



Report

# 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence 2018

Vietnam Country Office



## THE ISSUE

Viet Nam has made significant progress in gender equality during the past few decades, including improvements to legal frameworks, policies, and national institutional mechanism on gender equality and the advancement of women. This progress has been reflected in diverse areas of society, including women’s improved access to education and health care and increased participation in the labour market and the political life. However, gender-based violence remains a serious problem, for which 85% of victims are women.

According to the 2010 National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam, **58%** of ever-married women reported to have suffered some forms of violence by their husbands at some point in their lives. In a survey conducted by Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and ActionAid in 2016 in five cities and provinces – including Ha Noi and HCM City - **51%** of women admitted that they had experienced sexual harassment at least once. In a baseline survey of UN Women and Ho Chi Minh city Department of Labour, Invalid and Social

Affairs (DOLISA HCMC) with 1200 respondents in 2017, nearly **19%** women reported having experienced sexual harassment (SH) and nearly **12%** of men reported sexually harassing women in the last 12 months. According to a survey by UNESCO Viet Nam, more than half (51.9%) of all surveyed students reported having experienced at least one kind of school-related gender-based violent behaviors in the last 6 months. LGBT students (particularly more ‘feminine’ same sex attracted males or gender non-conforming/transgender youth) were at particularly high risk of victimization and exposure to all kinds of violence – **71%** of LGBT students had been physically

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(The 2010 National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam)

abused, **72.2%** verbally abused. Incidents of all forms of SRGBV were more prevalent among lower secondary students than upper secondary students.

This situation is in part sustained by persisting gender stereotypes and social norms that support the notion of male superiority and justify discrimination and violence against women and girls. Moreover, socio-cultural barriers that blame and shame victims of violence prevent women from seeking for help and have access to justice. An annual 16 days of activism campaign to end gender based violence (25/11-10/12)<sup>1</sup> is one of the efforts to change the social norms. In commemoration with the UNiTE Campaign 2018 with the global advocacy theme: Orange the World: #HearMeToo and the national action month on gender equality and GBV prevention and response 2018 theme: “Take the initiative in prevention and response to violence and abuse against women and children”, UN’s Gender Thematic Group chaired by UN Women Viet Nam together with partners who are government agencies, embassies, international NGOs and local NGOs jointly implemented **1 online advocacy campaign and offline activities**<sup>2</sup> during 16 days of activism 25/11-10/12 to stand in solidarity with survivor advocates, women’s movements and women’s human rights defenders who are working to end violence against women and girls.

<sup>1</sup> The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign which takes place each year. It commences on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day. It was originated by activists at the first Women’s Global Leadership Institute in 1991 and is coordinated each year by the Center for Women’s Global Leadership. It is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. In support of this civil society initiative, under the leadership of the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign (UNiTE) calls for global action to increase awareness, galvanise advocacy efforts and share of knowledge and innovations. In recent years, the UNiTE campaign has utilized the colour orange to represent a brighter future, free from violence against women and girls, as a unifying theme running through its global activities.

<sup>2</sup> Access selected high-quality photo folder of offline events [HERE](#)



## THE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2018

The 2018 campaign for the 16 Days of Activism to end GBV promoting the message “HearMeToo” marked the year 2018 by creating “wow” moments to draw attention to the issue. It offered more opportunities for targeted audience to “listen” both online and offline, using the voices of real survivors and activists on the ground to speak of the situation and interventions, helping the audience to understand and then commit to a change. UN Women Viet Nam office (VCO) as a chair of UN GTG group coordinated one **Joint social communication campaign** Orange The World - #HearMeToo with **12 disadvantaged group’s stories** of violence experience highlighted – followed with **12 commitments from 12 heads of agencies/organizations<sup>1</sup> and UN Resident coordinator**. Towards the end of 16 Days, UN Women produced and **published a video** presenting collective One UN voice on ending gender-based violence with commitments from UN Resident Coordinator in Vietnam, UN Head of Agencies, staff, and partners. In total, VCO Facebook page received **1,677 new page likes** and **1,730 new page followers** during the campaign (running from 12 November to 10 December), reaching **132,511 people**, with **47,522 total engagements**.

