

NAPAGBINTANGAN, NAPAGKAMALAN, NADAMAY

Trilogy Short Film Discussion Guide & Action Plan

Introduction	2
About the Films	3
Creating a Soft Space for Hard Conversations	4
Getting into the Good Bits: Discussion Guide	6
Context	6
Conversation Starters	8
Trilogy Short Films Discussion Points	9
Sino Si Max Dimaano?	9
Ghosed	9
Langit Lupa	10
#StartTheHealing: Plan Your Own Screening	11
Additional Resources	13
Further Viewing	13
Reach Out	13
Links and Resources	15
References	17

Introduction

The Trilogy Short Film, *Napagbintangan, Napagkamalan, Nadamay*, is a collaboration between INCITEGov and DAKILA in bringing real stories of the war on drugs victims in the Philippines. It advocates reforming the violent fight against drugs into a more humane and rights-based approach.

The International Center for Innovation, Transformation, and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov) is a policy research and advocacy center supporting democratic movements and spearheading democratic reform coalitions and initiatives. It was founded twelve years ago by a group of former senior government officials who collectively resigned from their posts in the wake of an alleged massive electoral fraud that implicated the country's highest official. INCITEGov served as a venue to continue working for reforms in developing a framework that holds linkage between democratic politics and good governance to bring about a better life for all – that it is imperative to understand and uphold the core among Politics-Governance-Development Outcomes (P-G-D, in short) as the key to arresting and overcoming the recurring cycles of a democratic crisis and development deficits in the country.

DAKILA – Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism is an organization of artists, cultural and development activists, students, young professionals, and individuals creatively building a movement of heroism towards social transformation.

DAKILA cultivates one's innate heroism, organizes communities of heroes, and creatively fosters social involvement by building one's capacity to make a change. It influences individuals and groups to be part of the movement for change and taking on advocacies and social concerns to bring about strategic actions that make real change.

Dakila was founded in 2005 by multi-awarded writer Lourd de Veyra, musician Noel Cabangon, actor Ronnie Lazaro, Parokya ni Edgar bassist Buhawi Meneses and the late comedian Tado Jimenez.

About the Films

Langit Lupa

TRT: 4 minutes

Kulas entertains his new classmates with stories of his happy family only to return home to an absent father and uncaring mother – why does Kulas refuse to recognize his reality.

Sino si MAX DIMAANO?

TRT: 7 minutes

After an unexpected tragedy, Max Dimaano’s friends and family share what they know about him only to find conflicting opinions and memories – was Max innocent, or was he hiding a dark secret?

Ghosted

TRT: 7 minutes

After Rey stops all contact with Dawn, a new romance turns sour, who then makes it her mission to find out – what did Dawn do to make him ghost her?

Concept by Micheline Rama and Floyd Scott Tiogangco

Written by Micheline Rama and Cha Roque

Directed by Cha Roque

Produced by

InciteGov

DAKILA - Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism

Active Vista Center, Inc.

Creating a Soft Space for Hard Conversations

Tips for Facilitating the Discussion

The topics of war against drugs, extrajudicial killings, and drug abuse in the Philippines will definitely come with many assumptions and predetermined arguments. Therefore facilitating is crucial in guiding these conversations. We have to be intentional that we help put out the fire and clear the smoke, rather than adding fuel to the fire.

As facilitators to the discussion, let's ensure we empower the group as a *whole*. We treat the facilitator and participants as both the teacher and learner. The power in this discussion is not *held over*, but rather *with* the group. Acknowledge that alone we know little, but together we know a lot.

Basic Roles of a Facilitator

1. After viewing the film, whether watching it alone or with a group, **take some time to reflect**. Write down your own initial thoughts, feelings, and questions. Encourage all those you plan to hold the discussion with to do the same.
2. **Open up a safe and accessible space** that offers many insights, opinions, and values to a given topic. Be intentional and clear with the participants about how interactive and inclusive you'd like your discussion. Set ground rules if you'd like, and make sure to allow space for your participants to add to the rules and collectively agree on these rules.
3. **Set the tone and expectations**. List down a clear agenda of what will be discussed. If done online, determine if videos should be turned on or allowed to be kept off. Clarify if the chatbox can be utilized as an alternative channel for sharing insights. Be realistic with yourself, too, when setting the length of discussion, breaks, and bring in a co-facilitator when you need one as additional support to help take notes or set the discussion and participants up.
4. **Encourage personal stories and reflections**. When the insights shared sound broad or abstract, ground the conversation by asking them to relate these instances to personal experiences or anecdotes. Take time to listen and show support, especially for intimate stories. Assure one another that no stories or personal information shared in the group can be shared outside without consent.

