thing is clear: we cannot address these issues alone. Survivors of technology-facilitated abuse deserve not just our empathy but active, meaningful support. This is where technology allies—platforms, cybersecurity professionals, and advocates—play a critical role.

Why Tech Allies Matter

Technology-facilitated violence thrives in the gaps left by inadequate tools and systems. Abusers exploit vulnerabilities in platforms, from privacy settings to reporting mechanisms. Survivors often face the daunting task of navigating these gaps alone, without the resources or support needed to reclaim their safety. This is where tech allies step in, using their expertise and platforms to close these gaps.

Tech allies are not just innovators; they are enablers of trust and safety. By prioritising data privacy, digital security, and user protection, they help ensure survivors are no longer left to bear the burden of securing their digital spaces alone. Solutions like secure data-sharing platforms, such as 3 Steps Data, can play a critical role by offering survivors and organisations tools that provide control, transparency, and robust protection against misuse.

The Role of Platforms

Platforms have a responsibility to prioritise safety by design. This means building proactive tools that:

- Detect and remove abusive content swiftly.
- Provide users with clear, accessible reporting mechanisms.
- Incorporate features that prevent abuse, such as warning users of potential risks when sharing personal data.

These measures require a focus on strong data governance and robust digital security frameworks. Platforms must also invest in human-led moderation teams that understand the nuances of abuse, especially its gendered dimensions.

Collaboration for Change

The tech industry cannot operate in isolation. Collaboration is key—between platforms, governments, and advocacy organisations—to create a comprehensive response to technology-facilitated abuse. Advocacy groups bring survivor-centred insights, while tech allies bring the tools to address the problem at scale. Data security solutions like 3 Steps Data exemplify how innovative technology can support these collaborations, ensuring sensitive information is handled securely while enabling transparency and compliance.

Together, these partnerships can create stronger laws, better tools, and greater accountability, paving the way for a safer digital world.

Empowering Survivors

Being an ally means more than providing tools; it means empowering survivors to reclaim their digital spaces. This includes:

- Offering accessible resources, such as guides on securing accounts or reporting abuse.
- Amplifying survivor voices to ensure their needs are central to solutions.
- Providing secure systems that prevent further exploitation of sensitive information, such as encrypted data-sharing platforms.

A Call to Action for Tech Allies

The 16 Days of Activism is a time for reflection, but more importantly, for action. If you're a platform, advocate, or technologist, ask yourself:

- Are we doing enough to protect survivors?
- Are our systems designed to prioritise safety?
- Are we collaborating with others to drive change?

The digital world should be a space of empowerment, not harm. By standing together as allies, leveraging innovative solutions like 3 Steps Data, and fostering collaboration, we can create a future where survivors are supported, abusers are held accountable, and safety is the norm—not the exception.