

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2023-03

TO: All Heads of Executive Departments, National Government Agencies, Bureaus, Offices, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Government Owned and/or Controlled Corporations (GOCCs), Legislative and Judiciary Branches, Constitutional Bodies, Other Instrumentalities of the National Government, Local Government Units, and All Others Concerned

SUBJECT: Guide for the 2023 Observance of the 18-day Campaign to End Violence Against Women (VAW)

DATE: September 27, 2023

1. Purpose

This Memorandum Circular shall guide all stakeholders on the observance of the 18-day Campaign to End Violence Against Women (VAW) from November 25 to December 12, 2023.

2. Campaign Background and its Legal Bases

Despite significant and continuing efforts of the government in bridging the gender gap, [violence against women \(VAW\)](#) is still pervasive and entrenched in Philippine society. The 2022 National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) released by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that 1 in 5 women (18%) aged 15-49 had experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence from their husband or intimate partner. Globally, about 1 in 3 women (30%) had experienced either physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner or non-partner in their lifetime as indicated by estimates published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

In addition to being an offshoot of gender bias and a severe violation of women's rights and fundamental freedoms, VAW is considered a major public health problem as it:

- affects a woman's attitudes, behaviors, and sense of self;
- limits her potential, growth, and personal development;
- jeopardizes her health, safety, and welfare; and
- impacts not only her family but even her community.

Hence, united efforts are highly needed to address, prevent, and eventually stop VAW worldwide.

Cognizant of the issue, the United Nations launched the "UNITE by 2030 to End Violence against Women" This UNITE initiative "calls on governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, the media, and the entire UN system to join forces in addressing the global pandemic of violence against women and girls." Globally, the civil society-led "16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence" is also held every year calling for actions to end all forms of gender-based violence.

The Philippine government has intensified efforts to spark discussions and raise awareness on violence against women and girls alongside local and national women's groups. One of these continuing initiatives is the annual participation in the global campaign to end VAW, which the Philippines has been observing since 2002.

Subsequently, in 2006, then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed Proclamation 1172 to extend the national campaign to 18 days until December 12 otherwise known as the International Day Against Trafficking to mark the adoption of the "Protocol To Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (TIPs), especially Women and Children" in Palermo, Italy back in 2000. As a result, November 25 to December 12 of every year was declared as the "18-day Campaign to End VAW" in the Philippines.

Spearheaded by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (IACVAWC), the 18-day campaign is anchored on the following national mandates:

- [Proclamation 1172, Series of 2006](#) - Declaring November 25 to December 12 of Every Year as the "18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women (VAW)"; and
- [Republic Act No. 10398](#) - Declaring November 25 of Every Year as the "National Consciousness Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children".

3. Campaign Theme and Objectives

For the year 2023, the 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women will center around the recurring six-year (2022-2027) theme:: **"UNITEd for a VAW-free Philippines."**

This theme aligns with [UN Women's UNITE by 2030 to End VAW Campaign \(UNITE\)](#), highlighting the powerful impact of combining individual efforts towards a collaborative and united thrust for a VAW-free Philippines.

The 2023 campaign specifically, it aims to:

- Revisit the amendments and provide the public with updated information on laws protecting women and girls, specifically the [Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004 \(RA 9262\)](#), The Anti-Rape Law ([RA 8353](#) as amended by [RA 11648](#)), [Safe Spaces Act \(RA 11313\)](#), [Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 \(RA 7877\)](#), and Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2022 ([RA 9208](#) as amended by [RA 11862](#));
- Aid in disseminating information about the status of VAW in the Philippines and the results of the 2022 National Demographic and Health Survey data on VAW; and
- Gather public support for the advocacy and solicit shared insights on their level of awareness and knowledge on VAW.

4. Guide for the Observance of the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW

4.1. Campaign Activities for 2023

The PCW will lead the conduct of several activities for the campaign. Listed below are the activities and information on how stakeholders can participate.

4.1.1. The **online campaign launch on November 25, 2023** with the premier of the PCW-conducted street interviews “**Alam Mo VAW?**”, a video presentation of PCW-conducted interviews with people on the street will be made available with the goal of asking and measuring the level of awareness and knowledge of the public on VAW-related laws.

4.1.2. Sharing of social media materials on “**VAWck to Basics Series**” where dedicated number of days will be allotted to specific to specific topics on VAW and VAW-related laws.

4.1.3. Sharing of the livestream of the “**Bawat Pilipino para sa VAW-Free Pilipinas**” On-site program in collaboration with IACVAWC on November 28, 2023. It will also serve as a venue to preview the public’s awareness on VAW-related laws and their reactions to VAW-related situations through the showing of the VAW Social Experiment and “Alam Mo VAW?” Street Interviews and to launch the IACVAWC website.

4.1.4. Sustaining the use of **#VAWfreePH** as the official 18-day campaign hashtag in support for the advocacy towards a VAW-free Philippines.

4.1.5 Participate in the **#VowToEndVAW Commitment Campaign** through online posting of photos with the “Stop VAW” sign to allow the public to express their thoughts and suggestions on how to achieve a VAW-free Philippines. They can post their ‘Stop VAW’ photos under the hashtag **#VowToEndVAW**.

4.1.6 A trip down memory lane via **The Orange Exhibit: Journey towards a VAW-free Philippines** which will feature milestones from 2002 when the country started participating in the global campaign to end VAW up to the present time.

4.1.7. Participate in the **Orange Your Icon Advocacy Initiative** that enjoins participating government offices and private organizations to color its major landmarks or iconic spots with orange during the campaign period to encourage public discourse and for disseminating the message of zero-tolerance for VAW.