5. **Watch out for red flags.** Carefully redirect individuals that monopolize the conversation, keep track of who's talking and whose voices are being heard, and work towards equalizing the space for all voices to be heard. Read the room as much as you can. If there are some disagreements or misunderstandings, check-in with the group as a whole or quietly check in with the concerned individuals.
6. **Make the connections.** With so many national issues competing for our attention, our tendency is to isolate the issues as if they have nothing to do with one another. The worst-case scenario is we forget about them. As the discussion deepens, look out for recurring problems and relate them to key issues from the film and the current events in the world and your community. This is one way to help ensure the conversation stays relevant and focused.
7. **Occasionally summarize and note key areas of agreement.** If a topic seems to have maxed out all possible directions and participants have found nothing more they'd like to share, make a recap of the insights before moving onto the next questions.
8. **Expect and respect a lack of closure.** This may be the first time the audience has dug deeper into this topic. Not all questions raised may be answered right away; there might also not be enough time to address every issue raised. Be okay with allowing these unanswered questions to sit with you for a while and return to them for another discussion.
9. **Enjoy the discussion.** Imagine how many conversations like this, you will ever spark or be a part of and where else this can lead! Treat this opportunity to learn and connect with one another. We discuss, debate, laugh, grieve, and fight together.
10. **End with a good and hopeful note.** The topics we discuss might fuel anger and uncertainty in our current situation. These feelings are equally important and powerful, especially when channeled into hope and vision. Keep this in mind from Patrisse Cullors, one of the founders of Black Lives Matter:

“Provide hope and inspiration for collective action to build collective power to achieve collective transformation, rooted in grief and rage but pointed towards vision and dreams.”

Getting into the Good Bits: Discussion Guide

Background Context and Discussion Points

Context

In February 2016, Rodrigo Duterte promised to end corruption, drugs, and criminality within three to six months of his office assumption. He also promised that he would not hesitate to kill in doing so because there “could be no cleansing that is bloodless.”

While he may have failed to deliver on his first promise, he has certainly lived up to the latter promise to kill under the guise of cleansing the country of its drug problem. The death toll is disputed, but the Philippine Supreme Court has established that by 2017, 20,232 had already been killed; now, the number could easily be between 25,000 and 30,000.

Victims of extrajudicial killings, such as small-time drug dealers or users, often come from poor communities. Studies claim that the poor are, in fact, most vulnerable in the Duterte administration’s war on drugs. While most of these are men, women bear the brunt of the other side of the killings: their rights and dignity are violated in the anti-drug operations, and they are left facing a new reality of vulnerability and scarcity, turning into a new underclass of the urban poor—ostracized and isolated, terrorized by local officials and the killers, and vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

And so now the poor are being killed, but we remain silent. It may be because we are too busy living our own lives or because we are not affected or have more pressing problems to face. But whatever the reason may be, we have to acknowledge that this can no longer continue—and it is past time that we take steps to ensure that it will not.

Understanding the War on Drugs Narrative

The war on drugs’ end goal is to eliminate the use of illegal drugs. This war on drugs is not unique to the Philippine context. The global war on drugs has been going on for over 50 years and hasn’t solved the problem. In the Philippines, the drug problem is being addressed by lawfully punishing illegal drug users by treating them as criminals and using inhumane and undignified measures to keep people or scare them away from using drugs.

Years of studies and data have shown that the current punitive approach in addressing the illegal drug issue has failed to eliminate the illegal use and put more people – from children, young people to adults in danger. Aside from substance abuse, it is also assumed that the

drug problem involves drug-market violence, criminal convictions, and has limited life chances. The stigma it creates leads to false narratives that drug users are killers, and they don't deserve a second chance in life. These dangerous assumptions affect not only the users but even their loved ones.¹ This has also led to internalized stigma. Even the loved ones of the person who uses drugs claim it is better if they are imprisoned or sometimes even killed, rather than put them into a rehabilitation facility and roam free in their community.

There's a big disjoint that leaves people at the losing end. Rather than addressing the system's lack of jobs, proper healthcare, the social divide, among others, the war on drugs has dehumanized drug users instead, equating the people to the problem, creating stigma and discrimination, therefore redefining the war on drugs into a war against the poor.

The Duterte government's war on drugs worsens the health and human rights situation of people who use drugs. People who use drugs are routinely subjected to shaming, police brutality, incarceration, or worse, are killed. The punitive climate is depriving people who use drugs access to evidence-based interventions that effectively mitigate the harms caused by drugs. In essence, the goal of addressing drug abuse is to keep our people safe – it has never been about the drugs but should always be about the people. This is why the war on drugs is failing.

