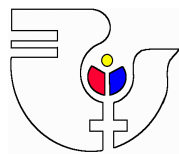


PHILIPPINE RESPONSE TO UN-CSW QUESTIONNAIRE ON PFA IMPLEMENTATION (Three Years After Beijing, 1995-1998)



**National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women
Philippines 1999**

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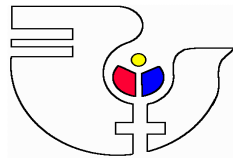
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ACRONYMS

ACWW	- Associated Country Women of the World
AFP	- Armed Forces of the Philippines
AGI	- Annual General Inspection
AIDS	- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APEC	- Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARB	- Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries
ASAP	- Araw ng Sangkap Pinoy
ASIN	- Act Promoting Salt Iodization Nationwide
ASPAC	- Asian and Pacific Economic Cooperation
BAKAS	- Bagong Pag-asa Para sa Kabataan
BHRAC	- Barangay Human Rights Action Center
BID	- Bureau of Immigration and Deportation
BIDA	- Bayang Mayaman sa Iron, Iodine at Bitamina A
BIDANI	- Barangay Integrated Development Approach to Nutrition Improvement
BJMP	- Bureau of Jail and Management Penology
BMI	- Body Mass Index
BNFE	- Bureau of Non-Formal Education
BNS	- Barangay Nutrition Scholar
BSMBD	- Bureau of Small and Medium Business Development
BWW	- Bureau of Women's Welfare
CAMP	- Coordinated Agricultural Marketing Productivity
CAP-PBD	- Credit Assistance Program for Program Beneficiaries Development
CAPWINGS	- Career Advancement Program for Women in Government Service
CAR	- Cordillera Autonomous Region
CARP	- Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CBCP	- Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CEDAW	- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEP	- Continuing Education Program
CESB	- Career Executive Service Board
CFO	- Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CHIPS	- Child Help Intervention and Protective Services
CHR	- Commission on Human Rights
CIDA	- Canadian International Development Agency
CIDSS	- Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services
CITC	- Cottage Industry Technology Center
CLO	- Certificate of Land Ownership
COMELEC	- Commission on Elections

CPP-NPA	- Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army
CRM	- Coastal Resources Management
CSC	- Civil Service Commission
CWC	- Council for the Welfare of Children
CYRS	- Children and Youth Relations Section
DA	- Department of Agriculture
DAO	- Department Administrative Order
DAR	- Department of Agrarian Reform
DBM	- Department of Budget and Management
DCI	- Defense for Children, International-Philippine Section
DECS	- Department of Education, Culture and Sports
DENR	- Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DFA	- Department of Foreign Affairs
DIC	- Decorum and Investigation Committee
DILG	- Department of Interior and Local Government
DOH	- Department of Health
DOJ	- Department of Justice
DOLE	- Department of Labor and Employment
DPWH	- Department of Public Works and Highways
DSWD	- Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	- Department of Trade and Industry
ECCD	- Early Childhood Care and Development
ECMI	- Episcopal Commission on the Case of Migrants and Itinerants
EO	- Executive Order
EP	- Emancipation Patents
ERDB	- Environmental Research and Development Bureau
FARE	- Food and Agriculture Retail Enterprises
FELP	- Functional Education and Literacy Programs
FLEMMS	- Functional Literacy, Education, Mass Media Survey
FP (Gender)	- Focal Point
FP	- Family Planning
FWCW	- Fourth World Conference on Women
GAD	- Gender and Development
GDI	- Gender Development Index
GDP	- Gross Development Product
GEM	- Gender Empowerment Measure
GNP	- Gross National Product
GOCC	- Government Owned and Controlled Corporations
GOP	- Government of the Philippines
GSIS	- Government Service Insurance System
GST/GRP	- Gender Sensitivity Training/Gender Responsive Planning

HAIN	- Health Action Information Network
HAVEN	- Hospital Assistance for Victims of a Violent Environment
HB	- House Bill
HIV	- Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HRD	- Human Resource Development
HUDCC	- Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council
IAC	- Inter-Agency Committee
ICPD	- International Conference on Population and Development
IDD	- Iodine Deficiency Disorders
IEC	- Information, Education and Communication
IFAP	- International Federation of Agricultural Producers
ILO-IPEC	- International Labor Organization - International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor
IO	- International Organization
IPM	- Integrated Pests Management
IQ	- Intelligence Quotient
IRA	- Internal Revenue Allotment
IRR	- Implementing Rules and Regulations
ISKOLAR	- Integrated Sanggunian Kabataan Organizational Leadership and Reorganization
IST	- Industry, Science and Technology
IUD	- Intra-Uterine Device
KC	- Kapanalig Circles
KRA	- Key Result Areas
KSBP	- Kabuhayan sa Barangay Project
LAMP	- Livelihood and Aqua Marine Productivity
LBM	- Local Budget Memorandum
LBP	- Land Bank of the Philippines
LGU	- Local Government Unit
MAIN	- Migrants' Advisory Information Network
MAIS	- Migrants' Advisory Information System
MASA	- Marginal and Poverty Stricken Areas
MC	- Memorandum Circular
MCH	- Maternal and Child Health
MCIHDC	- Multi-sectoral Committee on International Human Development Commitments
MILF	- Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MMDA	- Metro Manila Development Authority
MMR	- Maternal Mortality Rate
MOA	- Memorandum of Agreement
MTPDP	- Medium Term Philippine Development Plan

NAIA	- Ninoy Aquino International Airport
NAPC	- National Anti-Poverty Commission
NBI	- National Bureau of Investigation
NCRFW	- National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women
NDM	- Nutritionally Depressed Municipalities
NEDA	- National Economic and Development Authority
NFE A&E	- Nonformal Education Accreditation and Equivalency
NGO	- Non-Government Organizations
NNC	- National Nutrition Council
NRO	- NEDA Regional Office
NSCB	- National Statistics Coordination Board
NSO	- National Statistics Office
NVTDCW	- National Vocational Training and Development Center for Women
NYC	- National Youth Commission
ODA	- Official Development Assistance
OJT	- On-the-Job Training
OPA	- Overseas Performing Artist
OPAPP	- Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
OPHS	- Office for Public Health Services
OWWA	- Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PBSB	- Philippine Beijing Score Board
PESO	- Public Employment Service Office
PFA	- Platform For Action
PhP	- Philippine Peso
PHRP	- Philippine Human Rights Plan
PIA	- Philippine Information Agency
PMA	- Philippine Military Academy
PNP	- Philippine National Police
PO	- People's Organization
POEA	- Philippine Overseas Employment Agency
POPCOM	- Commission on Population
PPAs	- Programs, Projects and Activities
PPAC	- Philippine Plan of Action for Children
PPAN	- Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition
PPGD	- Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development
PPOP	- Population Policy Operations Project
PRESEED	- Promotion of Rural Employment through Self-Employment Entrepreneurship Development
PWD	- Persons With Disabilities
QRT	- Quick Reaction Team
QUEDANCO	- Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corporation

