



# A revolution of ONE BILLION

**A BRUTAL GANG RAPE IN INDIA**, the shooting of a 14-year-old women's education rights activist in Pakistan, and countless instances of rape and spousal abuse right here on our doorstep... It's an unthinkable reality that one in three women globally will be raped or beaten in their lifetime. That means one billion women have been violated across the world – it is this startling fact that lies at the heart of Eve Ensler's One Billion Rising (OBR) campaign.

Eve – who gained prominence in 1996 as the writer of the movement-redefining *Vagina Monologues* – is calling on women and men across the world to join the initiative on February 14 to dance or rise up together in a bid to oppose violence.

"Ending violence against women is as important as ending poverty, or Aids or global warming," Eve writes in her [Guardian.co.uk](http://Guardian.co.uk) column. Donna Karan, Thandie Newton, Charlize Theron, Robert Redford, Kerry Washington, Rosario Dawson and millions of people around the world have pledged their support for OBR in the year that also marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the V-Day fundraising and protest movement.

Another outspoken champion of OBR is Anne Hathaway, who was interviewed by Eve for a US women's mag last month. "It's hard to wrap my head around the fact that a billion women have been raped or beaten – just the enormity of that. When I was in college, I'd heard that one in four women would be raped, and I thought, God, that means I must know someone who was raped. Sure enough, I found out a week later that a friend had been. A billion is too big because one is too big," she said.

At the time of writing, there were already 10 South

African events indicated on the web-map, and that number is growing every day. Zoom out, and you'll see a proliferation of pink spots stretched across five continents, marking thousands of events happening in over 180 countries globally – 80 in the UK alone.

Locally, business woman and rape survivor Andy Kawa has partnered her grass roots anti-rape organisation Kwanele Enuf-is-Enuf with the Nelson Mandela Bay OBR event.

Andy was abducted and gang raped in Port Elizabeth in 2010. "From the very time I was released, I told myself that I would not be silent about what happened because I was very lucky to be alive. I decided to talk about the plight of rape victims and survivors," she told Algoa FM recently.

In Soweto, you can join Story Scarves for a yarn bomb – a street art movement, using thread instead of spray-paint – or you can dance your way through a nia movement session dedicated to OBR in Observatory, Cape Town. Either way, take part! ■ Check out the website [Onebillionrising.org](http://Onebillionrising.org) for more event details or to list your own OBR event.