What do we mean by the issue of drugs is a *public health* issue?

When we refer to public health, it is the science of preventing disease and injury and promoting and protecting the health of populations and communities. Substance abuse deals with a person's health. When instances of addiction or overdose occur, the solution should ideally address the user's physical and mental health and well-being.

Harm Reduction

Harm Reduction reduces the harm associated with the use of psychoactive drugs by people unable and unwilling to stop through policies, programs, and practices. It's rooted heavily in the sense of social justice and anti-discrimination.

While there's a growing demand for an alternative to the war on drugs, the deeply embedded stigma on drugs and people who use drugs makes it challenging to introduce

¹ "Defining and Implementing a Public Health Response to Drug Use and Misuse." *AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION*, 2013, www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/08/08/04/defining-and-implementing-a-public-health-response-to-drug-use-and-misuse.

harm reduction interventions on the ground, despite existing evidence on their effectiveness.

Currently, there's a slow but steady push from some civil society organizations, community groups, and academics to change the dominant punitive paradigm and introduce a public health and human rights-oriented approach to drugs and drug use.

Conversation Starters

- How do you understand drug use and drug abuse?
- What do you think about people who use drugs?
- What do you think about the government's response in addressing this issue?
- The number of drug users in the country had risen to 8 million from the initial 4 million counts before the war on drugs began. What does this mean for you?
- Who do you think is responsible for solving this issue? What should they do? Is there anything you can do?
- Is this the war on drugs a war worth winning - how?

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Trilogy Short Films Discussion Points

Sino Si Max Dimaano?

Ang Napagtripan.

Or those who were killed because they could be killed. They are neither pushers nor users, but they were killed by vigilantes or policemen. If it's the latter, it's because the victims evaded arrest, or "*nanlaban*"—they fought back—even though they were clearly executed.

Facts:

- According to government records, as of June 2019, there have "only" been 5,425 deaths in all 115, 435 drug operations.
- Human Rights groups have documented over 13,000 deaths as of 2018, the Philippine Supreme Court has established that by 2017, 20,232 had already been killed; now, the number could easily be between 25,000 and 30,000.

Discussion Questions:

- How did Max die?
- What is the value of the stories being shared about Max? Discuss each character's perspectives about Max and Nay Coring.
- What kind of person can you conclude Max was based on the stories from his family and neighbors?
- Examine the significance of that one line shared by the police that Max fought back, or "*nanlaban?*" – how do you understand this situation?
- What do you understand about the word 'stigma,' and how does stigma affect people?
- Did Max deserve to die?

Ghosted

Ang Napagkamalan.

Or, those who were killed because of mistaken identity. They are random men and women killed because their names or faces were similar to drug suspects or because they lived in the same neighborhood. Their names were included in the drug lists as the price for removing another name—the so-called *palit-ulo* scheme.

Discussion Questions:

- Who killed Rey?

- How is Rey's death considered an extrajudicial killing or even part of the administration's war on drugs?
- Do we have laws and policies in place that are supposed to protect random killings?
- If Dawn was able to answer Rey's call, what could she have done?
- Did Rey deserve to die?

Langit Lupa

Ang Nadamay. Or those who were killed as collateral damage. They are men and women—and especially children—who happened to be in the vicinity of anti-drug operations and were killed by bullets, stray or otherwise.

Facts:

- 95% of victims are from the urban poor communities.
- Of these, most are male between the ages of 20–40, unemployed or find a living in the informal economy, and are likely to live in the NCR, specifically in Payatas, Sauyo, Culiat, and Bagbag.
- Children between the ages of 3–22 are also included in the victim count.
- 26,906 children have surrendered to the Philippine National Police.
- 18,398 children have become orphans due to the so-called drug war.

Discussion Questions:

- What did this short film bring you to realize about the victims of the war on drugs?
- After finding out what actually happened to Kulas, Danica, and all the kids in their school, how did you feel?
- Does Kulas' story have anything similar to do with you or your community?
- What is the value of their stories?
- Was what happened to Kulas and all the other kids inevitable? How could it have been stopped or avoided?

#StartTheHealing: Plan Your Own Screening

Step 1. Planning your own educational screening

When do you want to hold your screening? How many audiences will attend your screening? Do you have a venue that is capable of holding a film screening?

The Trilogy films are readily available for watching at <https://watch.activevista.ph/activevistaph>. If you want to arrange exclusive screenings for your organization or community, you may fill out the Active Vista Screening Form (<https://bit.ly/AVScreeningRequestForm>) to guide you in planning your screening.