R	
RA	- Republic Act
RH	- Reproductive Health
RIC	- Rural Improvement Club
RTI	- Reproductive Tract Infection
SBM	- Sagip Batang Manggagawa
SDC	- Social Development Committee
SEC	- Securities and Exchange Commission
SIBOL	- Sama-samang Inisyatiba ng Kababaihan sa Pagbabago ng Batas at Lipunan
SME	- Small and Medium Enterprises
SPES	- Special Program for Employment of Students
SRA	- Social Reform Agenda
SRC	- Social Reform Council
SSS	- Social Security System
STD	- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TESDA	- Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TT	- Tetanus Toxoid
TULAY	- Tulong Alalay sa Taong May Kapansanan
TVET	- Technical/Vocational Education Training
TWG	- Technical Working Group
UN	- United Nations
UNDP	- United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	- United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
VAW	- Violence Against Women
VAWC	- Violence Against Women and Children
WAND	- Women's Action Network for Development
WAP	- Work Appreciation Program
WEDC	- Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances
WEED	- Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurship Development
WHPDD	- Women's Health, Population and Development Desk
WID	- Women in Development
WISE	- Work Improvement in Small Enterprises
WLB	- Women's Legal Bureau
WSAP	- Women Studies Association of the Philippines
WSSD	- World Summit on Social Development
WWSF	- Women's World Summit Foundation

INTRODUCTION

What has happened in the Philippines three years after Beijing? What significant measures were adopted? How has the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) influenced the national plans, policies, programs and projects of the government? What has been the effect, in general?

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), which serves as the national machinery for women's advancement in the country, monitored the actions taken by government and its partners during the three years that followed the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW). During the past two years, NCRFW published annual PFA implementation reports that provide an overview of policies, programs, and institutional mechanisms set in place to implement the 14 specific commitments and the strategic objectives outlined in the 12 areas of concern of the PFA. This year, however, the Philippine report to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN-CSW) will take the place of the PFA implementation report for the year 1998.

The UN-CSW sent a set of questionnaire to the Philippine government to follow up the actions taken to implement the PFA. The information supplied by the UN member States are intended to be compiled by CSW for the comprehensive review and assessment which will be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fourth session in the year 2000, and to the special session of the General Assembly to be held at the United Nations, New York in June 2000.

The questionnaire arrived at the same time that the NCRFW was preparing for the publication of the *Three Years After Beijing Report*. To facilitate the work and meet the deadline set by CSW, the NCRFW and its partners decided to consider the usual procedures used in preparing the annual PFA implementation report, while following the focus and format of the questionnaire.

This report, therefore, was envisioned to serve a dual purpose: one, as the country's response to the CSW questionnaire; and *two*, as the *Three Years After Beijing Report*. The report is divided into four parts. PART ONE provides a brief analytical overview of the trends and experiences in implementing the commitments made by the Philippines in the FWCW, highlighting the major achievements and obstacles. PART TWO describes the overall implementation in relation to the national action plans, resource allocations, and institutional arrangements. PART THREE is further sub-divided into two parts. Part III-A which provides an overview of the actions taken to implement the strategic objectives in the 12 areas of concern under the PFA, and Part III-B which describes an array of initiatives undertaken to implement the country's specific commitments made in Beijing. The last part, PART FOUR, discusses the country's agenda and vision for women's advancement and equality for the next millennium.

It is of interest to mention that an essential part of this report is the technical paper presented by NCRFW Chairperson during the Fourth Meeting of Senior Officials of the

National Machineries for the Advancement of Women in the East and Southeast Asian Countries held in Tokyo, Japan last June 17-19, 1999. This technical paper entitled Philippine Response to the UN Questionnaire on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action appears as Annex A of this report. It is to be emphasized as an annex to the main report, the technical paper reinforces the crucial concern of wide implementation of PFA commitments across the global arena.

The process of formulating the answers to the questionnaire allowed the NCRFW and its partners to reflect on the results of their work in GAD mainstreaming. It also enabled NCRFW to examine its overall strategy from a global point of view. It is hoped that the information provided by this report will help CSW assess the gaps and point out specific areas for further action of UN member States.

PART I:
OVERVIEW OF TRENDS IN ACHIEVING
GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S
ADVANCEMENT

OVERVIEW OF TRENDS IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT

1. Three years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the movement to advance gender equality in the Philippines remains vibrant and progressing. The government took immediate steps to carry out the 14 specific commitments and positioned the implementation of the strategic objectives under the 12 PFA areas of concern within the overall framework of GAD mainstreaming, a campaign launched in 1986 to make the government work for gender equality.

2. Advancements in the gender equality campaign have been gradual but steady. Majority of the 14 specific commitments have been fulfilled and an increasing number of government departments, attached agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations, state colleges and universities, as well as local government units are opening windows for the implementation of the PFA. Policies and plans are in place, definite sources of budgets are provided, and a dynamic partnership between and among the NCRFW, women NGOs and GAD advocates in government ensures the continuity of gender mainstreaming.

A. NATIONAL POLICY FOR ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

3. The Philippines has adopted strong policy mandates on gender equality. Article II, Section 14 of the Philippine Constitution provides that, "*the State recognizes the roles of women in nation-building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men*". This policy is concretized through legislative, policy and program measures that strengthen women's rights, enhance their opportunities for participation and increase their chances to enjoy the benefits of development.

4. The Family Code removed a number of discriminatory provisions in the Civil Code, particularly by: (a) equalizing age requirements for marriage; (b) equalizing authority of the spouses to choose the family residence and manage conjugal property; (c) providing the wife with the right to exercise her profession or career and accept gifts without the need for the husband's consent; (d) granting the widow the right to remarry even before the expiration of 300 days after her husband's death and to retain parental authority over her children after remarriage; and (e) equalizing the right for custody of children. It also broadened the base for legal separation which, among others, include repeated physical abuse and abandonment without justifiable cause.

5. The Women in Development and Nation Building Act (RA 7192) is one of the landmark laws that operationalize this policy. Among others, it provides equal rights and opportunities as men in entering into contracts and loan agreements and in joining social and cultural clubs. Fulltime household managers can avail of social security services through working spouses and women are assured of equal opportunities for appointment,

admission, training, graduation and commissioning in all military or similar schools of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police. The law also secures 5-30 percent of total official development assistance (ODA) for programs and projects or components on women. More importantly, this law provides that *“all government departments and agencies shall review and revise all their regulations, circulars and procedures to remove gender biases therein.”*

6. In addition to RA 7192, major laws and policies were passed in support of gender equality. These laws include the following: Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, the Act Strengthening the Prohibition on Discrimination Against Women with Respect to Terms and Conditions of Employment, the Act Giving Representation to Women in the Social Security System, and the Paternity Leave Act.

7. The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (RA 6657) was aimed at instituting a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program which will promote social justice and industrialization in the countryside. The law also mandated concerned government entities to guarantee and assure equal rights to ownership of land, equal share of the farm's produce and representation in advisory or appropriate decision making bodies.

8. Meanwhile, the Act Strengthening the Prohibition on Discrimination Against Women (RA 6725) mandated the prohibition on discrimination against women with respect to terms and conditions of employment. Women are also entitled to compensation, promotion, training, employment and study opportunities given to men.

9. The adoption of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act (RA 7877) declared sexual harassment as unlawful in the employment, education or training environments. Sexual harassment is committed when sexual favor is made as a condition on the hiring, continued employment, or granting of compensation of an employee, or if the refusal to grant the sexual favor would result in depriving employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affecting said employee.

