



State of the Filipino Women Report, 2015 Highlights

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*State of the
Filipino Women
Report* **2015**
Highlights



Message

The State of the Filipino Women Report chronicles the achievements of the administration of President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III in bridging the gender gap and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

This booklet presents the highlights of the report, which the Philippine Commission on Women prepared for presentation at the International Women's Day event on March 8, 2016 at the Kalayaan Hall, Malacañan Palace, Manila. Featured are the gender-responsive programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, the Commission on Higher Education, and the Department of Health. MOVE Aklan, a voluntary group of men advocating an end to gender-based violence, is included as a story from the ground.

In the full report, which will be completed in May, 2016 as the term of President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III (2010-2016) nears its end, other exemplar programs, projects and activities will be featured. We invite partner line agencies and local government units to provide us information towards the completion of the State of the Filipino Women Report, 2010-2016.

Remedios I. Rikken

Chairperson

Philippine Commission on Women

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Chapter 1
**Gender equality in
the President's Social
Contract**



13 must be our lucky number

“...From a lack of concern for gender disparities and shortfalls, to the promotion of equal gender opportunity in all spheres of public policies and programs.”

— President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III quoting Item 13 of the Social Contract with the Filipino People, as contained in Executive Order No. 43

People familiar with the laws and policies passed during the term of President Corazon Aquino can rightfully say that her son was indeed tracing her footsteps when he passed EO 43.

When this “mere housewife” — as her rival, authoritarian President Ferdinand Marcos had once described her — took office in 1986, one of her first acts was to adopt the Philippine Development Plan for Women that spelled her government’s agenda regarding half of the country’s population.

According to the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW) 1989-1992, several imperatives were needed to give Filipino women a firmer foothold on development, among them:

- Train women in skills and trades usually taken up by men but are highly in demand by industries and which pay well;
- Remove barriers to women’s entry to the Philippine Military Academy and other security training institutions
- Pass laws that would criminalize domestic violence and decriminalize the sexual exploitation of women in prostitution;

- Amend the Labor Code to remove night-work prohibition for women;
- Prohibit the dismissal of women workers for reasons of pregnancy, and make sure that working conditions and facilities consider the needs of women workers during pregnancy and lactation, including seats, a breast feeding room and child care service;
- Support women farmers with extension services and access to farm technology and inputs;



- Eliminate gender stereotyping in the mass media and text books.

Giving women that major push towards more equal opportunities was among the priorities set by the first woman president of the Philippines, no mean feat that her son, President Aquino, acknowledged thus: “In all honesty, when my mother became the first female president of our country, that really was the major boost in gender equality and gender sensitivity.” (*Interview with RG Cruz of ABS-CBN News, posted at 02/18/16*)

With the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) as lead implementing agency, the Corazon Aquino administration mobilized government bureaucracy to work on these priorities by:

- Sensitizing high officials on gender issues
- Training technical personnel in gender analysis and planning
- Generating data on the situation of Filipino women, from the problems they face, to the programs, projects and activities they needed

Making government work for women became the vision and rallying cry of the NCRFW, the predecessor agency of the Philippine Commission on Women.

More than just a buzzword

When the Social Contract with the Filipino people mentions “equal gender opportunity,” it is referring to a level playing field for both men and women without stereotypes or preconceived notions about traditional roles holding them back. The term also means making available to all the learning and work opportunities to which they are qualified, be it leadership roles or caregiver posts.

It is also about removing the shame that men feel or are made to feel if they earn less than their wives,

or choose to be full time fathers or homemakers. Finally, it is about lauding the choices people make to squeeze the most out of their given talents, developed skills, interests and inclinations.

Championing the HeForShe Campaign

On February 24, 2015, President Aquino accepted the invitation of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon to be one of the 10 Head of State Champions of the HeForShe Campaign, a global effort to engage men and boys in dismantling the social and cultural barriers that prevent women and girls from achieving their full potential.

As Head of State Champion, President Aquino committed that the Philippine Government will strengthen support to end violence against women (VAW), promote women’s economic empowerment (WEE) by strengthening micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and promote male engagement for gender equality.

In accepting the role, the President wrote Ban Ki-Moon:

“The Philippines has always played a leadership role in the area of gender equality, and my administration continues to formulate policies that will not only safeguard the gains of the past but also open more opportunities for the future. I am confident that this Campaign will not only bolster the existing national and local government programs for gender equality and women empowerment, but will also complement one of the Philippines’ advocacies, as 2015 APEC Chair, on ‘Women and the Economy’”

President Aquino's HeForShe IMPACT Commitments

Strengthen government support to end violence against women.

According to the 2013 National Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the National Statistics Office, one in five Filipino women age 15-49 has experienced physical violence. To begin to change behavior at the community level, the Magna Carta of Women mandated the establishment of “violence against women desks” in every village throughout the country. As of 2014, close to 80% of villages have established their desks. As part of the commitment to HeForShe, the government will reach 83% or 33,884 of the 42,029 barangays nationwide that have enacted Barangay Ordinances or issued Executive Orders for the establishment of VAW Desks by the end of 2016.

Promote women's economic empowerment by strengthening SMEs.

Today, women are involved in 95% of microenterprises in the Philippines. Strengthening this sector provide opportunities to female workers and entrepreneurs. By the end of 2016, the Trade and Industry Department will reach a total of 101,710 MSMEs of which at least 30% are women-led. Over the same period, the Department of Social Welfare and Development aims to reach approximately 375,000 families with business and livelihood trainings, through its Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP). By 2020, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)-Coke STAR program will train 200,000 women and sari-sari (village variety stores) storeowners on gender-sensitivity and micro-business management skills.

Promote male engagement in gender equality.

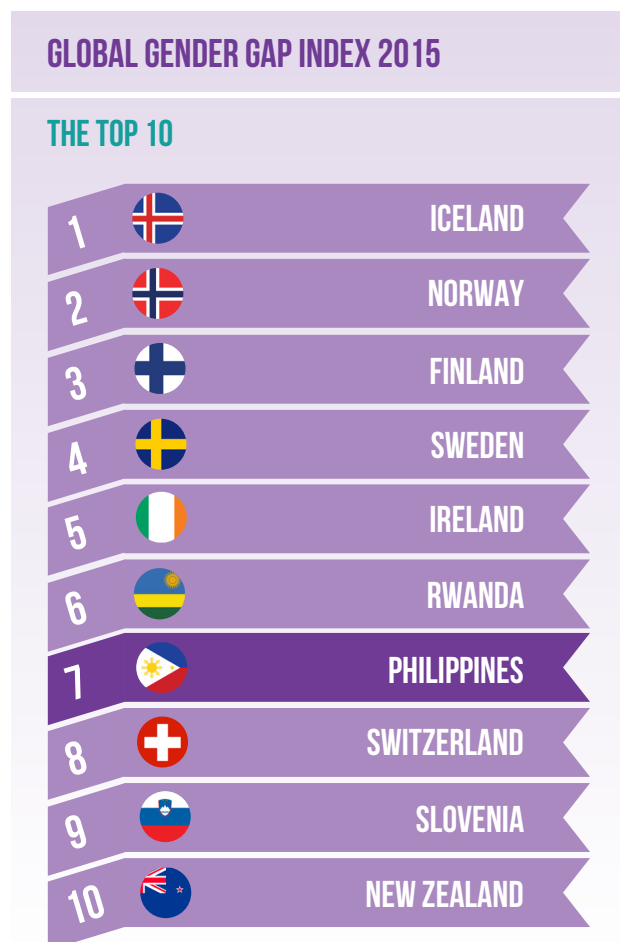
The government will strengthen collaboration with male movements and networks of male advocates such as Men Opposed to Violence Everywhere (MOVE), a network of male anti-VAW advocates, Men on Wheels, Men's Responsibility on Gender and Development (MR GAD), and Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Parental Abilities (ERPAT), a program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development being implemented by local governments. The government will work with these organizations to encourage men to support gender equality and the empowerment of women. With the support of the Population Commission and through the Kalalakingang Tapat sa Responsibilidad at Obligasyon sa Pamilya (KA TROPA) (Men True to their Responsibility and Obligation to the Family), the government commits to increase male engagement by targeting an additional 45,000 men in 2016 and a further 47,000 men in 2017, for a total of almost a million men engaged in these efforts by 2017.