In addition, **five following joint offline events** were organized with different partners including **UN agencies, governments, CSOs and private sectors** to call for concrete actions to end GBV:

### **SPEAK UP FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

The Journey for Gender Equality with four orange buses carrying the message of ending violence against women and girls departed from four universities and high school in Hanoi. The buses were joined by **four Ambassadors of G4 embassies** (Norway, New Zealand, Switzerland and Canada) and

**Head of Office of UN Women Viet Nam, Country Director of Plan International, Vice President of Youth Union Federation, Mrs. World Wide Duong Thuy Linh** and over **100 Hanoi students** (half male, half female). On the bus journey, distinguished guests and students had the opportunity to exchange and discuss topics related to gender equality with a clear message on saying NO to VAW. A Facebook event was created for the event and received 2,200 responses; 392 people registered for an open ticket while only 50 open tickets are available.



In the spirit of “No One Left Behind” of the Sustainable Development Goals, VCO created an open forum on gender issues through the **Speak Up for Gender Equality** event offering 400 participants (250 women and 150 men) the opportunity to listen to experience of 10 speakers with diversified background such as youth, people with disabilities, celebrities, the LGBTIQ + community, the scientific community and people working in both formal and informal sectors. This event is **a symbol for UN Women’s coordination mandate** when it was co-organized by UN Women Viet Nam and (Embassies of Canada, Norway, New Zealand and Switzerland in Vietnam, Vietnamese Women’s Museum, Viet Nam Volunteer Center, Plan International Vietnam and the United Nations International School of

1 12 UN agencies and organization partners join the social media campaign includes: UNFPA, UNICEF, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, Plan International, Irish Aid, Share Our Stories S.O.S., Australia Embassy, SCDI, Institute for Development & Community Health LIGHT

Hanoi, Hanoi Department of Transportation and Center for Public Transport management).



### LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND TRAINING



**Training for celebrities and media:** UN Women in cooperation with UNAIDS and a private media company - Sunrisesvn Agency - organized a training and dialogue with over 30 journalists and famous celebrities such as **Miss Universe Vietnam - H’Hen Nie** and **Miss Vietnam 1st Runner-Up - Hoang Thuy**, together with **people who are at high risk or living with HIV** on the topic of gender and HIV prevention and response - leave no one behind. Every participant of the event committed to supporting the National Month on GE and GBV prevention and response and the global Unite 16 days of activism campaign to end gender-based violence to take action against Gender-based violence by spreading meaningful messages such as #EndViolence #LeaveNoOneBehind #ZeroDiscrimination #HearMeToo etc. Messages in the workshop on sexual harassments linked with #Metoo movement were later conveyed by **Miss Universe Vietnam - H’Hen Nie at the stage of the Global Miss Universe’s top 5** on 17 December when she was asked by the judge on her opinion toward #Metoo movement.



### DANCE FOR KINDNESS



**Dance for Kindness and Open exhibition on GE and GBV:** On the morning of the international day to eliminate VAWG 25-11, by Hoan Kiem lake - the heart of Ha Noi - capital of Viet Nam, around **5,000 dancers** #Orangetheworld by a 2-min Freezemob to remember victims and survivors of gender-based violence and an impressive Flashmob to call for action to end GBV welcoming the World Kindness Week and the starting of #16Daysof Activism against Gender-based Violence. At the same time, a photo exhibition showcasing photos and stories on promoting gender equality and ending violence to women and girls has been opened to the public at walking streets by the lake attracting thousands of viewers compared to only hundreds of viewers when it was exhibited in the museum. This event is also a showcase of the partnership among UN Agencies (UN Women and UNESCO), governments (Youth Magazine - Youth Union and Vietnam Women’s Museum), CSOs (Care International, Homeland Charity Foundation, CSAGA, DKT Youth Club) and private sectors (Aus4Skills and Coca Cola).