10. Furthermore, the Civil Service Commission (CSC), in partnership with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), adopted a Memorandum Circular (MC) on Equal Representation of Women and Men in Third Level Positions in government. The CSC MC is a major policy issuance for the career advancement of women in government service. Its objectives include the following: (a) promotion, nomination and appointment of both women and men to third level positions; (b) maintenance of a pool of qualified women and men nominees for every vacant third level position in government; and (c) encouragement of a 50-50 representation of either sex in third level positions, as deemed practicable.

11. Other notable policy developments include the Philippines' commitment on women in various international treaties. Presently, the Philippine government is a signatory to 22 international treaties. The country's involvement in international conferences (1994 in Cairo on Population, 1995 in Beijing on Women and Development

and in Copenhagen on Social Development, and 1996 in Istanbul on Habitat) has also helped shape policy directions and program implementation on gender equality.

B. NATIONAL PLANS AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

12. The goals of gender equality and advancement of women are pursued as one of the priority thrusts of the government. The integration of the gender equality commitments into the national development framework were pursued using the following strategies:

- 12.1. *Adoption of the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025* – This 30-year framework for attaining gender equality serves as the main vehicle for implementing the PFA in the country. It serves as the main reference of government agencies and partners in developing their GAD implementation plans;
- 12.2. *Integration of gender perspective into the National Anti-Poverty Framework* – The Social Reform Agenda, which served as the centerpiece program for alleviating poverty, recognized women as one of the basic sectors, being the poorest in society and in urgent need of assistance. It adopted a gender sensitive approach to poverty and ensured the representation of the national women’s machinery in its highest policy making body;
- 12.3. *Consideration of the GAD agenda in the framework of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) 1999-2004* – The (draft) successor MTPDP adopted empowerment and gender equity as one of the principles undergirding the pursuit of national development. The national women’s machinery was also provided with a seat in all the planning committees and gender concerns were incorporated in the various chapters of the draft plan;
- 12.4. *Adoption of agency level GAD Plans* – Government instrumentalities are mandated to adopt a GAD plan to address women’s concerns as provided under the Women in Development and Nation Building Act;
- 12.5. *Adoption and implementation of a GAD budget policy* – The annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) directs all agencies of the government to formulate a GAD Plan in line with the intents of the Women in Development and Nation Building Act (RA 7192). The cost of the GAD Plan shall be no less than five percent of their total budgets. The RA 7192

directs the allocation of 5-30 percent of total ODA for programs and projects on women; and

- 12.6. *Adoption of resolutions and policies addressing GAD/women's concerns in the PFA* – Various policies and resolutions strengthened the protection of women and children victims of violence, highlighted the contributions of rural women in development, and created avenues for representation of women's concerns in major decision making bodies.

13. The legislative branch has a committee on women in the House of Representatives and in Senate. It also took significant steps in sensitizing the Secretariat on gender issues. There is now a core of GAD advocates in the technical level and a guidebook toward making legislation gender responsive has just been adopted.

C. PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PRIORITIZED PFA AREAS

14. The government attended to the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern of the PFA. However, more attention was devoted to: (a) institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; (b) women and poverty and the economy; (c) violence against women; and (d) women in power and decision making.

a) Progress on institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

15. The NCRFW, which is the national machinery for women's advancement in the country, was strengthened through Executive Orders 208 and 268. These measures broadened the mandates and functions of the NCRFW and added 17 plantilla positions for new administrative and technical personnel. The divisions were also expanded from three to five, providing a more adequate structure for the execution of its mandate and functions. The Board of Commissioners, which is the policy making body of the Commission, was also strengthened with the addition of top officials from 10 line departments whose mandates are critical to the issues in the national GAD plan.

16. The NCRFW continues to lead government's efforts on gender mainstreaming. It provides technical assistance, capability building, and other enabling interventions to government agencies and local government units, and manages a national information resource division which maintains GAD data that are helpful to policy makers, advocates, development planners, researchers and trainers, among others. Training, which used to be a main thrust of the NCRFW, is now gradually being transferred to regular government training institutions and partner state colleges/universities. To meet the continuing demand of government partners for resource persons on GAD, the NCRFW maintains a referral resource system with "assets" composed of GAD experts in various sectoral fields and concerns.

17. The role of the NCRFW as catalyst and authority on women's concerns has been widely recognized and its perspective is regularly sought in the formulation of critical policies and programs. Some legislations that are not specifically directed on women, such as the National Anti-Poverty Act (RA 8425), the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 (RA 8042), the annual General Appropriations Act and the Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act (RA 8551) have carried a gender responsive orientation as a result of NCRFW's direct participation in legislative hearings and formulation of implementing rules and regulations. In line with its effort to mainstream GAD skills in critical bodies, the NCRFW provides training to the permanent staff and secretariat of Congress and developed a guidebook for gender responsive legislation.

18. Years of campaign and advocacy have considerably helped in shaping an improved data system for gender mainstreaming. Agencies conducted their own researches, disaggregated statistics by sex and enriched their data collection in aid of gender responsive development planning. Statistical fact sheets on women in population, health, education, labor and public life were published and disseminated. The main statistical agencies of the government also adopted capability building programs to enhance their ability to support agencies in gender responsive planning.

19. The National Statistics Office (NSO), and National Statistics Coordination Board (NSCB), took the lead in carrying out major projects that respond to the concerns of the PFA. Among these were: (a) the development of methodology to generate statistics on violence against women and children, (b) refinement of existing GAD indicator system, (c) conducting pilot time-use survey toward the development of a framework for measuring women's contributions to the economy; (d) formulating a training program on the use of statistics for gender responsive development planning, and (e) publishing statistical documents.

20. Sex-disaggregation of data resulted in better GAD indicators in the Departments of Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources as well as the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the national planning body of the government.

21. Agency level GAD planning and budgeting was pursued. The NCRFW continued to guide agencies in developing their GAD plans which outlined the programs, projects and activities that will respond to gender issues affecting the agencies and their clientele. An accompanying GAD budget was allocated to ensure that the GAD plan was carried out. Since 1995, the General Appropriations Act (GAA) of the government mandated all government agencies to set aside a portion of their budgets for GAD programs and projects. Beginning 1996, a benchmark of "minimum of five percent of the total annual budget" was prescribed to be allocated for such purpose.

22. In 1997, 71 agencies complied with the GAD budget policy, with 26 of them meeting or exceeding the minimum level. The total GAD budget of government rose from Php 1.5 billion in 1996 to Php 2.93 billion in 1997 and a sum total of Php 8.027 billion for the periods 1995-1998.

23. The big bulk of the funds, 87 per cent or a total of P6.731 billion went to direct services and program in the areas of women's health, education, housing, credit facilities livelihood projects, and marketing and training assistance to poor women. These also include activities to integrate GAD in the critical programs and projects of the government such as the Equal Employment Opportunity program of the Department of Labor and Employment and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) of the Department of Agrarian Reform, among others. The remaining P1.296 billion, or 13 percent, was spent for programs, projects and activities that will transform institutional mechanisms so that agencies could efficiently deliver gender responsive programs to their clientele. Examples of these are GAD training (GST/GRP), establishment of Day Care Centers, briefing sessions for top officials, strengthening of the GAD Focal Points, review of internal policies and guidelines, setting up of gender-based statistics, development of GAD modules, and participation in pertinent conferences and activities. The second biggest share, totaling P86.4 million, was spent on policy researches that supported the formulation and review of gender responsive policies and plans.