Source: <http://www.heforshe.org/en/impact/benigno-aquino>

Chapter 2
**Philippines ranks
high in global
gender indices**



Here's how the Philippines fared compared to its counterparts in the world:



Source: *The Global Gender Gap Report 2015*
 Note: 2015 rank out of 145 countries

The high Philippine ranking is due to the increase in the number of female legislators, senior officials and managers, as well as professional and technical workers and women in ministerial positions.

The other GGI indicators on which the Philippines received a rating of 1 to signify that gender equality has been achieved, are literacy, enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education, and healthy life expectancy.

Since 2006, the Philippines has consistently ranked among the top ten countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, as shown in this table:

RANKING OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX, 2010-2015

YEAR	SCORE	WORLD RANK
2015	0.790	7TH
2014	0.781	9TH
2013	0.783	5TH
2012	0.776	8TH
2011	0.769	8TH
2010	0.765	9TH



Source: *The Global Gender Gap Report 2015*

Gender Development Index

When it comes to measuring whether male and female citizens have achieved the same level of human development, the United Nations Development Programme has placed the Philippines among Group 1 countries which have achieved “high gender equality in Human Development as measured by the Human Development Index (HDI).”

The HDI disaggregates the achievement for females and males in the three dimensions — a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living — and takes into consideration the gender gaps favoring males, as well as those favoring females.

COMPONENTS OF GENDER DEVELOPMENT INDEX: PHILIPPINES, 2014

 FEMALE	INDICATORS	 MALE
0.649	Human Development Index	0.664
71.8	Life Expectancy at Birth (Years)	64.9
11.5	Expected Years of Schooling	11
8.4	Mean Years of Schooling	7.9
5,382	Estimated GNI per capita (\$)	10,439

Source: United Nations Development Programme (2015), *Human Development Report*, page 221

The Philippines' GDI value for 2014 was at 0.977, which is higher than average in the medium HDI group, composed of about 37 countries with Philippines ranking 10th behind Botswana, Moldova, Egypt, Turkmenistan, Gabon, Indonesia, Paraguay, Palestine and Uzbekistan. In East Asia and the Pacific, the country scored higher compared to Singapore, China, Australia, New Zealand and many more countries with only Thailand doing better than the Philippines with the GDI score of 1 to signify full gender parity.

Despite these rosy figures, there is a gender gap when it comes to labor force participation, of which the rate for females is only 49.7 per cent while for males, the rate is 77.8 per cent in January 2015. Women constitute less than 40 per cent (39.4%) of all employed persons.

As noted by the United Nations Development Programme, the estimated gross national income per capita in 2014 was \$5,282 for females and \$10,439 for males.

To arrive at these figures, UNDP considered the labor force participation rates of males and females, the ratio of female to male wages in all sectors, and the gross national income (GNI) in 2011 purchasing power parity, which for the Philippines stood at \$7,915 in 2014. These figures place us within the group of upper-middle income countries based on World Bank classification.

But if we were to join the club of high-income economies — those with GNI per capita of \$12,746 or more — then we need to increase economic activities by enabling more women to enter the labor force, especially in areas with high value added.

When men and women get equal pay for work of equal value, and the average pay of men and women equalize, then we can say that, economically, we have achieved gender equality.

Pending that, we need a gender-responsive governance to speed up the process.

Chapter 3
**Things go better with
Gender-Responsive
Governance**



Things go better with GRG

We encourage concerned government agencies to refer to the Women’s EDGE Plan as a tool for addressing gender equality issues in their respective areas of concern. PCW will continue its technical assistance, advocacy, and monitoring to guide gender mainstreaming efforts toward fulfilling women’s human rights and accomplishing the commitment of the President to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

— Chairperson Remedios I. Rikken in the foreword to the Women’s Empowerment, Development and Gender Equality Plan, 2013-2016

Gender-responsive governance (GRG) recognizes the universal human rights of men and women and makes it the business of the state to respect, protect and fulfill these rights without discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. In the Philippines, gender-responsive governance is about making real to every Filipino man and woman the principle of equality before the law in the Philippine Constitution.

The Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710) provides directions on areas of life where more proactive interventions by state institutions are required so that women are able to fully enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with men. The law declares,

“(T)he State shall endeavor to develop plans, policies, programs, measures, and mechanisms to address discrimination and inequality in the economic, political, social, and cultural life of women and men.”

(Article 2. Declaration of State Policy of RA9710)

Gender-responsive governance means being aware that men and women have different needs and interests because of the differences in their gender



roles, and the expectation, privileges, power and resource entitlements that go with their respective genders. Policies, programs, services and activities of the state should consider these gender-based differences and ensure that the needs of both men and women are met, and any inequality in access to resources and power are corrected rather than perpetuated.

The Women’s Empowerment, Development and Gender Equality Plan, 2013-2016 (Women’s EDGE Plan) identified the areas where the national government commits to address priority issues of gender inequality and deficits in women’s enjoyment of their human rights. The Plan’s thematic areas of focus are Women’s Economic Empowerment, Women’s Social Development Rights, Gender in Justice, Peace and Security, Gender in Environment and Climate Change, and Gender-Responsive Governance.

Gender-responsive governance enables men and women to equally participate in policy-making including resource allocation at all levels, from national to the local levels. Appointing equal number of men and women in Cabinet level positions and fielding or nominating equal number of male and female candidates (in the party list of traditional political parties and the sectoral parties of marginalized constituencies) are hall marks of gender-responsive governance.

More women in present cabinet

No other President has appointed as many women to his Cabinet as President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III. He appointed 13 women to his Cabinet of 60 members, making women 22 per cent of the Cabinet.

Within the government, gender equality needs to be achieved and observed if it were to be a key driver in promoting gender equality and in realizing the human rights of men and women

without discrimination. The Women’s EDGE Plan, 2013-2016, declares,

“The country’s civil service is well poised to perform this role. Gender balance and decent terms and conditions in the workplace are very important issues that can drive gender equality among civil servants. Since civil servants form the core of program implementers, the gender equality issues they espouse have the potential for achieving multiplier effects among their beneficiaries.”

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN APPOINTED TO CABINET LEVEL POSITIONS

Corazon C. Aquino (1986-1992)

7.4%

Fidel V. Ramos (1992-1998)

13.2%

Joseph Ejercito Estrada (1998-2001)

12.2%

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2001-2010)

15.2%

Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III (2010-Present)

21.7%

Source: Official Gazette, Masterlist of Cabinet Members in 1899. Retrieved from <http://www.gov.ph/lists/cabinet-members-since-1899/>

The Women’s EDGE Plan reported that as of 2010, females outnumber males among the employees of government at the ratio of 58.7 per cent females versus 41.3 per cent males. At second level positions, the advantage of females is even higher at 66.3 per cent of those who hold professional, technical, executive and managerial positions. However, positions at the third level — the level where

appointments are made only by the President — men outnumber women who hold only 45 per cent of the posts. The Magna Carta of Women requires the ratio between men and women to reach 50-50 or full equality.

Highlights

The following articles highlight major initiatives of the government of President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III in making governance gender-responsive, guided by the Magna Carta of Women, the Women's EDGE Plan and the many laws and policies passed and adapted to protect, promote and fulfill the human rights of women. These are among the exemplar programs, activities and projects that were designed and implemented with deliberate consideration of the relevant gender issues, and that had substantial budget allocation. Chosen are programs, projects and activities (PPAs) that contribute to the progressive realization of their human rights as enshrined in the Magna Carta of Women and other national laws and international conventions and commitments of the Philippine Government, including item 13 of the President's Social Contract with the Filipino people.

Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program

The 4Ps: To the 3Rs and beyond!

It's probably a tiresome cliché, but also tragically proven true every time: the rich plan for generations; the poor plan for Saturday night.

Indeed, being poor means endless uncertainty, with the most basic question haunting mothers and women who head impoverished households: where do we get tomorrow's meal?

How does one plan beyond the next meal when there's hardly any money for rent, for school, milk and diapers, and when one's meager savings can be wiped out by an unexpected medical emergency? Are vaccinations for future diseases more important for the baby than proper nutrition? Why send the kids to school to learn the 3Rs (Reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic) when they're more needed to tend the market stall, or take care of their younger siblings while the parents scrounge for a living?

Such life and death decisions among the country's marginalized are among the factors behind the 4Ps, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program which literally means lifeline for the family. Otherwise known as the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), it is a human development program that involves government investment on the health and education of children in poor households. Originally for those aged 0-14 years, the 4Ps was expanded in 2014 to include those up to 18 years taking into account the K to 12 Basic Education Program. The education grant for children in high school was also increased from P300 to P500.