We aim to bring this film to places where it is not readily available and to audiences who may not have the resources to watch it to spread awareness on its important social messages that the drug problem can and should be addressed through a rights-based approach of restoring human dignity rather than violence.

Step 2. Preparing for your educational screening

As soon as our Screening Agreement is finalized, you can now start preparing for your screening.

- Check the technical set up of your venue and let us know what equipment or platform is available.
- Schedule a technical test for us to determine the technical set up for the film screening.
- Organize the forum based on the thematic issues presented in the film.
- Determine the time allocated for the after-screening discussion. We advise you to give at least 45 minutes to have a good meaningful discussion.
- Assign a host and moderator for your screening program.
- Invite a good mix of 2-4 resource speakers for the panel discussion.
- As soon as your resource speakers are confirmed, ask for their brief profile. You will need this to introduce them to your audience.
- Active Vista can provide or link you up to relevant resource persons that can share their insights and expert opinions on the themes explored in the film. Send us an email at activevistafest@dakila.org.ph or indicate in the Active Vista Screening Form to request speakers.

Step 3. Promoting your educational screening

- We shall provide you with materials you can use for your promotions, including posters and film stills.
- You may opt to promote publicly or to your targeted audiences only, depending on the nature of your screening.
- Let us know if you need help with the promotions. We have a large social media following that can help get the word out on your screening.

Step 4. Hosting your educational screening

On the day of the screening, here are some notes to remember.

- Ensure that the venue or online platform is ready at least an hour before the screening. We would need an hour for technical set up.
- Registration should be ready at least an hour before so that you could manage the lines effectively at the venue entrance if you're having a physical screening.
- Coordinate with our team before letting audiences in.
- It would be nice to have a representative from your institution to welcome audiences to the screening.
- Assign a person who shall brief the speakers on the program.
- Inform your audiences of the necessary code of conduct in public screenings, such as turning their mobile phones in silent mode and refraining from talking during the screening or turning off their mics on online platforms.
- Remind your audiences about Republic Act No. 10088. Copying the film through a recording device in a theater or screen recording is strictly prohibited.
- Encourage your audiences to ask questions and share their opinions. Make them feel that the forum is a safe space for discourse and to engage respectfully.
- Document your screening through photos and videos. Please ensure that you inform your audience in doing so and that you would not violate your audience's privacy.

Step 5. Sustaining the impact of your educational screening

- After the screening, we provide an evaluation form to measure the film's impact and forum on our audiences.
- We have also developed a study guide that educators can use as a tool kit to continue the conversation in classrooms or in group discussions.

Additional Resources

Further Viewing

Films

- *Aswang*. Alyx Ayn Arumpac, 2019. 85 mins. Philippines.
- *On the President's Orders*. James Jones and Olivier Sarbil, 2019. 72 mins. United Kingdom & USA
- *The Mortician of Manila*. Leah Borrromeo, 2019. 25 mins. Philippines & UK.

Philippine educational distribution for all films mentioned above is through Active Vista. Contact activevistafest@dakila.org.ph to organize a screening in your area, school, or organization.

Are you interested in a more sustained partnership on the use of art, media, and popular culture for social consciousness formation among our youth? We offer creative and innovative programs such as our Heroes Hub Youth Fellowship, Digital Media and Communications for Social Change Training, Creative Workshops, Film and Media Labs, our Arts Festival every September, and Film Outreach featuring a catalog with a wide array of socially relevant films. Connect with us at activevista@dakila.org.ph

Public Video Resources

- Understanding Drug Addiction by Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8AHODc6phg>
- Why The War on Drugs Is a Huge Failure by Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJUXLqNHCal>
- Harm Reduction in the Philippines by NoBox Transitions
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyUgzaPHOpE>
- Support Don't Punish Shifts – Video Series by NoBox Transitions
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyr5JrvSoiYaM9qXNMAQRd_DOW-S2Lers

Reach Out

Regional and local organizations working on harm reduction, extrajudicial killings victims support, and/or policy reform:

Action for Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE)

An HIV NGO that engages in the intersections of HIV, human rights, gender, and migration. ACHIEVE is currently conducting documentation of the lived experiences of people who use drugs, town hall meetings to consult communities on the effectiveness of existing “community-based” rehabilitation programs, and an organizational development assessment for harm reduction CSOs and community groups.

BAIGANI

Baigani supports families victimized by EJKs to meet their food, education, and livelihood needs and empower mothers and children. It brings together people who support the advocacy to end the killings related to the war on drugs and help champion the human rights of the widows, mothers, and children of those killed.