24. Aside from the GAD budget, government set aside at least 20 percent of the national budget to social programs and services that were central to women's lives. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the 1996 national budget was allocated for programs and services on education, health, housing, welfare and employment. In 1997 and 1998, percentages recorded were 32.30% and 33.68%, respectively.

25. Moreover, in pursuance of the Women in Development and Nation Building Act which mandates the allocation of 5-10 percent of official development assistance (ODA) to programs and projects on women, a total of \$477.5 million was committed from 1997-1998. Programs and projects endorsed and implemented addressed violence and human rights violations against migrant Filipina workers, family health management by poor settlers, water supply and sanitation, advancement of women for peace and development, and hospital equipment assistance, among others.

b) Progress on women and poverty and the economy

26. Based on an annual nominal poverty threshold of P11.39 in 1997, poverty incidence declined from 35.5% in 1994 to 32.1% in 1997. However, due to population growth, the total number of poor families living below the poverty line increased from 4.53 million in 1994 to 4.55 million in 1997. These were mostly in rural areas, where number of poor families increased by 297,927 from 1994 to 1997 despite the 2.6 percentage point drop in rural poverty incidence during the period. Furthermore, the general decline in poverty incidence has not been matched by a similar improvement in the distribution of income. New concerns have also arisen, as the Asian financial crisis hit the region in mid-1997. Aggravated by adverse weather conditions, almost 13,487,569 families were affected by the increased price of food and other basic commodities.

27. On the aggregate, this meant the loss of purchasing power of the depreciated peso and the resurgence of inflationary pressures which had adverse consequence on prices,

production, employment and incomes. Unlike other ASEAN countries, however, the Philippine economy managed to demonstrate some resiliency because of policy actions of the Central Bank of the Philippines and the implementation of policies, programs and projects which will help weather the ill effects of the financial crisis.

28. The basic sectors participated in and benefited from various poverty alleviation interventions particularly policy reforms. Policy advocacy was forged through the formulation of the following: Philippine Human Rights Plan 1996-2001, Comprehensive Employment Strategy Program (CESP), Philippine Plan of Action for Children (PPAC), the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) 1995-2025, the Philippine Plan of Action for the Asia-Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons and the Medium-Term Philippine Youth Development Plan (MTYDP) 1999-2004.

29. To augment the regular budget for the social sector, the government also appropriated a total of P8.5 billion under the Poverty Alleviation Funds (PAF) from 1996 to 1998. The PAF is a special purpose fund created to support specific Social Reform Agenda (SRA) programs and to address the most unmet minimum basic needs of poor communities.

30. Furthermore, the Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC was drafted to integrate women into the mainstream of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) processes and activities. It is comprised of five inter-related elements that will strengthen the capacity of APEC to develop and implement gender-sensitive policies, programs and projects. Leaders of APEC economies were urged to assess and take measures to address the disproportionate economic, financial and social impacts of the crisis on women in response to the financial and economic turmoil in the APEC region.

31. The government pursued a gender responsive approach to the alleviation of poverty. Through the Social Reform Agenda (SRA), women were recognized as among the poorest in society and must be prioritized for assistance. The SRA identified measures to fight VAW, to make expansions regarding women's access to economic resources such as capital, information, training, technology and marketing assistance, and to promote their representation in positions of power and decision making. The Social Reform Council (SRC), SRA's policy making body, included a representative of women and the NCRFW as among its members.

32. The SRA articulated a clear policy on freeing Filipinos from the cycle of poverty and lack of opportunities for a better life. This paved the way for government agencies to set in motion their own interventions. But because poverty is deeply rooted in Philippine society, it would take time before the poor feel the intended impact of the SRA and marginalized Filipinos, including women.

33. Within the framework of the SRA, a Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS) was undertaken by departments to address the need of women in the poorest communities. Assistance given included livelihood projects, entrepreneurial development and training, and credit. A law enacted during the term was Republic Act

7882 that provided assistance to women engaged in micro and cottage industries. Also part of the CIDSS was setting up of day care centers in all the barangays. Under the Day Care Service Law (RA 6972), day care centers would give care and social learning opportunities to preschool children while their parents engage in economic activities. As of December 1997, the Department of Social Welfare and Development reported that 34,979 barangay day care centers had been set-up, some 83.40 percent of the total target and that 34,979 social workers were employed in these centers.

c) Progress on violence against women

34. Cases of violence against women, as reported either to law enforcing authorities or in media, rose alarmingly during the three-year period. This cloud of violence, however, had a silver lining. On one hand, it indicated that more victims and survivors were no longer afraid or ashamed to report such cases. On the other hand, VAW had become a national concern that policy makers and program implementors must address.

35. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) maintains halfway homes in various regions and women's help desks with 24-hour hotlines in all their regional offices. It reported 41,667 cases of VAW from 1991 to 1997. More than half of these, 59.8 percent, were battery cases. The rest were cases of illegal recruitment, rape, involuntary prostitution, victims or survivors caught in armed conflict, incest and women in detention. In 1998, the DSWD reported that 850 cases of battering has been filed during the first quarter of 1998 alone, followed by rape with 135 cases and incest with 88 cases.

36. Congress passed the landmark Anti-Rape Law (RA 8353). It amended what was once considered as a private offense against chastity to a public crime against person. This means that the victim is not only the one who can file a rape case. The law allows virtually anyone who knows of the crime, such as parents and persons of authority, to file a complaint. Rape was redefined to include other acts of sexual assault that may be committed against a woman or a man. It also implicitly recognized the concept of marital rape when it stated in one of its provisions that the crime of rape is extinguished when it happens within a marriage and the wives forgive the husband. The struggle to amend the anti-rape law to make it more reflective of the experiences of women victims and survivors took almost a decade. Throughout the process, women's groups and NGOs stood at the forefront, patiently engaging the legislators, discussing and debating with them on the surrounding issues, and educating the public on why it was important for women to have a new law penalizing rape.

37. A companion measure to the Anti-Rape Law was the Support To Rape Victims Act (RA 8505). It called for the setting up of women's crisis centers in all the provinces that would extend such services as legal and medical aid, counselling and temporary shelter to rape victims. The Family Court Act (RA 8369), on the other hand, created special courts whose jurisdiction included cases of domestic violence. The Institute of Judicial Administration of the University of the Philippines trained newly-appointed executive judges on the proper handling of VAW cases. A program to train judges for

placement in family courts is being worked out.

38. Another mechanism of government that acted decisively to fight VAW was the Philippine National Police. It continued to establish women and children's desks in all its precincts staffed by policewomen who went through gender sensitivity training and orientation programs. The trainings were conducted by the NCRFW and women NGOs and were geared toward a more sympathetic and careful handling of women and children victims of violence. In 1997, 954 PNP women's desks established nationwide have handled 4,722 cases on crimes against women. The PNP has also 1,936 Children and Youth Relations Sections (CYRS) nationwide which have handled a total of 2,633 cases.