The cash is meant to provide assistance to help the household meet their immediate needs, while the long term goal is to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty by investing in the children's education and helping them aspire for a better future.



DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman receives the GADtimpala bronze award from PCW Executive Director Emmeline Verzosa on March 28, 2014 at the Diamond Hotel in Manila. Together with TESDA, DSWD was rated as the country's most gender-responsive agency for 2013. PCW recognized the DSWD's integration of gender aspects in its Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (PPPP) and Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS).

The Pantawid Program gives cash grants to beneficiaries provided that they comply with the following:

- (a) pregnant women must avail of pre- and post-natal care and be attended during childbirth by a trained health professional;
- (b) parents must attend Family Development Sessions (FDS);
- (c) zero to five (0-5)-year-old children must receive regular preventive health check-ups and vaccines;
- (d) six to 14 year-old children must receive deworming pills twice a year; and
- (e) all child-beneficiaries (0-18 years old) must be enrolled in school and maintain a class attendance of at least 85% of school days in a month.

Qualified child-beneficiaries may continue to college through a Students Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (SGP-PA), which began in 2012, under the auspices of the Commission on Higher Education and the Department of Labor and Employment. This program provides scholarship grants to the high school graduates who also qualify to study in state universities and

colleges for degree programs, or in accredited training institutions for technical courses, which government has identified in its human resource development priorities.

As of June 25, 2014, the Pantawid Program has nearly 4.1 million registered household-beneficiaries and operates in 79 provinces covering 1,484 municipalities and 143 cities in all 17 regions of the country.

The 4Ps has helped reduce disparity in education, by making it rewarding for parents to keep their children in school longer. In fact, aside from improving education access, the 4Ps also helps reduce the dropout rates of students. According to the Research and Statistics Division of the Department of Education, schools not implementing the 4Ps showed a dropout growth rate of 18 per cent, compared to only nine per cent in schools where students are receiving 4Ps subsidies.

In SY 2014–2015, there were 1.844 million 12–18 year-old children of Pantawid families in high school, of which 333,673 were the first batch to graduate in 2015. This batch is 99 percent of the total 337,685 Pantawid Pamilya senior high school students in SY 2014–2015. As of July 2015, 78,994 of the graduates have signified interest to go to college, while another 5,960 are interested to pursue technical-vocational courses.

For SY 2015–2016, the number of beneficiaries in high school increased to 1.845 million as of June 2015.

The 4Ps has also addressed maternal mortality, as seven out of 10 live births in the last five years by Pantawid mothers were delivered in a health facility, compared to 5.5 in 10 births among non-beneficiary mothers.

The national average is 6 in 10 births, indicating that the program has a positive impact on top of the improvements from 15 nationwide interventions by the Health department and



related agencies. This outcome is important as institutional delivery is much more effective than skilled birth attendance at reducing maternal and infant mortality and morbidity.

The Pantawid program also encourages the trial use of modern family planning and encourages women to try these methods at least once. Findings of the 2014 4Ps Impact Evaluation show that among 15-49 year old women who gave birth over the last five years, 74% of those from Pantawid households indicated having used such modern family planning methods compared to 68% of their counterparts.

With Pantawid grantees required to attend Family Development Sessions (FDS) as compliance to program conditionality, they become exposed as well to lectures on family planning that could lead to changes in attitudes and practices towards reproductive health.



As of June 25, 2014, the Pantawid Program has nearly 4.1 million registered household-beneficiaries and operates in 79 provinces covering 1,484 municipalities and 143 cities in all 17 regions of the country.

Health center visits by Pantawid mothers may also increase their access to similar information on family planning, as well as how to ensure a healthier upbringing of their children.

The incidence of antenatal care by a skilled health professional is also high for Pantawid mothers (93%). The study shows marked improvement on the mothers having these check-ups by a skilled health professional in a health facility. Results of the study reveal that 80% of beneficiary mothers are checked by skilled health professionals after giving birth, compared to 59% of non-beneficiaries. More Pantawid mothers (72%) also had their postnatal check-up in health facilities compared to their non-beneficiary counterparts (55%).

Pantawid Familyang Pilipino Program

Faces turned to the future



“If you are not empowered on your own, how can you help empower others?”

— *Pantawid Program*
beneficiary *Marivic Labajo Palisan*, with her husband *Aljun* and son, in front of their house in *Barangay Alipao*.

Over two years, members of the women’s group *Pilipina* travelled all over the country, seeking out the beneficiaries of the *Pantawid* program, and soliciting their personal stories. They found 18 women, one man and a couple, who willingly shared their journey from their daily struggle for survival, to living with faces turned to the future.

The stories are documented in the publication *Bridging the Gender Gap, stories of Change*

in *Women’s Lives in the Pantawid Familyang Pilipino Program* (2015), which was produced with funding from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The storytellers in the book ranged in age from 30 to 59, with a median age of 39, and at least four children each. Most of the women had finished elementary schooling, with a few having graduated from high school and two with college degrees. Only one storyteller’s family lived in an urban informal settlement, while the rest lived in rural farming areas or coastal fishing communities.

Most of the storytellers’ households were ranked within the lowest socio-economic strata in their communities when they were identified as *Pantawid* beneficiaries. Their household incomes were drawn largely from their male spouses’ work in farming, fishing, vending or seasonal contractual jobs in carpentry, driving, welding or small-scale mining. The women sought to augment family incomes by selling cooked food and snacks, poultry and piggery, and vegetable gardening. There were also family enterprises, a combined effort between the couple, which included selling fresh or dried fish; cooking and selling snack foods or refreshments; cultivating seaweeds, and for one, making and selling ice-cream.

How did the *Pantawid* program change their life? Have the gender sensitivity sessions they were required to attend made a difference

on how they view themselves as women, and their relationship with their spouses?

Here's one story that could typify those of other Pantawid beneficiaries:

Meet Marivic

Marivic Labajo Palisan of Alegria, Surigao del Norte, looks back now with humor at the time when, as a harassed wife, she had to balance housework with childcare, preparing snacks for sale and giving up the business with the coming of her second child. She had to stretch an increasingly tight budget given the irregular income from her husband's work in small-scale mining.

Marivic Labajo married Aljun Palisan, 29, in early 2008. They had met in Manila where Aljun worked as a security guard and Marivic was living with her mother. After the wedding, the couple returned home to Barangay Alipao, Alegria, Surigao del Norte, where Aljun made P300 (US\$6.70) a week from hauling work in a small mine.

Occasionally, if they struck it rich, he'd take home P1,000 (US\$22). But if their excavation was of low or zero-grade ore, he'd be paid nothing. To stretch his income, Aljun would sometimes join other workers in hauling *copra* (dried coconut meat) making P200 (US\$4.50) per trip.

Marivic recalls that in the past, when she had to choose between rice and the children's milk, she would always prioritize the youngsters' needs: "*Dili makapalit og bugas tungod sa gatas* (I could not buy rice because of milk)."

If there was no income, she would seek out loans. She dreaded those lean times when the children fell ill, she recalls. The loans came with a 15 per cent interest (now increased to 20 per cent), which she had to make good with monthly payments, otherwise the interest would be compounded. With only one child to keep her busy, she tried

selling *gulaman* (a cold drink with gelatin cubes) and *landang* (a sweet delicacy), to augment the family income, but a second pregnancy cut this short.

In 2008, Marivic was included in the survey and found to be qualified as a Pantawid Program beneficiary. Now she no longer faces such a hard choice. When the health and food subsidy of P1,000 (US\$22) comes (released every two months), she buys one can of powdered milk at P700 (about US\$16) and over P200 (US\$4.50) worth of vitamin supplements, which are shared by seven-year-old Vince David and three-year-old Nicole. She used to negotiate with David's teacher about the late payments of school obligations. Now, school accounts are settled on time and the child's school needs are immediately secured. And her husband's meager income can then buy them rice.

New ways for old problems

Being a part of the Pantawid Program has not just helped ease financial anxieties, it has also paved the way for new ways of looking at and solving old problems for Marivic and Aljun.

From the Pantawid Program Family Development Sessions (FDS), Marivic learned about time management and the prevention of and proper care for diseases such as schistosomiasis, tuberculosis and filariasis, which are common in areas with poor sanitation facilities. She also learned about infant and young child feeding, and practiced exclusive breast-feeding for Nicole in her first six months. And the better way to discipline children, she realized, is to talk with them rather than resorting to physical punishment.