Children’s Legal Rights and Development Center (CLRDC)

Children’s Legal Rights and Development Center, Inc. is a legal resource human rights organization for children committed to advancing children’s rights and welfare by providing its services based on human rights developmental framework approach and methodologies.

IDEFEND

I Defend Human Rights, and Dignity (iDEFEND) is a grassroots movement that defends the rights and upholds the dignity of all Filipinos. It will engage with the government, educate and organize the public, and transform collective voices into public action. iDEFEND shall work towards realizing rights-based governance that is anchored on respect for due process and the rule of law.

IDUCARE

A community organization of people who use drugs in Cebu is a peer-based community of people affected by drugs aiming towards behavior change, integral health, and upholding and defending human rights. IDUCARE was established through a Global Fund engagement mechanism for people who inject drugs. They deliver harm reduction services in several areas in Cebu and support their community’s mobilization to develop local health interventions.

Institute of Politics and Governance (IPG)

A local governance NGO that provides technical support to progressive local government officials. IPG has been sensitizing progressive local government officials at the village/barangay and city levels and providing them with technical support to align their local programs on drugs with harm reduction principles.

[Medical Action Group \(MAG\)](#)

An organization of physicians, nurses, dentists, psychologists, health students, and health workers that promotes and defends the human rights of all peoples. Since its inception, it has rendered total health services to the urban poor, political prisoners, internally displaced peoples, and workers. MAG is committed to consolidating the ranks of health care providers from the community to the national level to define a health care agenda that recognizes the capacities of all peoples of the Philippines to shape a health program that is relevant and responsive to their needs.

[NoBox Transitions Philippines](#)

An organization that has pioneered harm reduction advocacy in the Philippines and serves as a vital go-to organization with technical expertise on harm reduction. They conduct training for other CSOs and national and local government stakeholders to improve awareness on drugs and harm reduction, provide technical support, and directly engage with national government agencies such as PDEA on harm reduction.

StreetLawPH

A new organization of lawyers aims to increase the access to justice and legal aid of people who use drugs. They hold paralegal training for people who use drugs. They sensitize legal aid groups on drugs and drug use to facilitate strategic litigation that impacts harm reduction advocacy.

[RESpond and Break the Silence Against the Killings \(RESBAK\)](#)

RESBAK is an alliance of artists, media practitioners, and cultural workers. Its primary goal is to advance social awareness of the killings brought forth by the Duterte administration's 'war on drugs.'

Links and Resources

International resources on harm reduction and drug policy

[Filter Mag](#): *Filter's* mission is to advocate through journalism for rational and compassionate approaches to drug use, drug policy, and human rights.

- Spotlight Feature on the Philippines
[The Startling Optimism of Harm Reductionists in the Philippines](#)

[Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations or APCASO](#) is an Asia-Pacific regional civil society network of community-based and non-governmental organizations on HIV, health, and social justice, focusing on advocacy and community capacity development.

- International Drug Policy Consortium (IPDC)'s Drug Policy Guide:
<https://idpc.net/policy-advocacy/idpc-drug-policy-guide-3rd-edition>
- IDPC Glossary of Terms:
http://fileserver.idpc.net/library/IDPC-guide-3-EN/IDPC-drug-policy-guide_3-edition_Glossary.pdf
- UNAIDS Terminologies:
(which includes acceptable language instead of using 'drug addicts' or 'drug abusers')
https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/2015_terminology_guidelines_en.pdf

[Harm Reduction International](#) is a leading NGO dedicated to reducing the negative health, social, and legal impacts of drug use and drug policy. We promote the rights of people who use drugs and their communities through research and advocacy to help achieve a world where drug policies and laws contribute to healthier, safer societies.

[Support Don't Punish](#) is a global grassroots-centered initiative supporting harm reduction and drug policies that prioritize public health and human rights. The campaign seeks to put harm reduction on the political agenda by strengthening the mobilization capacity of affected communities and their allies, opening a dialogue with policymakers, and raising awareness among the media and the public.

[National Harm Reduction Coalition](#) on The Principles of Harm Reduction – A handful of individual activists, educators, and people who used drugs began launching grassroots efforts to support members of their communities who were dying from this brutal disease. Brought together by their love and compassion for people who use drugs, these individuals formed a small working group that became the start of the Harm Reduction movement.

[RELEASE](#) is a UK-based national center of expertise on drugs and drugs law. RELEASE believes in a just and fair society where drug policies should reduce the harms associated with drugs and where those who use drugs are treated based on principles of human rights, dignity, and equality.

[Transform Drug Policy Foundation](#) is a charitable think tank that campaigns for the legal regulation of drugs both in the UK and internationally.

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[Infographics](#) used in the Fast Facts