39. The absence of legislation against domestic violence prompted the government to issue a directive to all government heads of agencies to take action on it. They, in turn, responded by setting up VAW desks or focal points in the workplace, conducting awareness raising, and initiating innovative approaches to existing frontline services to victims and survivors. An inter-agency project, together with an NGO partner, the Women's Crisis Center, and funded by the United Nations Population Fund, started to develop a model for crises centers based in government hospitals. Services and protocols of frontline agencies handling VAW cases were also reviewed to make them more responsive to the needs of victims and survivors.

d) Progress on women and power and decision making

40. There has been some steady progress in women's representation in positions of power and decision making but this has been very slow. Thus, on the whole, women continue to be a minority in the area of power and decision making. In the present Congress, there are only around 12.08 percent women legislators in the House of Representatives and 16.67 percent in the Senate. From among the 22 members of the President's Cabinet, only two (12.5%) heading Social Welfare and Tourism Departments are women. The equal sharing of power in the bureaucracy is still a distant reality. While more than half of the 1.38 million civil servants were women at 53.81 percent, only 32.5 percent of them occupied the third level positions. Most of them, 72.26 percent, were in middle ranked positions. In the judiciary, only 17.8 percent of the judges and justices were women. The 15-member Supreme Court has two woman justices. Meanwhile, the Sharia's Court had none. The 1998 Human Development Report of the United Nations gave the country the 2nd highest score together with Malaysia in its gender empowerment measure (GEM) for the whole of Southeast Asia. It was ranked 46th from among the 174 member countries of the UN for the same category.

41. Various measures were pursued in line with the commitments under this area of concern. There is now a Party List Law (RA 7941) that enables small parties, organizations and coalitions to be represented in the legislature. Under this law, a party list system was instituted, allowing under-represented sectors to elect their parties to the House of Representatives. Women were identified as one of these sectors. Six women parties vied for three seats in the Lower House under the party list system during the 1998 elections. One woman sectoral representative now sits as a member of the House of

Representatives and is heading the Committee on Women. One of the Deputy Speakers of the House of Representatives is a woman, another first in the history of the said Chamber.

42. The government also made a conscious effort to see to it that women are represented in various decision-making bodies, especially at the local levels. The Department of Interior and Local Government, for example, issued an administrative order that encouraged a minimum 30 percent representation of women in barangay (village) assemblies and in mandatory consultations with local and national governments.

43. The Civil Service Commission (CSC), together with the NCRFW, adopted a policy that aims to equalize (50-50) representation of women and men in third level positions in government. To support the implementation of this policy, the NCRFW and CSC also adopted a folio, entitled “Women on the Move” that contains a list of qualified women for appointment to third level positions. This is expected to facilitate the identification of women who could be appointed to higher positions. A Career Advancement Program for Women in Government Service (CAPWINGS) is likewise launched in the bureaucracy to provide women with training, child care facilities, and other support system in order to pursue career advancement opportunities.

D. OBSTACLES AND PLANNED RESPONSES

44. In spite of the many efforts done, a lot more remains to be pursued. Generating the support of new top officials in government remains a formidable challenge. The development of NCRFW’s capacity to service and monitor an ever-expanding network of GAD partners continue to exert pressure on its over-stretched institutional resources. The development and dissemination of systems – for monitoring, capacity building, and change management, in general, are areas that require continuing action. Bringing down the agenda to grassroots level become problematic due to absence of NCRFW’s presence in the field level.

a) Remaining commitments to be fulfilled

45. An assessment of actions taken on the 14 specific commitments revealed that two of them had not been sufficiently acted upon. One, is the inability of many department heads to integrate the implementation of GAD/PFA into the key result areas (KRAs) of their performance commitment with the President of the Philippines. This was a measure designed to ensure accountability in implementing what the government committed to do under the PFA. To address this, stronger tie up is being forged by NCRFW with GAD partners in the departments as well as the Presidential Management Staff which is the body tasked to monitor the performance of the agency heads.

46. The other unfulfilled commitment concerns the enactment of laws against trafficking, illegal recruitment and undocumented migration, as well as a law that shifts

criminal liability to the pimps and producers instead of the prostituted women. The efforts to pass these laws have been continuing even before the Beijing Conference. However, because of the lengthy process by which legislation is passed, the bills that were filed in Congress remain in the process of deliberation.

47. The need for a stronger commitment to allocate a substantial portion of the official development assistance (ODA) funds to women-related projects and programs is another priority concern. Figures show that total available ODA funds intended for women-related projects have declined for the past two years. In 1997, only 11.6 percent (\$ 303.5 million) of the total ODA funds has been allocated for programs and projects which address women concerns. In 1998, the amount totaled 9.96 percent (\$ 174 million).

48. Interventions in the areas of armed conflict, power and decision-making, human rights, environment and the girl-child need to be strengthened. This issue will be addressed in the on-going GAD assessment and planning of the government.

b) Project-driven orientation of approaches

49. Many government actions are seen to be program or project-driven. While this may benefit women in the short to medium-term, their implementation may not be sustained in the long run. This could happen when a particular agency changes its priorities, or when new implementors replace the present ones.

50. There is a need to go beyond programs and projects and ensure that national policies and laws addressing women's concerns are put in place as mandates for future actions. The PFA concerns have to be integrated into the agency's regular functions, rather than be undertaken as special initiatives for the agency's women constituents. This way, programs and projects for women are in line with the agency's own priorities, with clear direction and purpose as to how they are to be implemented. Resources, in terms of funds and staff members who would oversee these programs and projects, would also be guaranteed. And with their integration into the agency's work plan, they become subject to regular monitoring so that their impacts are continuously assessed, and their overall effectiveness is strengthened.

c) Bringing down the PFA to field level operation

51. A challenge to the national leadership is how to make local government units and agencies capable of developing their own initiatives in support of PFA implementation. This is crucial since most of the women targeted by the Platform are found in the local levels, rural women or those living in urban slums, poor and marginalized women, and women from indigenous communities. A more deliberate and organized effort has to be coordinated so that the Platform could reach them and affect their lives as well.

d) Reducing repercussions of financial crisis to women

52. A major challenge would be the government's response to trade liberalization and globalization. These twin trends would undoubtedly continue to influence economic decisions and directions of the government. They would produce winners and losers among the country's economic players, including the workers who would be affected either favorably or adversely by them. The government must be prepared to put in place safety net measures to assist those who would be adversely affected. These may in the form of re-training programs, skills training, job alternatives, or credit assistance, among others. Poverty alleviation programs that benefit marginalized women must also be continued.

e) Enhancing government's response to VAW

53. The government should continue to be a firm ally of women victims and survivors of violence. It is now impossible to put back the shroud of silence surrounding VAW. Yet, there are still insufficient laws that would redress these basic violations of women's rights. There must be more stringent legislation to penalize those engaged in trafficking of women and children, illegal recruitment and undocumented migration. The law on prostitution must be amended to shift criminal liability from the prostituted women to the pimps or procurers. Specific measures should also be legislated to address domestic violence. These must protect not only the legal spouses of the batterers but all abused women in intimate relationships. The implementors should learn how to validate new knowledge and learning, and to process realizations experienced during their implementation. This way, initiatives for women may be redesigned to ensure that they are the ones with the vision and aspirations of the FWCW Platform.

f) Establishing performance indicators and benchmark standards

54. An effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism outlining concrete result-based indicators, would make it possible to know the impact of initiatives on PFA, bringing to the surface the concrete changes that they have brought to women's lives. Hard data and statistics about the realities of women's lives should be strengthened as a component of the monitoring system to provide an objective basis for formulating actions. They can also help identify gaps and limitations in present initiatives so implementors could improve on them.