But it was at the Project's gender sensitivity training in 2012 where Marivic experienced her "Aha!" moment. The training discussed the difference between the terms "sex" and "gender," which Marivic and most others had previously thought were identical.

Marivic reflected somberly on women’s socially expected roles as summarized in the four B’s - *balay, bata, baboy, bana* (house, children, hogs, and husband). She herself exemplified this by what she was expected to do as a matter of course: cleaning, cooking, clothes washing, child care, and so on.

But with gender consciousness came the awakening that such a situation was not right. Now when parent leader duties call her out early, she tells her husband, “*Dong*, please prepare breakfast.”

A woman, she continues, should have time for neighborly exchange. She recalls what someone she respects told her: “*Kun sa kaugalingon dili ka empowered, unsa pa sa uban?* (If you are not empowered on your own, how can you help empower others?)” The words hit hard and hit home.

Even her concept of politics and gender roles has changed, says Marivic who adds that the mere mention of “barangay captain” (village head) used to evoke the image of a male because “men are good leaders, they have firm plans.” Women, in contrast, are “fickle, emotional.” Women usually landed the positions of secretary and treasurer because “they know how to write, how to count,” she says of her previous concepts.

But now, she stresses, women say, “Wait a minute, can we reverse roles? Men can take the positions of treasurer and secretary; we can become barangay captain.”

In fact that day may not be far off. Now two women sit as *kagawad* (councilors) in the local legislative body when there was none in the past. And two of nine barangay *tanod* (security watch) are female.

Another Project workshop on VAWC (violence against women and children) made her realize the various types of rape including statutory rape (of minors) and marital rape (by a spouse). Something clicked in her mind: “*Wa ta kahibalo, na-VAWC na diay ta.*” She explains: “We didn’t realize it then but we were already VAW victims – by the mere putdown ‘you have no mind, you are of no

account’, and by the justification that ‘you were beaten because you keep on yapping.’”

With their newfound gender consciousness, Marivic and her colleagues can now turn the tables and warn their husbands “I shall VAWC you,” meaning “I can go to court if you hurt or harm me.”

A turning point

When the Pantawid Program and the Project issued an invitation for a four-day learning and summing-up conference in Davao City in August 2014, Marivic strategized. She did not inform her husband well in advance because she was sure he would say “No.” In the past he would make up excuses, she says, whenever she sought permission for an out-of-town activity, making her feel “*mora ko’g maid, dili na asawa* (like a (house) maid, not a wife).”

When Marivic informed him about the training workshop one day before her schedule to go, he protested as was his wont, but still, she packed that evening. “Take all your clothes,” he had warned her. She replied firmly, “I cannot do that because I cannot leave the children. We shall settle this when I return.”



Marivic Palisan relating her life story to Pantawid Program staff of Alegria town.

At the bus terminal she met a fellow participant who also had to placate her husband. She told her friend: “*Kun giapas ka sa terminal, ako sa balay gipalayas na ko!* (If your husband followed you to the terminal [to make you change your mind], my husband has told me to pack up and leave.)”

When Marivic returned after the seminar, the house was a mess. She did not clean-up, a niece did. Her husband said, “Go, marry your community organizer...They spend for your training to teach you to defy your husband?” he taunted her. Not much later, however, with her explaining and a good dose of cajoling, husband and wife spoke and came to terms.

“We didn’t realize it then but we were already VAW victims – by the mere putdown ‘you have no mind, you are of no account’...”

Now she goes off for a number of days for an activity, knowing it is a calculated risk, but returns with conviction that convinces him that what she is doing is important, too.

Within two years, Marivic’s viewpoint and trust in herself had turned 180 degrees. Marivic also recalls her first Pantawid Program meeting: she would not dare interrupt the discussion with a question, and was quaking when asked to say a prayer. When called to speak she would cover her face; when spoken to she would just stare back open-mouthed.

Now she speaks out confidently and shares her observations and lessons from the Project activities with her beneficiary group. Indeed, Marivic has come a long way in her gender journey. She has conquered her fears, and made her husband accept, sometimes grudgingly, why she needs to fulfill her community leadership roles.

And she knows there is much more to discover in herself, her activities and relationships, about being a woman.

The National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

No longer war booty, women find an ally in NAP



Women as perpetual victims of crimes, including sexual violence, in times of war and armed conflict has been a given in the world's blood-soaked history. Rape as an instrument of war — a means to reward mercenaries and a tool to further demoralize the men of the losing camp — has been an established military tactic, one used so often that the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 1325, asking governments to include more women in decision-making when it comes to preventing and resolving situations of conflict.

The Philippine government did just that in the first quarter of 2010 and drafted a National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security with nine government agencies tasked to implement it. It was the first national action plan on UNSCR 1325 in Asia, and the 26th in the world.

A place at the (negotiating) table

In recent decades, Filipino women have made significant strides: as heads of households, business leaders, elected and appointed officials, government workers and community organizers.

History has not been remiss in reminding us about the scars and wounds of war deeply etched in humanity's soul, with its trail of blood always leading to a grieving woman's doorstep and a weeping child's nightmare. Indeed, the time has come for all governments to make sure that women are given a greater role in preventing armed conflict or, once it has broken out, in resolving it and ensuring its enduring and inclusive peace dividends.

— Secretary Teresita Quintos Deles, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process presenting the Philippine Country Statement during the High-Level Review on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

It is in the area of peace negotiations however where women’s participation lagged behind, with war and conflict-resolution generally considered a male domain and women often seen as vulnerable and in need of protection.

A study in 2012 showed that of 31 peace processes between 1992 and 2011, women comprised only 4% of signatories, 2.4% of chief mediators, 3.7% of witnesses and 9% of negotiators (UNIFEM, 2012). This, in spite of the passage in 2000 of Security Council Resolution 1325 that urges increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and the setting up of mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.



Source: UNIFEM, 2012

In contrast, the GPH panel on the Bangsamoro peace agreement had three women signatories working alongside an equal number of men. Indeed, assigning two competent, experienced women experts, presidential peace adviser Sec. Teresita Quintos Deles, and UP Professor Miriam

Coronel-Ferrer to the highest decision-making positions in the peace process in Mindanao is a major accomplishment in the Philippine government’s implementation of SC 1325. (Source: From “Gender in the Peace Process,” by Socorro L. Reyes, International Consultant, Social Development and Gender Equality, as published in the *Kababaihan at Kapayapaan Magazine*, March 2015)

Fortunately, it’s a reality that was challenged by the Philippine government when it adopted in 2010 its National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security, which is anchored on the Magna Carta of Women. The NAP made the Philippines the first country in Asia to put into actual policy its commitment to the UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325, 1820, and 1888, as it acknowledges women’s capacity to make decisions on peace and security issues, recognizes sexual violence as a war strategy and a possible war crime, as well as establishes leadership, deploys expertise and improves coordination among stakeholders involved in addressing conflict-related sexual violence.

In November 2010, under President Aquino, the NAP was further fleshed out with the identification of implementation targets and indicators. To make sure that the NAP would be filtered to the grassroots, especially in conflict-affected areas, the plan was localized with the drafting of local national action plans or LNAP.

As Presidential peace adviser Sec. Deles declared: “We have asserted time and again that peace is not made just on the negotiating table, but must be vigorously pursued on the ground. Let us work together to close the gap between what happens at the negotiating table and what happens in communities affected by armed conflict.”

The NAP consists of four pillars:

1. Protection and prevention
2. Empowerment and participation
3. Promotion and mainstreaming
4. Capacity development and monitoring/ reporting

Protection and prevention

To protect women in conflict situations and to prevent their exploitation, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) established a facility that provides assistance to women displaced by the 2013 Zamboanga siege. It also provides post-conflict support to 4,619 and 4,301 women in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and Region 12, respectively.

Philhealth, in close collaboration with the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), meanwhile provided health insurance to 754 women and enrolled 3,698 families covered by projects in Sajahatra Bangsamoro Program areas.

The Foreign Affairs department, for its part, helped mitigate conflict-related trafficking when it conducted mobile passport services in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi in 2013.

Empowerment and participation

The government increased the number of women in peace negotiations to ensure gender balance in the composition of the peace panels, and made

sure that women were as evenly represented in its support staff.

