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**United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of UN Women
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America/ Subregional
Headquarters for the Caribbean**

**Expert Group Meeting on good practices in national action plans
on violence against women
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America/ Subregional
Headquarters for the Caribbean
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
13-15 September 2010**

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** The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations*

Over the years the Philippines has developed a number of national action plans (NAP)

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The National Socio-Economic Pact of 2001 also mandated the NCRFW to “strengthen its oversight functions in implementing measures to curb violence against women and direct government agencies and departments to follow through.” In the light of the abovementioned mandate, the NCRFW convened the Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee (VAWCC), composed of fifteen (15) government agencies¹ with anti-violence against women mandates to serve as a mechanism aimed at implementing the government commitments to the Socio-economic Pact of 2001 and the Framework Plan for Women (FPW). The VAWCC hoped to enhance, systematize and synchronize all efforts to eliminate violence against women and children through the development of the NAP-EVAW.

Values and principles of **equality, empowerment and participation, peace and human rights** are articulated in the following vision statements of the plans:

For the **NSAP on Anti-trafficking**: “A just, humane gender-fair and empowered society that protects its people especially women and children from all forms of exploitation, thus enable them to fully exercise their rights, realize their potentials in the development of the country and experience a happy and peaceful family.”

For the **Strategic Plan of the IAC-VAWC**: “A gender-fair and empowered society that protects its people especially women and children from any form of violence and exploitation thus enabling them to fully exercise their rights and participate in all development efforts, and experience a peaceful and fulfilling family and community life.”

For the **NAP on Women, Peace and Security**: “Cognizant of their role as stewards of peace, the women and men who produced this NAP collectively affirm the primacy of peace and nonviolence in achieving a just, gender-responsive society where every Filipino woman is empowered as peace builder, enjoying human rights and safe from all forms of violence in conflict and post conflict situations.

The **NAP-EVAW**'s framework followed the four areas proposed by the integrated approach² in eliminating violence against women: addressing the needs of survivors; nature and causes of VAW; response to offenders; and changing society and values.

¹ Member agencies of the VAWCC are the: Civil Service Commission (CSC), Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM), National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), Philippine National Police (PNP), and the Philippine Information Agency (PIA)

² The Integrated Approach on Eliminating Violence Against Women was used following a Multi-stakeholder Regional Conference among Government and NGOs sponsored by UNIFEM and the Commonwealth Secretariat held in Malaysia in 2002. Participants were from Southeast Asia and South Asia.

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The **National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons (NSAP-ATP)** is a product of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) which was created by the virtue of RA 9208. The NSAP-ATP was developed in order to enhance, systematize and synchronize all efforts to eliminate trafficking in persons. Its goals and objectives are:

1. Promote public awareness of trafficking in persons and sustain collective/coordinated advocacy efforts;
2. Coordinate the maximum effective and efficient implementation of the law;
3. Mobilize and forge partnerships and cooperation among different agencies involved in the areas of prevention, protection, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of trafficking;
4. Establish and institutionalize an effective and efficient referral and tracking system of incidents of trafficking and through all the stages of intervention; and
5. Institutionalize a central database and a shared information system on trafficking.

Its strategies include: a. Advocacy and Social Mobilization; b. Capability building; c. Data Collection and Management; d. Alliance Building and Networking; e. Research, policy Studies and Documentation; and f. Institutional Mechanisms. The Plan covered three major components following the Optional Protocol on Trafficking in Persons: 1. Prevention; 2. Protection; 3. Recovery and Reintegration.

The objectives of the **Strategic Plan on Anti Violence Against Women and their Children** (intimate partner abuse) are:

1. To provide holistic, integrated and sustained programs and services for the protection of the rights and welfare of VAWC victim-survivors;
2. To ensure the effective implementation of RA 9262 through the establishment of efficient systems and mechanisms in government and capacitating service providers;
3. To assist in the rehabilitation of perpetrators and prevention of future VAWC acts; and
4. To develop community-based mechanisms and programs to address issues of VAWC, including the care and support of victims and their children, as well as the non-tolerance of all forms of VAWC.