PART II:
FINANCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL MEASURES

FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

1. The Philippine government recognizes that one of the most reliable measures of political will to implement the Beijing Platform for Action is the amount of funds allocated and spent for its implementation. Along this line, two major mechanisms were adopted. *First*, the annual General Appropriations Acts (GAAs) carried a specific provision containing the GAD budget policy since 1995, the year when the Beijing Platform was adopted. *Second*, the Women in Development and Nation Building Act (RA 7192) directed the allocation of a specific portion of all official development assistance (ODA) funds for programs and projects in support of women and gender-related programs, projects or activities.

A. GAD IN THE NATIONAL BUDGET

2. The national budget, as embodied under the annual GAA, includes a specific GAD budget policy mandating all government instrumentalities to allocate a minimum of five percent of their total annual budget in support of programs and projects for gender equality. The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), in partnership with the national women's machinery, initiated the formulation of the GAD budget policy in 1995. These agencies, together with the national planning body, are also mandated to develop a set of rules and guidelines governing the implementation of the GAD budget policy.

3. After the enactment of the 1995 GAA, the national government budget was analyzed to check how government instrumentalities carried out the policy. The result was published and shared by the Philippine delegation to the FWCW in Beijing.

4. The initial implementation of this provision was positively accepted by agencies who saw that the GAD provision aided them significantly in implementing their GAD programs and projects. Thus, the policy became a permanent feature of the annual GAA. To further strengthen it, the Women in Development/Gender and Development (WID/GAD) was classified in the 1996 National Budget Call as among the priority programs of the government, along with the Social Reform Agenda (which is the national centerpiece program of the government) and other priority measures of the government, such as the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade.

5. The GAD budget policy in the GAA underwent progressive enhancement since 1995. From an innocuous one-sentence statement of mandate, it expanded to a three-paragraph provision that among other things, highlighted the following:

5.1. Inclusion of state colleges and universities and government-owned and controlled corporations as among the instrumentalities covered by the mandate;

5.2. Compelling all agencies to report their implementation of the policy to Congress;

5.3. Directing agencies to formulate their GAD Plan, from which the budget would be allocated, the submission of the same to Congress, budget department and the national women's machinery, and subjecting the same to a review by the latter; and

5.4. Issuance of guidelines to implement the policy and the participation of the national machinery in the process of formulating the same.

6. An analysis of compliance to this provision showed progress in implementation. The aggregate allocations increased steadily from 1995 to 1997, with a very slight decrease in 1998, apparently due to the *mandatory reserve-policy* imposed by the government to cope with the financial crisis in the region. The recorded allocations were:

1995 - PhP 990 million

1996 - PhP 1.5 billion

1997 - PhP 2.78 billion

1998 - PhP 2.69 billion

7. Increase in the number of agencies complying with the provision registered an erratic pattern. Based on reports of submission, there were 19 line departments that complied in 1995. The figure fell to 15 a year after, then rose significantly to 71 in 1997, and again fell slightly to 69 in 1998. This year, unprocessed submissions had already reached the previous year's record. The reports promise an optimistic aggregate figure due to the lifting of the mandatory-reserve policy of the government.

8. The GAD budget policy enables government agencies to pursue their GAD mainstreaming strategy more actively. The funds were spent for the following programs, projects and activities:

8.1. *establishing and strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming*, which includes gender-related orientation and skills trainings, database development, strategic planning, production and dissemination of information materials, and similar activities;

8.2. *gender mainstreaming in programs and projects*, which covers both women-specific and GAD mainstreaming components in existing programs and projects, such as day care center, livelihood assistance, leadership and empowerment trainings, and others. Notable among these are new programs such as the entry of women into command activities and absorption of women graduates in the Philippine National Police Academy as lateral entrants, Gintong Ani (golden harvest) program of the agriculture department, as well as the Career Advancement Program for Women in Government Service (CAPWINGS) of the Civil Service Commission.

9. The latest assessment report revealed that, the Human Development Sector (which includes social welfare, labor, defense, etc.) had the highest allocation, comprising 51 percent of the aggregate GAD budgets of all reporting agencies. This was followed by the economic sector (covering agriculture, trade, agrarian reform, etc.) with 46.6 percent. The infrastructure and technology sector (including public works, transportation, communication) and development administration comprised 1.6 percent and .8 percent respectively of the total.

10. The above data indicates the prominence of the Human Development sector as far as GAD budgeting is concerned. This is not surprising since this sector traditionally addresses women's concerns and delivers direct services to women constituents, such as health and social services. The economic sector is advancing despite its being a non-traditional sector for women, which may be partly attributed to the concern about the impact of the financial crisis to women and the equally huge budget the government spends for the sector. The low compliance in the last two areas may be attributed to the difficulties encountered in identifying gender issues in the sector. Further, these sectors are composed of very few agencies, compared to the first two sectors mentioned.

11. The budget department and the national women's machinery issued Joint Memorandum Circular 97-01 that directed agencies to submit report of compliance of their programs, projects and activities to the GAD budget policy for the years 1995-1998. This circular aimed at assessing the directions and nature of agency compliance and determine the total magnitude of the 1995-1998 GAD budget, for inclusion into the *Budget Expenditures and Sources of Financing* document of the government.

12. The GAD Budget policy under the GAA is a potentially powerful instrument for advancing the gender mainstreaming strategy. Commitment to GAD is steadily growing. Review of the agency GAD Plans gives the impression that majority of the agencies have clear ideas on what they need to make their organizations gender-responsive. However, they seem to have difficulty in identifying and applying strategic actions to make their

programs and projects gender-responsive. Technical assistance on developing sound GAD intervention plans shall therefore be continuously pursued.

13. In the meantime, the government also committed to set aside at least 20 percent of the national budget to social programs and services. This initiative promises more benefits for women since social programs and activities are central to their everyday lives and concerns. In 1996, 31 percent of the national budget was allocated to these programs and services such as education, health, housing and employment. Percentages recorded in 1997, 1998 and 1999 amounted to 32.30 percent, 33.68 percent and 33.69 percent, respectively.

B. GAD BUDGET UNDER THE OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

14. The Women in Development and Nation Building Act (RA 7192) calls for the promotion of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation-building. This law seeks to operationalize the constitutional provision which recognizes the role of women in nation building and guarantees fundamental equality before the law of women and men. Thus, the law provides that all projects funded under the ODAs shall allocate a substantial portion of the funds (5-30 percent) to programs, projects or activities in support of women's advancement.

15. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) was mandated to monitor its implementation. NEDA accounted that in 1997, the amount of US\$303.50 Million, representing 11.67 percent of the total ODA of US\$2.6 Billion, has been allocated for programs and projects addressing women concerns. In 1998, the amount totaled to US\$174.0 Million or 9.96 percent of the US\$1.8 Billion total ODA funds. Although the recorded figures are minimal, these indicate a growing concern to address gender issues as a priority program area among donor agencies.

16. Programs, Projects and activities funded by the GAD budget under ODA focused on responses to violence and human rights violations against migrant Filipina workers, family health management by poor settlers, water supply and sanitation, advancement of women for peace and development, and hospital equipment assistance, among others.