The Philippine government also blazed a trail in making sure that women were active participants in crafting peace agreements. Aside from Secretary Teresita Quintos-Deles, who chairs the Office of Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), the Government of the Philippines (GPH) panel negotiating a peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was chaired by a woman, UP Prof. Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, with several women in its technical working committee, among them Presidential Assistant on Muslim Affairs Yasmin Busran-Lao.

The government's peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF) also included Jurgette Honculada and Lulu Tison, while 2011 agreement transforming the Cordillera Bodong Administration- Cordillera People's Liberation Army into a potent socio-economic unarmed force had Jessica Banganan and Charlotte Matias as program development officers in Benguet.

In the GPH panel for talks with the MILF, 40% of the peace negotiators, including the chair, are women. Women also comprised 69.2% of the secretariat, and 60% of the legal team. Thus, even at the negotiation stage, women already had "meaningful political participation," as stated in the draft agreement.

Other gender-sensitive provisions can also be found in the annexes on Revenue Generation and Wealth-Sharing, Power-Sharing and Normalization.

A similar gender representation can be gleaned from the GPH panel negotiation with the CPP/NPA/NDF: 40% of the negotiators, 54.5% of the



Out of the box, and into women-friendly spaces

To make sure that women's rights are protected in conflict situations, the DSWD started its Women Friendly Space (WFS) project, as part of its commitment to the NAP.

From traditional relief operations in disaster-stricken areas that involve the usual dole-out of rice, noodles, canned goods flashlights and sanitary napkins, the WFS project moved away from the one-size-fits-all concept for refugees.

That women have specific needs demanding space and time became all too apparent after several disasters showed that sexual violence, child trafficking and prostitution became unintended consequences of the lack of privacy and wherewithal in evacuation centers.

The DSWD thus created women-friendly spaces for mothers, especially those who are breastfeeding, in Cagayan de Oro in the aftermath of typhoon Sendong. Four more multi-purpose structures were built by an international organization, with one designated as a WFS site.

Initially, a WFS simply consisted of space and a number of activities. The need for livelihood—prompted by the sight of idle men and women and of young girls trading sex for cash or relief goods, was addressed by some skills training and cash-for-work program that were however limited. The need for gender consciousness—raising also became a felt need, as cases of domestic abuse and sex trafficking were reported in refugee camps in Zamboanga, Maguindanao and Tacloban. Sessions that tackled violence against women (VAW), sexual exploitation, trafficking and gender-based violence (GBV) became part of what the WFS sites offered, with men, including police, attending the sessions.

Ten WFS sites were established in conflict-affected areas in 2013-2014: six in Maguindanao, one in North Cotabato, and three in Zamboanga City, all operated by NGOs.

The DSWD ran other sites in disaster-stricken areas, where the agency undertook capacity-building or staff training for a total of 13,805 participants in 465 sessions on GBV, with almost 60% of participants being female. Most of these women eventually became gender and peace advocates who can confront husbands and partners about family problems and VAW, and who can now access government support in cases of trafficking and GBV.

secretariat, and 66.7% of the technical committee members are women.

Promotion and mainstreaming

This means that NAP activities must be integrated and mainstreamed into the plans and budgets of agencies and local government units (LGUs), whose programs are located in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Mainstreaming gender concerns in peace-building has always been on the agenda of the Philippine Commission on Women. Republic Act 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women was passed before the adoption of the NAP, so several provisions related to women, peace and security were already integrated in the law. NAP then became the instrument to implement those provisions.

Monitoring and evaluation

The OPAPP has taken the lead to streamline and further refine the NAP indicators into more doable and measurable terms. The research project to take stock of the implementation of NAP in the country has just been completed. In 2015, UN member states that have developed their own NAPs were expected to submit their report on the status of their implementation.



A minefield of gender contradictions

For all their best intentions, the women in the GPH peace panel found that the going was anything but smooth on the road towards a gendered peace agreement, as it would cover both Christians and Muslims whose viewpoints on women and their roles could sometimes be contradictory. But having women at the peace table gives discussions a more expansive point of view, as women are able to share their perspectives and experiences, grounding the talks on everyday realities.

In her article, “WOMAN at the talks,” for *Kababaihan* at *Kapayapaan Magazine* (March 2014 issue), GPH chair Miriam Coronel-Ferrer recalled that sometimes, a mere word makes a lot of difference: “sex” as used in the item on non-discrimination based on sex, creed, race, ethnicity, etc. had to be replaced by “gender,” MILF panel member Datu Michael Mastura cautioned, as the ulamas are wary of the “s” word.

“Men’s and women’s equality” proved as contentious, with MILF panel chair Mohagher Iqbal saying that he believes women and men cannot have absolute equality because they are different physically, biologically and even emotionally.

This prodded Ferrer to go into the difference between being equal and being the same.

“Yes, we are different, biologically, socially. Men traditionally carried arms, women gave birth. But equality is not about sameness, but about relationships founded on mutual respect and the dignity of both persons. It is no different from what the MILF wanted for the Bangsamoro—‘parity of esteem.’ The same ‘parity of esteem’ or mutual respect between the majority and the minority population is desirable as well between men and women.”

The result of the often extensive discussions on which term was most appropriate gave the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro two gender-sensitive provisions found in the section on Basic Rights:

- (g) Right of women to meaningful political participation, and protection from all forms of violence;
- (i) Right to equal opportunity and non-discrimination in social and economic activity and public service, regardless of class, creed, disability, gender and ethnicity.

Mainstreaming Gender and Development in higher education

Learning is not gender-neutral



“We have come to a tipping point of the (Gender and Development) movement in higher education,” said Patricia B. Licuanan, Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) when she opened the 4th Higher Education Summit on Gender Issues on January 27-28, 2016 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

“The journey of mainstreaming gender and development in higher education since 2011 has not been a smooth and easy one for CHED,” she added and acknowledged that it is the

“persistence and tenacity of many women’s empowerment activists and supporters” that helped CHED come to this point.

When Patricia B. Licuanan, Ph.D., a staunch advocate of women’s rights, was appointed to CHED by President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III, she realized her unique and privileged position to pursue both her passion for education and education reform and gender equality and women’s empowerment.

In an attempt to demonstrate what it takes to systematically mainstream the gender perspective in the work of a government agency, we present the milestones of CHED’s journey:

Policies

- Special Orders and Memoranda to all CHED offices, state colleges and universities and local colleges and universities (LCUs) prescribing guidelines and procedures for the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women (MCW); creating and strengthening the GAD Focal Points in CHED Central and Regional Offices; reviewing the Gender and

Development (GAD) Plans of CHED and the state colleges and universities to ensure compliance to MCW and its implementing rules and regulations according to their role and responsibilities; and spearheading an information and education campaign on the MCW targeting students and faculty.

- Gender and Development Accord of Philippine Higher Education with a Declaration of Commitment and Partnership, (dated 12 October 2011) in which Presidents of state colleges and universities, other public higher education institutions (HEIs) and private HEIs committed themselves and their institutions to, among others, ensure that gender stereotypes and images in existing educational materials and curricula are revised and gender-sensitive language shall be used at all times; pursue capacity building on gender and development, and peace and human rights education for teachers and all those in the education sector; promote sports and health education for women and girls; provide scholarship programs for marginalized women and girls and ensure that age, pregnancy, motherhood, disability and lack of consent of husband shall not be ground for disqualification in the grant of scholarships; and develop programs aimed at increasing the enrolment of women in non-traditional skills training.
- CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, series 2015 “ESTABLISHING THE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIS)”, which provides for the institutionalization of gender equality and GAD in the policies, operations and programs such as gender-sensitive and rights-based curricula, instructional materials, as well as research and extension services
- Memorandum institutionalizing a Technical Panel on Gender and Development in the CHED System.