It identified Key Strategic Areas (KSA) and goals per KSA to guide stakeholders especially government agencies in implementing the law. KSAs are 1. Public Information and Advocacy; 2. Capacity Building and Service Delivery; 3. Research and Policy Development; 4. Sustained Linkages and Partnerships, Resource Generation and Mobilization. It also identified Institutional Mechanisms and Implementation Arrangements including coordination and monitoring, institutional roles, and resources.

The NAP on Women, Peace and Security identified four (4) major purposes:

1. Promotion and Prevention: To ensure the protection of women's human rights and prevention of violation of these rights in armed conflict and post-conflict situations;

NGOs especially those involved in anti-VAW provided substantive inputs for the plan. For the NAP on women, peace and Security, the International Women's Tribune (IWT) and the women and peace NGOs influenced government agencies to pursue the development of the NAP.

The IWT provided some funds for the conduct of some of the GO-NGO consultative planning workshops. UNIFEM, UNICEF and the UNFPA also provided some resources for the workshops and for printing of the laws and their implementing rules and regulations.

The plans pursuant to the implementation of the two laws – the anti-trafficking and the VAWC acts – were **adopted** by their respective interagency councils created by the laws. A resolution for adoption is signed by the Secretaries of the interagency council member government agencies. The 11 members of the **Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT)** are the heads of the Departments of Justice, Social Welfare and Development, Foreign Affairs, Labor and Employment, the Philippine Overseas and Employment Administration, the Bureau of Immigration, the Philippine National Police, the Philippine Commission on Women (formerly NCRFW) and three NGO representatives for children, women and overseas Filipino workers or OFW.

The **Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (IACVAWC)** are composed of the 12 heads of the Departments of Social Welfare and Development, Justice, Education, the Interior and Local Government, Health, Labor and

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Role of the national women’s machinery

With regard to the intersection between the plans and the national women’s machinery, the Philippine Commission on Women initiated, coordinated and actively participated in the development of all the plans in close coordination with its fellow government agencies responsible in implementing the plans. Below is the nature of membership of the women’s machinery in relevant inter-agency councils:

National Action Plan	Inter-Agency Council responsible for development and implementation	Role of National Women’s Machinery (PCW) in the IAC
National Action Plan on Elimination Violence Against Women	Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee (VAWCC)	Convenor and Secretariat
National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Person (NSAP-ATP)	Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT)	Member (the Department of Justice is Chair, the Department of Social Welfare and Development is Co-Chair)
Strategic Plan of the Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (SP-IACVAWC)	Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (IAC-VAWC)	Secretariat (the Department of Social Welfare and Development is Chair)
National Action Plan to Implement UN Security Council 1325 and 1820	National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security	Co-Chair with the Office of the Presidential Adviser of the Peace Process as Chair

3. Legislation

The five laws on VAW – Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 (RA 7877), the Anti-Rape Law of 1997 (RA 8353) and the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998 (RA 8505), the Anit-trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (RA 9208) and the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004 (RA 9262) do not refer to a plan. Rather, for the last two laws, their Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) specify guidelines for programs and services to implement the laws effectively. The IRRs also

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specify the duties and responsibilities of key government agencies which informed the formulation of the national action plans.

The National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) - CEDAW chapter, called for the review of discriminatory provisions of laws such as that of vagrancy, penalizing women in prostitution. It called for the passage of the Anti-Prostitution law decriminalizing women in prostitution and instead penalizing the users and pimps.

4. Criminal Justice System

Measures mentioned in the NAPs deal mostly with capacity building of the law enforcers and service providers of VAW cases.

The NHRAP –CEDAW specifies its Thematic Objective #1 as “Improving the capacity of the justice system to implement the five Anti-VAW Laws will be measured by 5 strategic indicators that will involve several agencies of the executive branch of government, and shall include the judiciary.” The performance targets for 5 strategic indicators are specified in the Annex 1.

NSAP-ATP, under the Protection component states: “Formulate standard protocols/manuals on surveillance, interception, detection and arrest of traffickers and rescue of trafficked persons to ensure a gender-sensitive and child-friendly procedure in handling trafficking cases.” And “Enhance capacities of law enforcement agencies and frontline workers in handling trafficking cases...”

The NAP WSC states as an action point: “Strengthen the criminal justice system to address VAW in the context of armed conflict.” Among its Results Statements are: Criminal justice system made more efficient and effective to address VAW; enhanced witness protection program; and strengthened directorate for the women’s and children’s affairs in the police to include VAW in armed conflicts.

