



## Gains in Gender Mainstreaming: The Philippine Experience

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Good day to everyone!

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Japan for inviting us to this important gathering of national women's machineries in East Asia. We commend Her Excellency, Dr Kuniko Inoguchi, Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs, for initiating this sharing of best practices in gender mainstreaming so that we can more effectively promote women's empowerment and gender equality in the region.



## Major measures for the promotion of gender equality

- Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989-1992
- Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development, 1995-2025
- Women in Development and Nation-Building Act
- GAD Budget Policy

For many years, our country has had a history of gender bias deeply ingrained in our culture. To address this, we have pioneered in gender mainstreaming as a strategy for promoting women's empowerment and gender equality in government. This came alive in 1989, when a development plan for women was formulated - addressing not just social concerns but also gender issues in the economic sector, infrastructure, science and technology. This plan ran parallel with the country's medium-term development plan. But knowing that gender biases deeply rooted in culture cannot be removed in a six-year term, a 30-year perspective plan for gender-responsive development was formulated in 1995 aligned with the areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Women in Development and Nation-building Act of 1992 mandated all government agencies to "review and revise all their regulations, circulars, issuances and procedures to remove gender biases therein." It also paved the way for gender budgeting, when a provision for all government agencies to allocate at least 5% of their total budgets for gender and development concerns was added to the annual General Appropriations Act beginning 1995.



## Major measures for the promotion of gender equality

- Core GAD Indicators
- Gender focal points
- Gender resource centers and Gender Resource Network
- Gender Mainstreaming Resource Kit
- Harmonized GAD Guidelines for Project Development, Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation
- Are you a Gender-responsive Local Government Unit? Assessment Tool
- Focused gender mainstreaming interventions in micro-enterprise, reproductive health and anti-violence against women.

Over a decade of gender mainstreaming has resulted in the following:

- better coordination among national agencies to produce sex-disaggregated data on 20 priority indicators to monitor progress in the implementation of CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, and the MDGs and the national plan for women;
- formation and capacity building of gender focal points in national agencies as well as local government units responsible for formulating their agency Gender and Development plans and advocating for their GAD budgets;
- establishment of eight gender resource centers nationwide and a pool of gender experts to provide technical assistance to regional line agencies and local government units;
- development of a Gender Mainstreaming Resource Kit composed of five modules and guidebooks for training, planning and evaluation;
- development of the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines for Project Development, Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation used in appraising the gender-responsiveness of project proposals. These guidelines were launched by no less than the President herself during the 30th anniversary of NCRFW last year.
- development of an assessment tool to gauge the gender-responsiveness of local government units and integration of gender indicators in the local and community-based monitoring systems;
- more focused gender mainstreaming in key sectoral programs such as micro-enterprise, reproductive health and anti-violence against women.

## Eradication of domestic violence and prevention of trafficking in persons



- Inter-agency councils on VAW and anti-trafficking
- Performance standards and assessment tools
- Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004
  - from 1,100 cases in 1996 to over 6,500 cases in 2005
- Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003
  - 137 rescued persons
  - 56 arrested persons for violation of the law
  - 380 women and children assisted
  - 7 convictions (March 2006)
  - 244 assisted and repatriated

We have made progress to eradicate violence against women by enacting laws to combat sexual harassment, rape, trafficking in persons, and domestic violence with the coordinated efforts of government and NGOs. Inter-agency councils against trafficking in persons and against violence against women ensure that the landmark laws are effectively implemented. Performance standards and assessment tools on gender-responsive handling of women victims have been developed for the police, prosecutors, social workers, health workers and village officials. The number of VAW cases reported to the police increased six-fold from 1,100 cases in 1996 to over six thousand five hundred cases in 2005. The highest recorded number of VAW cases peaked in 2001 at over 10 thousand cases.

The Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004 protects women and their children from all forms physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering or economic abuse in the context of intimate relationships. It includes the battered woman syndrome as a justifiable defense.

Two years into its implementation the anti-trafficking in persons law has resulted in 137 persons rescued by the police and 56 persons arrested. The social welfare department has provided protection and assistance to 380 women and children. Although 114 cases have been received for prosecution by the justice department, only seven convictions have been made as of March 2006. The foreign affairs department has assisted and repatriated 224 cases of human trafficking.

We need to forge strong alliances – through bilateral agreements - to break this web of trafficking and prostitution. We also need to address the demand side of trafficking to put a stop to the buying and selling of women and children.

## Rectification of education gaps between women and men



- Girls have **higher** participation rates than boys at the elementary and high school levels.
- **64%** of scholars are female.

In education, signs of paradigm shifts are gradually emerging as more women flock to the corridors and classrooms of elementary, high school and even university levels of education. The times now show more women taking on courses which prove lucrative to the pursuit of business, technical and other professional occupations.

Data for school year 2003-2004 showed that girls' participation rate is almost two percent higher than boys in elementary levels and eight percent higher in secondary levels. Higher education is also female-dominated.

Female enrolment in 'traditionally' male-dominated disciplines such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary medicine, math, computer science, and the military has steadily increased.

Women scholars outnumber men. Data on scholarship assistance of the education department to deserving indigenous youths for all school levels showed that 64% of over eleven thousand beneficiaries were female.

## Rectification of income gaps between women and men

- Female labor force participation rate registered only at **50%**.



In the field of work, however, female labor force participation rate registered only at 50% while the males registered steadily at 80% over the past ten years.

## Rectification of income gaps between women and men



- Support for **3 million** entrepreneurs as one of the 10-Point Agenda of the Arroyo Administration
- CIDA-NCRFW GREAT Women Project

President Arroyo has targeted the generation of 6 to 10 million jobs for her term till 2010. Three million of these are for women being provided access to micro-finance and micro-enterprise development.

The NCRFW will soon commence the GREAT Women Project or the Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women with the assistance of the Canadian International Development Agency. Its goal is to improve women's enterprises and sustainable livelihoods in order to raise their incomes and ultimately, improve the quality of their lives. In the process of doing so, gender concerns will be addressed in order to unblock some of the social constraints to women's economic empowerment.

## Roles and functions of the national machinery



- Knowledge broker
- Policy advocate
- Facilitator
- Innovator

In all of these undertakings, the NCRFW has played a catalytic and strategically influential role to achieve advancements in gender mainstreaming.

- As knowledge broker, it provided quality thinking and critical analysis on gender equality;
- As facilitator, it enhanced stronger linkages among local, national, regional and international sectors through its leadership in gender mainstreaming;
- As innovator, it encouraged and upheld the promotion of best practices in gender-responsive governance;
- As policy advocate, it championed the cause gender mainstreaming in all levels of government.

During this year's National Women's Month Celebration, the NCRFW presented to the President and her Cabinet the gains and gaps in the implementation of CEDAW in view of the reporting of the Philippines to the Committee this August. We have successfully generated support through the issuance of Presidential Directives such as the removal of night work prohibition, enforcement of anti-sexual harassment policies, appointment of more women in the Shari'ah courts, and support for the passage of a Magna Carta on Women, a comprehensive piece of legislation to protect and fulfill poor and marginalized women's economic, social and political rights.



There is much to share about our experiences in the Philippines but we have run out of time to do so.

The challenge we would like to pose in this meeting is to sustain our gender mainstreaming efforts with more sectoral focus using a rights-based and results-based approach.

Thank you very much. We hope to discuss these further with you in the succeeding sessions. *Arigato gozaimasu!*