4.1.8. Participate through your comments and calls and support, and share the **Anti-VAWlitaktakan Online Program** which will be shown live on the [PCW Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#) on December 5 and 12, 2023.

4.1.9. Dance and express your Anti-VAW support through the **#DotheMachoChoir challenge** based on a radio plug developed by PCW in 2018 will be open to all interested participants within the campaign period only.

4.2. Proposed Activities for Stakeholders

In line with the 2023 observance of the 18-day campaign, participating government agencies and instrumentalities, non-government organizations, sectoral groups, private entities, civil society organizations, and gender and development (GAD) and VAW mechanisms at the national, regional, and local levels are enjoined to conduct any of the following activities:

4.2.1. Presentation of the campaign activities and the use of the “All-Women Cast Lupang Hinirang” video in the flag-raising ceremonies of government agencies and instrumentalities, local government units (LGUs), and other organizations during the campaign period to encourage the participation of their staffers and stakeholders. The “Lupang Hinirang” video can be downloaded from the [PCW Digital GAD Library](#);

4.2.2. Printing and display of the official campaign banner in conspicuous places. The design, specifications, and guidelines on the use of the banner are already available in the PCW website. Interested organizations can integrate their official logo in the placeholder so that due acknowledgment will be given for their contribution to the campaign;

4.2.3. Participation in the online campaign under the hashtags #VAWfreePH and #VowToEndVAW. Stakeholders are encouraged to upload the official logo, banner, advocacy videos, and other campaign materials on their websites and social media accounts and share VAW-related news, articles, photos, and other relevant information online. They can also use the 18-day Campaign to End VAW Facebook Profile Frame, which is available on the PCW Facebook page. They can download, send, and use digital sticker packs about VAW on messaging platforms like Viber and Telegram as well;

4.2.4. Development, production, and distribution of campaign-related information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to their personnel, clients, and the general public. Stakeholders can reproduce PCW collaterals, provided that the content, design, and integrity of the materials are retained;

4.2.5. Public showing of videos on VAW, anti-VAW laws, and VAW-related services through electronic billboards, television/radio programs, and other platforms/venues managed by the stakeholders’ offices. PCW-produced videos can be downloaded for free via the [PCW Digital GAD Library](#), [PCW YouTube channel](#), and [PCW Facebook page](#). PCW does not endorse any film or movie for the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW, and leaves the discretion on the rental or purchase of such to the management of the organization, subject to the applicable rules on procurement, financial management, and auditing; ;

4.2.6. Conduct of orientations or forums on anti-VAW laws to inform internal and external stakeholders on their core provisions. For government and private entities tasked to implement specific provisions of anti-VAW laws, the conduct of internal discussions, capacity-building activities, and learning sessions is also encouraged;

4.2.7. Installation of “The Orange Exhibit: Journey towards a VAW-free Philippines” (design can be downloaded through this link: <https://bit.ly/orangeexhibit>) at their respective offices or chosen public places within the campaign period. Stakeholders are also encouraged to develop their own “Orange Exhibit” featuring their agencies’ milestones and achievements in fighting VAW and their VAW-related services for survivors;

4.2.8. Organization of VAW-related activities and respective ceremonies. Conduct of relevant, timely, appropriate, and impactful activities related to the advocacy during the 18-day campaign period with internal and external stakeholders as participants is advised especially for the purpose of creating a space for meaningful discussions about the campaign and what it stands for;

4.2.9. Coordination and collaboration with other government regional offices or LGUs in holding activities at the level of regional GAD committees, regional and local inter-agency committees on trafficking in persons (TIPs) and VAWC, regional/field offices, and LGUs; and

4.2.10. Gathering of support from fellow males and conduct of activities highlighting positive masculinity and male advocates’ important role in the anti-VAW advocacy for all Men Opposed against Violence Everywhere (MOVE) Chapters.

5. Non-partisan Nature of the Campaign

The annual observance of the 18-day Campaign to End VAW is strictly a non-partisan activity. To maintain the focus on the advocacy, the PCW is discouraging the use of any PCW-produced material for political gains, favors, and grandstanding and is therefore reminding public officials, employees and other stakeholders of the significance and integrity of the campaign.

6. Issuance of Parallel Memorandum by Oversight Agencies

All participating government offices at the national, regional, and local levels and other stakeholders are advised to release their respective issuances with detailed guidelines, activities, and reminders concerning the 18-day Campaign to End VAW as deemed appropriate and relevant to their mandates.

7. Use of Gender and Development (GAD) Budget

Expenses for the activities of the 18-day Campaign to End VAW may be charged to the GAD Budget and be reflected in the FY 2023 GAD Accomplishment Reports of the participating government agencies and instrumentalities, provided that the said undertakings are organized in line with the theme, objectives, and focus of the campaign set forth in this Circular; are relevant to their respective functions or mandates.

Nothing in this circular shall be interpreted to amend previously set policies on GAD Planning and Budgeting or any procurement (including RA 9184), finance, and administrative-related policies set by appropriate oversight agencies.

8. Details for Sending Inquiries and Feedback

For more information, comments, and suggestions, stakeholders may visit the 2023 campaign page:

<https://pcw.gov.ph/2023-18-day-campaign-to-end-violence-against-women/>.

They can also visit the PCW social media accounts (www.facebook.com/PCWgovph, www.twitter.com/PCWgovph, and www.youtube.com/CommissionOnWomenPH).

For queries, stakeholders may contact the PCW Corporate Affairs and Information Resource Management Division (CAIRMD) at telephone number (02) 8736-1654 local 129, or 0917-845-4814 and look for Ms. Nevi Calma, Mr. Ann Jun Magnaye, or Ms. Jescel Aquino or email vawfreeph@pcw.gov.ph.

For guidance and appropriate action.



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