5. Prevention

The NAP-EVAW of the VAWCC had the following desired outcomes:

- Increased awareness of VAW victims/survivors of their rights
- Increased clients’ awareness of VAW services being provided by government
- Organized women’s groups for GAD-VAW advocacy
- Increased participation of VAW victims/survivors in the development and implementation of IEC programs and awareness-raising and advocacy on VAW

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- Enhanced gender-sensitivity of media campaigns / productions
- Integrated GAD core messages in the basic education curriculum
- Institutionalized gender-sensitivity component in all training programs in government
- Provided relevant and timely VAW information that will help in formulating and delivering more effective services to VAW victims
- Encourage victims/survivors to cooperate and participate in decision-making and influence events that will affect their welfare (e.g. Organization of VAW survivors or support groups)
- Enhanced participation of critical VAW stakeholders in public discussions on VAW issues and concerns
- Enhanced GAD-VAW awareness of top management and service providers in national line agencies and local government units

Rehabilitation of Offenders

- Gained active support and participation of GOs and NGOs and civil society groups in the formulation of policies and programs for the rehabilitation / reformation of VAW offenders
- Provided appropriate counseling services to VAW offenders
- Ensured gender-responsive services and protection from violence for women offenders / inmates confined / detained in correctional institutions
- Established support group for VAW offenders

6. Protection, support and assistance to victims/survivors

The NAP-EVAW's desired outcomes along this line are:

- Defined a more rational and equitable distribution and delivery of critical VAW services, facilities, programs. Agencies made their own target such as numbers of women and child-friendly investigation room and one-stop shops, action centers receiving complaints. Women and children protection units in hospitals, substitute homes for women, anti-sexual harassment units in the regional offices of the Department of Education, policewomen staffing police women's desks and committee on decorum and investigation to handle sexual harassment cases in all agencies.

All NAPs included an improved and well coordinated **VAW referral system**.

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Protection orders are stipulated in the Anti-VAWC law, but capacity building for local officials and the justice system on the issuance of protection orders are in the NAPs.

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The VAWC plan also includes developing

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9. Organized VAW survivors into effective support groups

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the plan, the national women's machinery realized the need to develop a system of tracking the progress and results of the NAP-EVAW. Performance indicators for each outcome area have been developed. It specified indicators for government agencies in the VAWCC.

National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons (2004-2010) and the Strategic Plan of the IAC-VAWC (2007-2010)

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3. Liaise with local government units through the various leagues, the academe, the private and business sectors all matters concerning violence on women and their children with the end goal of promoting their rights and providing opportunities for their empowerment and development.
4. Access government agencies' and non-government organizations' to resources for the implementation of the strategic plan.
5. Conduct annual assessment to identify issues, gaps and best practices in and use these in setting the directions and priorities for continuous implementation.
6. Develop a reporting, monitoring and evaluation system in the implementation of the strategic plan.

National Action Plan to Implement UN SCR 1325 and 1820

To track and account for the progress of NAP implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements will be established to ensure the following:

1. Appropriate national initiatives (policies, plans, programs/projects, processes including systems and negotiations) are being undertaken;
2. Right results are being secured, which include *outputs* (immediate changes that are expected to come out of the accomplishment of national initiatives), and *outcomes* (medium-term or intermediate changes in relation to the achievement of articulated purposes);

The outputs of the NAP shall cover capacities (knowledge & abilities), processes, practices, services (programs & projects), mechanisms, agreements and agenda, and policies. NAP outcomes shall refer to improvements in the state and status of women in armed and post-conflict situations -- their condition (issues and needs) as well as the perceptions that affect women in these settings.

Indicators shall be further enhanced and negotiated to enable stakeholders to obtain evidence of the progress of the achievement of the results. These shall include a combination of end line as well as progress/process indicators.

3. Relevance to the country context, and consistency with the priority areas for the years 2010-2016 and consistency with the Philippine commitments to international instruments on women, peace and security; and
4. Informed policy, improved planning and management, strengthened organizations and agencies and enhanced knowledge and learning.

It is expected that the status and progress of the NAP would be reported periodically to national stakeholders such as the Office of the President and the Philippine Congress, and the UN and other international bodies.