Programs

- Grant of scholarships to increase enrolment of females in traditionally male-dominated courses and, conversely, males in traditionally female-dominated courses.
- Assistance to female students who are going through extreme personal problems that hamper their studies so that they can continue their courses and graduate.
- Faculty Development Program to enhance the professional skills of teachers including those specializing in gender-related courses.
- Institutionalization of the Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence including sexual harassment in the educational workplace or training and learning areas.
- Review of operational policies and research and extension programs of state colleges and universities, resulting, among others, to (a) integration of gender, peace and security concerns in research and extension services, (b) addressing gender issues in poverty through livelihood training for women and health services and psycho-social services for women and indigenous peoples, and (c) advocacy campaigns for social protection of women.
- Annual Higher Education Summit on Gender Issues for heads and GAD focal persons of all public and private HEIs, which is the Commission’s monitoring, integrating and marketing tool to popularize and build commitment to the mandate of gender equality. The 1st Summit was a call for partnership and commitment with the higher education institutions, and discovered the wide gap between those with mature gender studies programs and those needing mentoring; the 2nd Summit tackled the Magna Carta of Women especially the mandate of educational

institutions to eradicate gender-bias in the curriculum course content and attempted to address gender-based violence and sexual harassment in school campuses; the 3rd Summit served as the nationwide consultation with the administrators and faculty of HEIs on CHED Memorandum Order No. 01, S. 2015; and the 4th one, held in January 2016, located Philippine higher education in the international community and benchmarked progress alongside neighbouring countries in the hope of being able to respond more efficiently to the requirements of an integrated regional economy.

- Publication of Higher Education Gender Handbook, a compendium of data and information on GAD-related concerns of CHED and higher education, a GAD 101 resource for HEIs complete with templates of GAD planning and budgeting, guide to crafting policies on sexual harassment and information on setting up a GAD Database, among others.

People

- Capacity building on Gender and Development for focal persons of CHED central and regional offices and state colleges and universities through, among others, training on gender analysis, planning and budgeting, on the use of the Harmonised GAD Guidelines, on the Magna Carta of Women, and on the elimination of gender-based violence on campuses.

Mainstreaming Gender and Development in higher education

Merging advocacy for women with career in education

Summary and excerpts from the speech entitled “Women’s Access to Higher Education: Persistent and Emerging Issues” of Patricia B. Licuanan, CHED chairperson at Eurasia Higher Education Summit, 17-19 February 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey

It was her first visit to Turkey, one of the places in her bucket list. “Being in this beautiful and historic country that strategically links the continents of Asia and Europe...I decided to link the two continents of my own personal and professional world – education and education reform and gender equality and women’s empowerment,” Patricia B. Licuanan, CHED chairperson opened her speech at the recent Eurasia Higher Education Summit.

Licuanan was in her element as an educator with a long experience as Academic Vice President at the Ateneo de Manila University and as President of Miriam College. In the field of women’s rights, Licuanan blazed a trail as a high profile advocate from chairing the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women to chairing the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and leading the Main Committee of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Now as CHED chairperson, she gets to be the academic and woman activist.

As a social psychologist, Licuanan often brings into her academic world the perspective of women and development. In her speech, she cites the gender dimension in higher education where “women graduates must be seen as part of the essential human resource base of every country. As such they have the right to the same access and career opportunities as their male counterparts. Higher education also leads to reversal of trends that exclude women in higher management or barriers to participation of women in decision-making such as discriminatory appointment or promotion and the so call ‘glass ceiling’”.

Licuanan recalled the international instruments such as the World Declaration on Education for All (1990), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Millennium Development Goals or MDGs (2000-2015) in support of gender equality in education for women and girls.



*Patricia B. Licuanan,
Chairperson of the Commission
on Higher Education (CHED)*

Monitoring of these global agreements however shows that higher education for women had not been given enough attention as shown in trending situations across the globe.

“While youth literacy rate increased, millions of adults and youths worldwide lacked basic reading and writing skills, with women accounting for more than 60% of all literate persons.”

“In most countries reporting data in the period 2005-2012, women accounted for the majority of graduates in the field of education. By contrast, in the area of engineering, manufacturing and construction, men constituted the majority of graduates.”

Licuanan pointed out that Education for All, Beijing Platform for Action and the MDGs did not reach their goals. Thus Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” and its targets, seeks to complete the unfinished goals as well as set a universal agenda for 2030.

Persistent and emerging issues

A UNESCO Study in 2012 showed that enhanced access to higher education by women has not always translated into enhanced career opportunities. Women often need to have more education than men to get the same jobs. They continue to confront discrimination in jobs, and disparities in power, voice and political representation. As a result, well educated women often end up in jobs where they do not use their full potential and skills. Moreover, research has established that educational attainment aside, the amount of women’s unpaid care work at home is directly related to their participation in the labor market. Thus Gender Tracking – whereby women are channeled into careers that are basically extensions of their domestic responsibilities while men acquire more marketable skills and enjoy more earning power – aggravates the already unequal opportunities

available to women. Even in health and teaching professions, women are at the bottom rung while men dominate the top positions.

The role of social and cultural factors in women’s education and the need for an enabling environment

In the Philippines, a CHED study 2016 shows that despite high ratings on gender empowerment measures, males occupy 69% of the top position of HEIs. Also it took 100 years for the University of the Philippines to have its first woman president.

“The lack of women in senior positions means that women are globally under-represented across all decision-making fora...and the expertise and skills of a significant part of the higher education workforce are under-utilized.” (*Morley 2013*)

“Typically the skills, competencies and dispositions considered essential to leadership, including assertiveness, autonomy and authority are embedded in socially constructed definitions of masculinity.” (*Knights & Kerfoot, 2004*)

Licuanan also mentioned gender based violence in campus as well as gender-fair language to reduce stereotype and discrimination, saying that “the educational system...is one of the main socializing forces of gender role stereotypes and thus helps strengthen existing stereotypes. A World Bank survey showed that “a range of underlying social and economic conditions needs to be favorable in order for female education to have a beneficial effect of gender equality and women’s well being.”

Actions by governments and institutions as reported by governments in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action showed 3 major trends:

- 1) addressing economic barriers to girls’ education;
- 2) increased efforts to foster a gender-responsive school environment; and

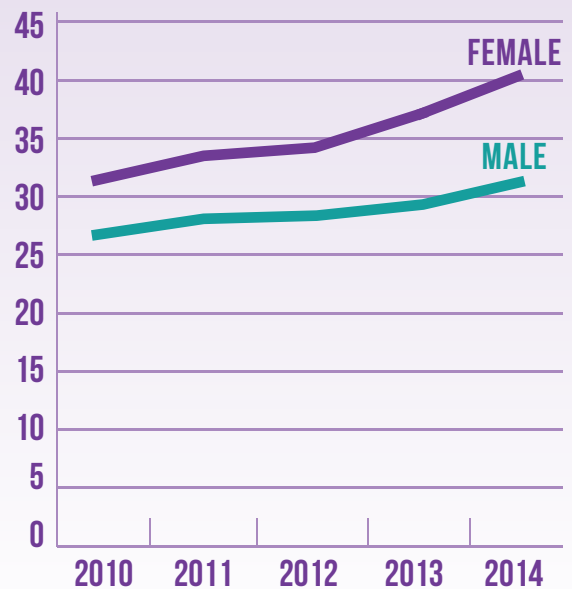
3) increasing support for the transition from school to work.

The latter needs strengthening linkages between education and access to decent work. There is a growing effort to target access to vocational training for women re-entering the workforce following maternity leave and women in rural communities.

Initiatives of the Philippine Commission on Higher Education were also discussed by Licuanan (See “Learning is not gender-neutral”).

Licuanan is in the right place at the right time. In CHED, she can work for change that could make a lot of difference in the lives of women. In all of her professional life, her work for gender equality and women’s empowerment continues...empowering young people through education, raising social issues and training professionals in graduate school. Her inaugural speech as president of Miriam College sums up the change she is still working for: she was going to tackle the “hidden curriculum” where “conformity and submissiveness are rewarded and assertiveness punished by using fear, disapproval and the imposition of authority... How will they dare to take the road less traveled by and make a difference? The challenge is not simply to provide our students with the best education possible but to create an enabling environment in society so that this education will be genuinely empowering and transforming.” (*Shaping the Women Global Agenda: Filipino Women in the UN, 2007*)

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO (GER), TERTIARY LEVEL BY SEX, 2011-2015

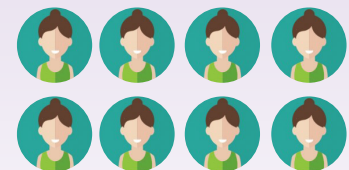


Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics online data base, <http://data.uis.unesco.org/> extracted on 26 Feb 2016 08:58 UTC (GMT)

STUDENT ENROLMENT IN BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS BY SEX, 2014-2015

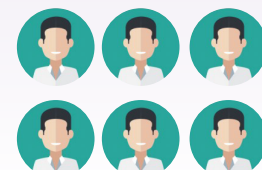
FEMALE

2,109,651
(55%)



MALE

1,702,075
(45%)



Source: CHED Infographics <http://www.ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Student-Enrolment-in-Baccalaureate-Programs-by-Gender1.jpg>

Sexual harassment then hidden, now shunned

Feeling safe on campus



CHED Chairperson Patricia B. Licuanan, 7th from right, discussed sexual harassment on campus at the 4th Higher Education Summit on Gender Issues.