C. GAD IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGETS

17. To mobilize resources for GAD in the local level, the budget department issued Local

Budget Memorandum No. 28. It directs Local Government Units (LGUs) to set aside a minimum amount of 5 percent out of their 1998 appropriations for projects designed to address gender issues in accordance with RA 7192 or the Women in Development and Nation Building Act.

18. In pursuance of this, some LGUs started to tap the 5% budget for women. The City of Bacolod, for instance, through its women's groups and women advocates in the local development council, launched several initiatives on women's concern such as the validation of the existence and incidence of domestic violence in some of its barangays (villages). This issue has been the rallying point of the women's organizations to ask for government support. As a response, the city established the Bacolod women's center which is tasked to address the growing issue of domestic violence in the community. To sustain the center, several financial mechanisms were tapped such as the City funds, social welfare department's budget, Philippine Amusement and Games Corporation (PAGCOR) fund and donations from women's organizations. The center is handled by a consortium of women's associations, NGOs, civic clubs, city government offices in collaboration with other city offices and national government offices such as the Philippine National Police women's desk.

19. Likewise, the Naga City tapped the 5% budget as a mechanism to support programs addressing women's agenda in the city. These include livelihood loan packages to women's groups, provision of facilities for businesses like agriculture, manufacturing, production, wholesale and retail and industrial services, day care center, family planning program, operation of primary health center and passage of local ordinances requiring companies to provide facilities for child minding. NGOs and POs also collaborate with the city to provide services to women through capability building and legal and counseling services, among others.

20. The experience of the City of Angeles in institutionalizing women's concern in the agenda of the city government is another milestone in local GAD budgeting. The passage of the GAD ordinance has put gender concerns in a more firm foothold. The ordinance aims at influencing the city government to set aside the mandated 5% GAD fund for gender responsive programs. It defined and identified the programs to be implemented particularly those that will address the gender issues of the locality. To sustain these, the ordinance also created a GAD council as an enabling mechanism for GAD.

21. The Angeles City Women's Coordinating Council (ACWCC) also implemented a Program to Promote the Welfare of Women which serves as the venue for equal development of women in the city, mainstreaming women's concerns and ensuring the gender responsiveness of development efforts. Responses to various women's issues also became their thrusts such as women organizing, education and training, crisis intervention and

networking and advocacy. ACWCC also conducted a series of women's summit for the formulation of a comprehensive women's agenda and action plan for the city.

D. MONITORING MECHANISMS ON THE GAD BUDGET

22. The strengthening of the national women's machinery in 1995 gave birth to a division solely dedicated to the monitoring of implementation of the county's gender equality policy. The division implements a monitoring strategy that combines technical assistance, follow-up, advocacy, incentives/disincentives, and reporting to get the GAD budget policy implemented. At the onset of the budgeting process, the staff of the women's machinery sit in the technical budget hearings wherein agency top officials defend their proposed budgets. Here, the aforementioned staff aid the directors and division chiefs of the department of budget and management in asking questions that scrutinized the agencies' GAD budget and allocations. This approach is being institutionalized into the work of the budget department.

23. Parallel to this, agencies submit their GAD plans to the national women's machinery as mandated under the GAD budget policy. These plans are reviewed by the staff of the women's machinery and recommendations for improvement are fed back to the heads of the concerned agencies. This process allows both parties to reflect on the quality of the programs and projects and learn from each other the nuances of GAD planning and budgeting as operationalized within the context of every agency's mandate.

24. While advising government agencies on how to improve their GAD budgeting, the national women's machinery also advises the different committees in Congress to check the agencies' GAD budget proposals. After the enactment of the national budget, agencies are monitored through their GAD plans and reports. Then, the cycle is repeated.

25. To sustain progress in GAD budgeting, a capability building program is being implemented by both the budget department and the national planning body. Organizational development review have been undertaken in both agencies to determine the systems, skills and tools that have to be developed and adopted to institutionalize the implementation and monitoring of such policy. A GAD budgeting question and answer brochure was also developed and disseminated to aid agencies in the processes of complying with the GAD budget policy. Briefings for agency officers and focal points for GAD are also regularly done to promote appreciation and understanding of the GAD budget policy.

26. In all these, women NGOs play significant roles as lobbyists, advocates and monitor.

They also serve as critique and sources of technical advice to agencies. The Women's Alliance Network for Development, for instance, undertook a project on research and advocacy on the women's agenda and budget. The project assessed experiences in implementing the women's agenda and GAD budget in order to develop a fresh *Women's Agenda and Budget* for advocacy with the new administration. The researches covered national and local experiences, among which were the cities of Bacolod and Naga.

E. OTHER MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE, FOLLOW-UP THE PFA AND OTHER RELATED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

27. The Multi-sectoral Committee on International Human Development Commitments (MC-IHDC) was created as a mechanism to coordinate the monitoring and follow up of actions to implement the country's international commitments on human rights in the FWCW, International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) and the Istanbul conference on Shelter and Human Settlements or the HABITAT II.

28. The MC-IHDC is mandated to monitor, review and evaluate the Philippine compliance to these commitments, as well as recommend the policies, strategies, programs and projects to the Technical Board of the Social Development Committee of the national planning body. It also serves as a venue to coordinate the monitoring of government actions to such commitments. The committee is composed of government agencies, non-government organizations and peoples' organizations. It is headed by the national planning body with agencies serving as lead in monitoring the four international conferences.

29. The national women's machinery is a member of the MC-IHDC as the lead agency for the FWCW. As such, it coordinates the monitoring of the implementation of the PFA. Recently, a study was initiated by the women's machinery in partnership with the UNFPA towards defining a framework for the integrated monitoring of the ICPD and FWCW commitments. As a method of implementing this framework, linkages of governments, NGOs, women's organizations, international organizations in promoting women's health shall be established. The study further suggested indicators in monitoring and evaluation for the promotion of women's health.

30. The other members of the MC-IHDC are the Population Commission, as lead for

population development, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) for shelter and human settlements, Department of Social Welfare and Development for social integration, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) for employment expansion, and the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) for poverty alleviation.

31. The MC-IHDC conducted a follow-up workshop for the 5th Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Development. This Conference aimed at reviewing the monitoring activities and processes on the ASPAC and the WSSD commitments of government agencies, non-government agencies, private sector and other stakeholders. The Conference determined the national, intermediate and quantifiable targets in the Manila Declaration on the Agenda for Action on Social Development, recommended ways for the integration of identified national targets into national and local plans, policies and programs as well as the mechanisms for monitoring them, and identified the issues confronting the attainment of targets.

32. The Committee plans to review issues, gaps and recommendations raised during the follow-up on the 5th ASPAC and other related issues concerning monitoring and implementation of international commitments. The four sub-committees will be meeting regularly to update accomplishments on the international commitments and thresh out coordination, implementation and monitoring issues.

F. ROLE OF NGO'S IN THE FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

33. Non Government and peoples' organizations are represented in the MC-IHDC and are, therefore, afforded opportunities to follow up government actions on the international commitments.