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Development of Performance Indicators

All the NAPS have identified performance indicators, targets and timeline so as to better monitor the implementation and assess effectiveness.

A sample of the NHRAP-CEDAW performance targets for its thematic objective on the justice system is found in Annex 1.

Annex 1.
National Human Rights Action Plan on CEDAW (NHRAP-CEDAW)
2010-2014

Table 1: Performance Targets

<p>Thematic Objective #1:</p> <p>To enhance the capacity of the justice system to effectively and efficiently implement existing laws that protect and uphold the rights of women against gender-based violence.</p>		
Strategic Treaty Indicators	Medium Term Targets	Annual Targets
<p>1. Duty bearers from the five pillars of justice competently applying the Rights Based Approach (RBA) and Gender Sensitive (GS) principles in dealing with VAW complaints/cases³.</p>	<p>Institutionalization of the module on Anti-VAWC Laws, RBA and GS into the regular staff development training program of accountable agencies and priority provinces.</p> <p>Cognitive and behavioral changes among duty bearers which are evident in their</p>	<p>2010 - Formulation and adoption on an organizational policy reaffirming commitment to the RBA and GS.</p> <p>2011 - RBA and GS indicators are incorporated into the staff performance evaluation tool.</p>

³ Responds to the CEDAW Concluding Comments, 2006

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	improved ratings on the staff performance evaluation system.	20% annual incremental increase in the total number of Anti-VAWC frontline service providers who are oriented on Anti-VAWC Laws and the RBA and GS.
2. Strategic Plans of the IACAT and IAC VAWC are progressively implemented and transparently monitored ⁴ for their accomplishments.	Local-level (city, municipality, barangay) implementation of IACAT-VAWC activities in the following key strategic areas are supported by LGUs: a) Public Information and Advocacy; b) Capacity Building and Service Delivery; c) Research and Policy Development; d) Sustained Linkages and Partnerships; and e) Resource Generation and mobilization.	Annual action plans of accountable agencies in the five pillars of justice, and those of Provincial IACAT-VAWCs in the 17 priority areas are aligned with the National Strategic Plans of the IACVAWC and IACAT. Progress reports of accountable agencies in the five pillars of justice, including those of target priority provinces, show inter-agency coordination in the implementation of the IACVAWC and IACAT national strategic plans.
3. VAW case/ complaint tracking and monitoring system is installed in pilot areas. ⁵	2012- Functional VAW/Case complaint tracking and monitoring system is functional in 2 pilot areas (Quezon City and Davao City) VAWC database is created and regularly updated for use as a reference in local development planning.	2010 – Tracking and Monitoring system is finalized and tested in pilot areas (Quezon City and Davao City) 2013 - VAW/Case complaint monitoring system is replicated in 2 more cities

⁴ Responds to UPR Comment on CEDAW,

⁵ Responds to the CEDAW Concluding Comments, 2006

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<p>4. National and local performance accountability mechanisms for monitoring the progress of the work of the Supreme Court's Committee on Gender Responsive Judiciary (CGRJ) are in place.⁶</p>	<p>Accomplishment reports show the SC's progressive implementation of the ff nationwide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Capacity building program to transform paradigm and enhance the commitment of the judicial system to gender equality. (2) Review or conduct of Gender audit of policies, programs, and practices to make these more gender-responsive; (3) Establish a gender-responsive database on the judicial system; (4) Promote the use of gender-fair language, core gender messages and rituals for higher gender awareness; (5) Enhance partnership and networking with other GAD advocates; (6) Organize regular family courts throughout the country; and (7) Create a Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) in each court station and train CODI members. 	<p>2010 – Institutional mechanisms for implementation of the <i>Strategic Gender and Development (GAD) Mainstreaming Plan for the Philippine Judicial System</i> are in place within the SC organization.</p>
<p>5. VAWC-related services improved in quality and accessibility, and are gender-sensitive and rights based</p>	<p>Accountable agencies of the justice system are 100% compliant to performance standards set for the</p>	<p>Sustained Improvement of organizational policies, structures, processes, and staff competence to</p>

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	Prevention, Protection, Recovery & integration of victim-survivors of VAW.	implement Anti-VAWC Laws (RAs9208, 9262, 7877, 8505 & 8353) Performance standards on service delivery for VAW victim-survivors are developed and practiced.
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