You would think that at college level, there are no gender issues. After all, data show that there are more girls than boys studying at college level, with 124 female students for every 100 male students now enrolled in Philippine colleges and universities. Women dominate the campus not only as students but also as teachers and administration staff.

But there is a gender issue more insidious than we imagine. It is sexual harassment on campus, with mainly students as victims and teachers as perpetrators, preying on our young men and women students. They are mostly men in authority abusing their position to have their way. Other possible harassers on campus are supervisors, co-workers and health personnel, as found in perception and incidence studies carried out in the University of the Philippines in Diliman, in 1992 and 1994 respectively.

Sexual harassment is “a persistent problem in our school campuses,” said CHED Chairperson Patricia B. Licuanan in her address to presidents, administrators, professors, lecturers and other members of the community in higher education at the 4th Higher Education Summit on Gender Issues held on January 27-28, 2016 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila.

Sexual harassment is a human rights violation and has since been declared a crime with the passing of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Law or Republic Act 7877 of 1995. It declared “... (A)ll forms of sexual harassment in the employment, education or training environment are hereby declared unlawful.”

In 2011, Licuanan issued a call for partnership with the nearly 2,000 institutions of higher education, to free the campuses of sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence by, among others, setting up of functional Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI).

This committee is responsible for receiving complaints of sexual harassment, for investigating the complaints, and for submitting their findings and recommendations to the disciplinary authority. The committee is also responsible for leading discussions and other means to raise the awareness of the school community about the policy against sexual harassment and the recourse for victims.

Over the past five years, a number of state colleges and universities (SCUs) have provided good practice examples in promptly investigating complaints against faculty members, who were afforded their rights to due process. Those found guilty had not only been dismissed from service but had also been disqualified perpetually from holding public office. Two of these SCUs, namely the Philippine State College of Aeronautics and the Ramon Magsaysay Technological University, went out of their way to help the victims file criminal cases against the perpetrators, a demonstration of the administrators' full commitment to upholding the rights of students to a campus free of sexual harassment.

At the start of the CHED campaign in 2011, less than 300 HEIs had CODIs in place. By School Year 2015-2016, CHED expects that all 2,000 HEIs would have their CODIs set up if they comply with CHED Memorandum Order No. 01, s. 2015. It is in the work plan of the regional offices of CHED to monitor compliance of HEIs by the end of the school year or in the summer of 2016.

NUMBER OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WITH MECHANISMS AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT, 2011 AND 2015



2011 There were less than **300** higher education institutions with CODI



2015 Target by 2015 is that all **2,000** higher education institutions will have CODI in place

Source: Commission on Higher Education

The Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law

Worth the wait

High in the legislative agenda of President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III is the passing of a law on responsible parenthood and reproductive health. It was the administration's key to addressing the persistent and serious problem of the high number of deaths among Filipino women due to pregnancy and child birth. It was also in keeping with Section 12, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution that declares it State policy "to protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution and equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception."

The passing of the law is long overdue, considering the country's international obligations on reproductive health and rights under the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of the United Nations, of which the country has been a State Party for nearly 30 years.

For nearly 12 years, Senate Bill No. 2865 and House Bill No. 4244 were fiercely discussed and debated in and out of congress until they were finally consolidated and approved by the Bicameral Conference Committee on December 19, 2012. Two days after, the President signed into law Republic Act No. 10354 that was to be known as the "Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012" or the RPRH Law.

RA 10354 declares "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of women especially mothers in particular and of the people in general and instill health consciousness among them." Human rights and women rights movements in the country, along with those in population and development and other concerned sectors,



hailed the passing of the law as a milestone towards finally achieving reproductive health and rights for all. Unfortunately, there were equally strong counter movements that sought to dispel the law on the argument that it is in violation of the same Constitutional provision on which it was founded, and that it tolerates - if not endorses - abortion as a form of contraception.

One day before the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 10354 was to be published in the national papers, the Supreme Court issued the Status Quo Ante Order (SQAQO) in answer to filed petitions.

On April 8, 2014, during its summer session in Baguio City, the Supreme Court (SC) declared RA 10354 and Its IRR to be “Not Unconstitutional”, except for eight (8) items. Following the SC Decision and the go signal for full implementation, the Department of Health (DOH), together with its attached agencies, proceeded to draft the guidelines and deliver the services required by the law and its IRR.

Below are excerpts from the first consolidated report by DOH issued in line with the law’s requirement for DOH to prepare an annual report “which shall provide a definitive and comprehensive assessment of the implementation of its programs and those of other government agencies and instrumentalities and recommend priorities for executive and legislative actions.”

The excerpts deal on the baseline situation of reproductive health (RH) in the country and the resources mobilized to implement the law in 2014.

Baseline status of RPRH

The RPRH Law was passed to ensure universal access to RH services as a means to reduce maternal and child mortality in the country. Maternal mortality has remained persistently high over the past decades. On the other hand, child mortality is declining, but its rate of decline is slowed down by

high neonatal mortality. High maternal mortality results from high levels of unmet need for various RPRH services such as modern family planning (FP) and safe delivery services for women and mothers. The lack of awareness and access to RH services among sexually active teens also explain the increasing number of teen pregnancies.

Number of maternal deaths remained the same since 1993

While declining since 1993, MMR has since remained unchanged between 2006 and 2013.

MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO, 1993-2012

	Survey-based	Civil Registry	DOH-FHSIS
1993	209	92	N.A.
1998	172	97	65
2006	162	103	63
2011	221	84	69
2012	N.A.	81	66

Source: Department of Health (2014) The First Annual Consolidated Report on the Implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 (R.A. No. 10354)

The gradual decline in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) and the limited progress since 2006 may not be due to fewer maternal deaths but is driven by the increasing number of live births. Data from the Civil Registry and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in the past two decades show that actual counts of

maternal deaths have essentially remained the same since 1990. The average number of deaths per year has been estimated at 1,605 and ranging from a low of 1,142 in 1990 to a high of 1,797 deaths in 2003.

Unmet needs for family planning hardly declined since 2008

It is estimated that 5.7 million women were at risk of having unplanned pregnancies in 2013. Previous efforts at reducing this problem appear to be inadequate, with only half a percent decline in unmet need for modern FP reported between 2008 and 2013. Unplanned pregnancy increases a woman's likelihood of dying from pregnancy complications as well as impact on the socio-economic welfare of families.

Modern contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) has improved very slowly in the last twenty years, from 24.9 in 1993 to 37.6 per cent in 2013. The CPR for all methods was 56 per cent in 2013, still below the DOH National Objectives for Health (NOH) 2011-2016 target of 65 per cent in 2015. While the use of modern FP methods (i.e., supply methods) has increased by 16 per cent between 2008 and 2013, there still remain 5.7 million women with unmet need for modern family planning (MFP).

Furthermore, when disaggregated by age group, unmet need for modern FP among women aged 15-19 has increased by 15 per cent, while it has increased by almost 50 per cent for those aged 40-49. These observations imply that if we are to be successful in reducing maternal deaths, efforts to reduce unmet need for MFP should focus on both the teens and the 40 and above age group.

Number of teenage pregnancy increased by 10 percent between 2008 and 2013

The lack of awareness and access to reproductive health services among teenagers has led to a 10 per cent increase in the number of pregnant teens

aged 15-19, between 2008 and 2013. Over 500,000 teens aged 15 to 19 are childbearing, already had a live birth, or are currently pregnant with their first child.

What is particularly disturbing with increasing fertility among teenagers is that the number of maternal deaths is also increasing among those aged 15 to 19. The live births among 15 -19 year olds have been increasing while that of other age groups either declined or remained the same. Maternal deaths on the other hand have been increasing for the age groups of 15-19, 25 to 29, and 30 to 34. Particularly for the 15-19 age group, the increase in maternal deaths appear to outweigh the increase in live births, thus resulting to an increase in maternal deaths in this age group.

Rates of antenatal care and facility-based delivery continue to improve

The overall trend for pregnant women completing four antenatal care (4ANC) visits in the Philippines continues to improve. However, there appears to be a lot of missed opportunities to generate demand, provide services, and ensure adherence to proper care during deliveries, when seen in terms of lower facility-based delivery (FBD) rates.