### ORANGE BUS & BUS STOPS LAUNCH



**Orange buses and bus stops in HCMC:** 26 buses of the most crowded bus route from city centre to Thu Duc University Village and the nationwide largest and most equipped bus station - Ham Nghi – were painted in orange to communicate the message “#HearMetoo - Hear and Act for a safe city to women and girls” with the joint efforts of UN Women, ActionAid Viet Nam, DOLISA HCM, Centre for Public Management – DOT HCMC and SunrisesVN Agency. This was the kick off of the HCM city’s plan to have more bus routes and 50 bus stations city wide painted in orange in the future under the HCM safe and friendly cities programme for women and children. In addition, security cameras installed and a communication radio spot on SHSV broadcasted in the speaker system on these buses to raise public’s



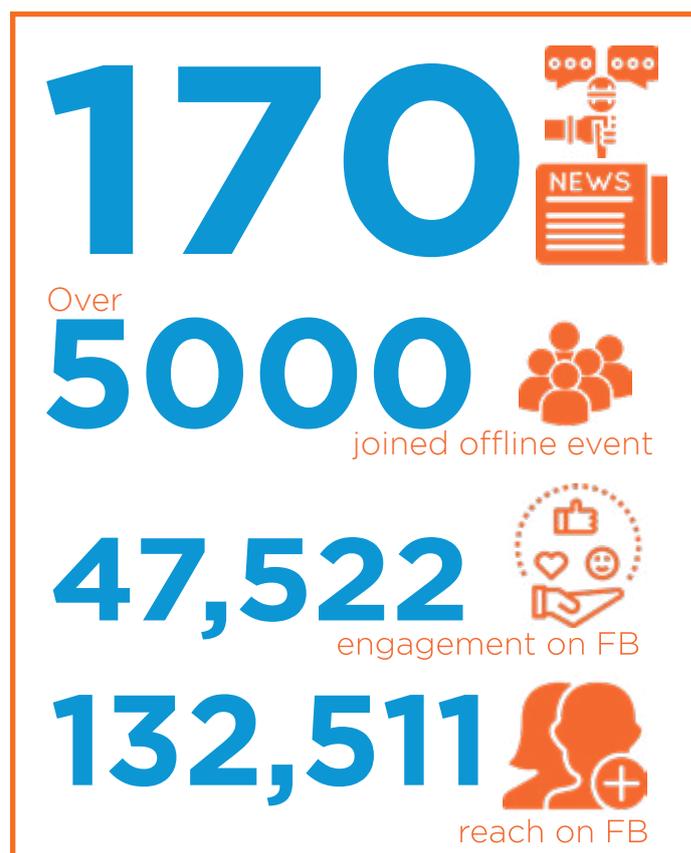
awareness on sexual harassments in public transports.

## WHITE RIBBON BREAKFAST

**White Ribbon Breakfasts with men** in 2018 expanded to **5 provinces** of Viet Nam compared to only one held in Ha Noi in the previous 3 years. In total, there were **750 participants** (2/3 of them are men) from different backgrounds including: bilateral and multilateral donor organizations, international organizations, government agencies, people's commune, enterprises, journalists, celebrities, headmasters, teachers and students attending five breakfasts in Can Tho, Thai Nguyen, Son La, Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh city to discuss the role of men in prevention of GBV and promotion of Gender equality. The Breakfasts this year also recorded the expansion of engagement of different partners including Center for Women and Development - Vietnam Women's Union (CWD), the Australian Government through the Australian Program on Human Resource Development (Aus4Skills), Flinders University, Da Nang Women Union, Da Nang Newspapers, HCMC DOLISA, HCMC Department of Transportation, Can Tho University, Thai Nguyen University, Tay Bac University and private sector – Sunrisesvn Agency.

The offline events have received interest from local mainstream media, with a total of **170 media hits** (mostly online) for the whole campaign of 16DOA. Notably, the event of Orange buses and bus stops in

HCMC received major media coverage with about **70 media hits including printed newspapers of Nhan Dan, Tuoi Tre, Thanh Nien and VTV1**. In general, the coverage<sup>1</sup> is positive about the efforts of UN Women Viet Nam and partners as well as sends strong messages on ending all forms of gender-based violence.



<sup>1</sup> Find the final media coverage link [HERE](#)