The Philippines also registered a 60 percent increase in FBD between 2008 and 2013. However, this remains below the 90 percent FBD target that was set by the DOH in its NOH 2011-2016.

Infant mortality decreased significantly between 2008 and 2013

Although infant mortality is decreasing, the decline has been slow, from 35 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 1998 National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) to 23 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 2013 NDHS.

As reported in the 2013 NDHS, only half of children were breastfed within one hour of birth.

Furthermore, among children age 6-59 months, 85 percent received vitamin A supplements, while only 38 percent received iron supplements in the seven days prior to the survey.

HIV/AIDS prevalence remain low but is increasing

The Philippines remains to be a low burden country for HIV/AIDS, with less than one percent prevalence in the general population. However, the epidemic is rapidly spreading among specific population groups and areas. Findings from the 2013 Integrated HIV Behavioral and Serologic Surveillance (IHBSS) showed that HIV prevalence has increased, from 1.68 to 2.93 percent among men who have sex with men (MSM). Low condom use during anal sex among MSMs has been cited as the main reason for the rapid spread of HIV among this most at risk population (MARF). Condom use among MSMs has increased only slightly, from 35 percent in 2011 to 37 percent in 2013.

Resources for the implementation of RPRH Law

The first year of RPRH implementation has made use of substantial resources to finance various efforts to develop policies, generate demand, deliver services, develop capacity, and manage implementation. However, various challenges to RPRH implementation have also been identified. In particular, the current level of investments and existing capacities are still insufficient to implement RPRH at the scale mandated by law. These and other challenges will be addressed in the subsequent years of RPRH implementation.

The SQAQ on the RPRH law and its IRR was still in effect when the 2014 General Appropriations Act (GAA) was passed. This prevented DOH and other agencies mandated to implement the RPRH Law from having specific budget line items to be used for RPRH implementation. After the law and its

IRR were declared to be not unconstitutional in the second quarter of 2014, the DOH along with other agencies identified specific line items within their existing budgets as sources of RPRH funding.

The DOH identified the following line items as main sources of funding for RPRH implementation:

- PhP2.52 Billion from Family Health and Responsible Parenting (FHRP);
- PhP2.53 Billion from Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI); and
- PhP9.27 Billion from the Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP).

These budgets were allocated across central office units and 16 regional offices, including ARMM.

The low utilization rate for FHRP is due to non-procurement of remaining FP commodities that have yet to be certified as non-abortifacient by the Food and Drug Administration. The recertification process was delayed, as the law took effect only on April 8, 2014. Further delays were also due in part to late submission of requirements for recertification to the FDA. In addition, the low utilization can also be explained by the preference of implementing many activities such as trainings and seminars in house, instead of outsourcing to third party providers. On the other hand, the low utilization rate for HFEP is attributed to delays in the bidding process of projects handled mostly at the level of LGUs.

The Commission on Population (POPCOM) spent around Php 198M from its budget to conduct demand generation activities at the grassroots level in their Responsible Parenthood and Family Planning (RP-FP) classes, Family Development sessions, and pre-marriage counseling sessions.





The Department of Education spent close to Php2.5M, or three percent out of their Php 83M Health and Nutrition Services line item for the Training of Trainers (TOT) on Increasing Awareness on HIV-AIDS in the Workplace, as well as on the TOT for mental health on the psychosocial

approach during humanitarian situation that involved 100,000 teachers and 70,000 DepEd (Department of Education) workers.

LGUs also spent for RPRH activities such as procurement of commodities, hiring of staff, and health promotion and communication, social mobilization, and travel and communication expenses relative to capacity-building activities conducted by the DOH and partner agencies, among others. However, these amounts cannot be disaggregated from available financial reports.

The key development partners for RPRH implementation include, in alphabetical order, Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Union (EU), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Bank (WB), and World Health Organization (WHO). These development partners assisted the Government of the Philippines (GPH) by providing technical assistance to programs at the national, regional, and local levels; supplementing commodities that are lacking or insufficient in various regions, provinces, or facilities, whether on a specific project-based areas or geographic location; developing capacities for health workers to deliver the full range of reproductive health services; and assisting in knowledge management and in health promotions and communications.

BUDGET ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION RATES FOR SELECTED RPRH-RELATED LINE ITEMS, 2014

Allocation (PhP)		Utilization Rate (%)
2.538 BILLION	 Family Health & Responsible Parenting	61
2.441 BILLION	 Expanding Program on Immunization	95
9.268 BILLION	 Health Facility Enhancement Programs	57
324 MILLION	 AIDS/STI Prevention & Control Program	100

Source: Department of Health (2014) The First Annual Consolidated Report on the Implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 (R.A. No. 10354)

Men Opposed to Violence Everywhere: Aklan Chapter

Sometimes it takes a man...

“I am very thankful to this organization. It helped to free me from the bondage to violence,” remarked a survivor of domestic violence who was referred by MOVE Aklan to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Similar feedback was reported by Governor Florencio T. Miraflores in his recent State of the Province Address.

MOVE Aklan, or Men Opposed to Violence Everywhere - Aklan Chapter - is a group of men who are active advocates to end violence against women and children in the province. Organized in 2007, MOVE Aklan is 270 members strong, many of whom work for the provincial and municipal governments of Kalibo, Malinao, and Nabas as well as the departments, and colleges and universities. Students and police officers count among MOVE members whose ages range from 17 to 60 years old. MOVE Aklan is led and ran by volunteers.

MOVE Aklan targets men to raise their awareness on violence against women and children and to enjoin them to work towards the elimination of this human rights issue in the province. Activities include gender awareness sessions targeting the police, barangay officials and employees of local government units. Provincial offices of national line agencies that have also tapped MOVE Aklan include TESDA, DAR, DENR, Department of Education, and the Philippine Statistical Authority.

“Sometimes, it takes men to talk to men for men to listen,” said Pamela Reynaldo — a professional and a mother — as she watched the approaching MOVE motorcade in the streets below her office in 2015.

In partnership with MOVE Aklan, the provincial government has been stepping up its anti-VAW activities. In 2014, during the first Governor’s Search for Best Barangay Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) Desk, MOVE Aklan was mobilized to help the barangays level up to the requirements set by the Magna Carta of Women.



Top photo: MOVE Aklan members. Bottom photo: Aklan representatives at the 2015 MOVE Forum in Manila with Philippine Commission on Women Executive Director Emmeline Verzosa.

MOVE Aklan makes extensive use of radio and social networking as well as special media such as banners and posters and interpersonal strategies to raise public awareness. During the annual commemoration of the 18-day campaign to end violence against women, MOVE Aklan encourages government employees to get out of their offices to join motorcades and to walk the streets bearing placards with anti-VAW messages.

Last year, a photo exhibit on the theme “Empowering Women in Aklan” was displayed at a Kalibo mall.

MOVE members from DAR Aklan target agrarian reform communities in advocating the elimination of VAWC. Other members put in their share for the MOVE cause. Bullit Parco and Jones Arrieta, both professional trainers, lead briefing sessions and capacity building activities for the membership building campaign that MOVE Aklan conducts in government agencies and local government units. Workshops usually end with the participants expressing their commitments and personal statements on why they oppose violence against women and children.

“Sometimes, it takes men to talk to men for men to listen.”

MOVE also works to mainstream anti-VAWC projects and activities in the gender and development plans of municipalities and barangays. Then Mayor Raymar Rebaldo of the Municipality of Kalibo, in response to MOVE advocacy at the barangay levels, mainstreamed anti-VAWC objectives and activities into the three-year gender and development plan of the municipality.

Franklin Quimpo, the first MOVE Aklan president, remembers the early years. “Organizing and expanding membership was a classic networking move. I phoned a friend who encouraged a couple of his colleagues who also called on his co-workers and pretty soon we were meeting in a street bar

or in a member’s house in the company of a local mayor, a lawyer, a policeman, a media person, and a youth leader.” Quimpo shared that Mayor Ariel Igoy was one of the early members of MOVE who championed the cause in his own Municipality of Malinao, the first municipality to organize its own MOVE chapter.

MOVE Philippines awarded the Aklan Chapter as one of the nation’s most outstanding men’s advocacy group. The Philippine Commission on Women recently recognized the Province of Aklan as one of the country’s five Gender and Development Learning Hubs with MOVE Aklan as among its features.