34. Women NGOs in coordination with the national women's machinery and concerned line agencies also work together to implement and monitor the implementation of PFA. The Philippine Beijing Score Board (PBSB), a network of women NGOs, actively monitors the implementation of the PFA by reviewing the implementation of major laws and international instruments promoting women's status. It also provides technical support to the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Committee on Women in the House of Representatives in the conduct of consultations, public hearings and committee meetings to craft bills and monitor laws responding to PFA concerns. The PBSB also collects data and provide reports to international monitoring bodies on women's concerns. Under the new administration, the PBSB works in partnership with the Senate Committee on Women in creating opportunities for government agencies to report their performance in relation to the implementation of the PFA.

35. The Board of Commissioners of the women's machinery is another vehicle for involving women NGOs in the process of following up national actions on the PFA. Presently, out of 27 members, 17 came from the NGO sector. The Board meets every month to discuss and address policy issues confronting the implementation of the country's commitments under the PFA.

36. Another vehicle for NGO participation in monitoring is the Cairo-Copenhagen Beijing Interface (CCBI). This is another network of NGOs and GOs which was formed to coordinate, follow-up and monitor the implementation of the Phil. Commitments to Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing Conferences. Among its initial efforts preparatory to the Beijing conference is a conduct of a conference, "Paving the Road to Beijing" which aimed at linking the NGO gains from the previous U.N. conferences to ongoing substantive discussions for and during the Beijing conference particularly on the issue of population and health and to identify NGO positions on critical issues on the draft Platform for Action. Right after the FWCW, the INTERFACE drew up a matrix delineating the policy and program initiatives that the Philippines have to pursue to implement its commitments in the PFA. This was used as reference by the national women's machinery in the process of advocating with government agencies corresponding actions on the PFA commitments.

37. NGOs also played a crucial role in the implementation of the PFA. Several consciousness raising or gender sensitization of mostly women development workers and grassroots leaders were conducted. HASIK is an NGO which conducts gender sensitization to men. NGOs also organized women and men around gender issues. Further, in partnership with the national machinery, advocacy campaign were launched which included the conduct of policy research and formulation, lobbying and mass actions toward bringing about policy reforms. The focus of the major legislative advocacy campaigns of NGOs has ranged from anti-rape and anti-sexual harassment to maternal and child care. Other advocacy campaigns that have been waged were on migrant workers' rights and welfare and local sectoral representation. Model building was also pursued by NGOs. This entailed implementing pilot projects that test new ways of integrating women's concern on health system and credit program and pilot testing a community-reaction to counter violence against women.

PART III-A:
**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF
CONCERN OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION**

1. WOMEN AND POVERTY

1.1. Overview

1.1.1. Poverty remains as the single biggest factor that limits the opportunities of most Filipinos to attain a better life. As indicated in the 1998 Annual Poverty Indicator Survey (APIS) covering 13,487,569 families, almost all participating families were affected by the increased price of food and other basic commodities. With regard to the families in the lowest 40% income strata, eight out of ten families reported the great effect of drought or “El Nino” in their livelihood. Other families reported reduction of wages and/or loss of job within the country. More often, poverty in the Philippines has a woman’s face and is especially felt by rural women. It is often rural women, who, because of their poverty and lack of opportunities in life, become migrants, and risk going to urban areas and foreign lands for jobs. Because of their limited education and skills, most of them are employed as service workers such as entertainers and domestic helpers. The very nature of these jobs make them vulnerable to abuses and exploitation.

1.1.2. During the past four years, responses to this area of concern have been more predominant than the rest of the PFA concern. This is predictable since government attention during this period was fixed mainly at battling the financial crisis that hit the region. The concerns of women were considered in the national anti-poverty agenda, opening avenues for women’s participation, program advocacy and resource mobilization. On the whole, however, observable impacts on women’s lives, especially poor women, remain elusive and shall continue to be a major concern of the present administration.

1.2. Policy and institutional developments

1.2.1. The Social Reform Agenda (SRA) serves as the government’s main program to alleviate economic deprivation and eventually liberate poor Filipinos from the ratchet of poverty. This program recognized women as the poorest in the society and among those who are in urgent need of assistance. The SRA policy framework therefore explicitly states that the government shall pursue a gender responsive approach in its campaign against poverty.

1.2.2. To operationalize this framework, the women’s machinery was made a member of the Social Reform Council (SRC), the highest policy making body of the SRA. This body was also tasked to ensure that the PFA commitments are integrated and monitored in the process of implementing

the SRA. In support of this, women was recognized as a basic sector and were given a seat in the National Anti-poverty Council (NAPC). The NAPC was institutionalized through the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act (RA 8425), reiterating the national policy of pursuing a gender responsive approach to poverty and providing that women must be represented in the NAPC Board to serve a term of 3 years. It also created a window for the basic sectors, including women, in the countryside.

1.2.3. Within the framework of SRA, a Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS) was instituted as a convergence program to address the need of the poor, including women, in poorest communities. Assistance included entrepreneurial development and training and livelihood credit support. Various laws are also in place to support women's effort particularly of poor women. These are:

- Republic Act 6725, which strengthens the prohibition of discrimination against women with respect to terms and conditions of employment, promotion and training opportunities;
- Republic Act 6972, which mandates the setting up of a day care center in every barangay to give care and social learning opportunities to pre-school children while their parents are engaged in economic activities. As of December 1998, the social welfare department reported that 34,979 barangay day care centers have been set up, some 83.40 percent of the total target. A total of 34,979 day care workers are employed to handle these centers;
- Republic Act 7192, which provides that “women of legal age, regardless of civil status, shall have the capacity to act and enter into contracts which shall be equal to that of men”. Under this law, women shall have the capacity to borrow and obtain loans and execute security and credit arrangements under the same conditions as men. They shall have equal access to all government and private sector programs granting agricultural credit, loans and non-material resources and shall enjoy equal treatment in agrarian reform and land resettlement. The same law also recognize the eligibility for insurance coverage of a spouse who devote full time to managing household and family affairs “to the extent of one half of the salary and compensation of the working spouse”, subject to the consent of the insured spouse;
- Republic Act 7882, which provides for assistance to women engaging in micro and cottage business enterprises. It directs the provision of assistance to Filipino women in their pursuit of owning, operating and managing small business enterprises. Specifically, it states that any woman who shall have been certified, after appropriate training under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), or any government or government-accredited training institution as eligible to

operate a micro and cottage business enterprises. The TESDA also provides free training programs to all women who avail of the benefits provided under this law;

- Republic Act 8291, which revises the Government Service Insurance System Act and expands the coverage of insurance of government workers. Since women are half of the government workforce, this law benefits women government workers as well as the widows and families of male civil servants;
- Proclamation No. 1105, which declared the 15th of October as National Rural Women's Day, giving importance to their contributions and calling attention to their needs.

1.2.4. Likewise, the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law and the Urban Development and Housing Act provided bias for the poor and the women among them.

1.3. Program and project developments

1.3.1. Programs and projects implementing these policies are being implemented by concerned government agencies. They consist of day care services, land distribution and settlement, enterprise development training and credit assistance, among others.

1.3.2. Notable among them are adjustment measures for agricultural workers, including women farmers and fisherfolks, to cushion the adverse impacts of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, support mechanisms to address problems on women and sanitation, farm to market roads, ports and markets, among others. Women in the informal sector were likewise served under the Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurs Program of the labor department.

1.3.3. In terms of performance, the credit program for women in micro and cottage business enterprises released a total of Php 27.99 millions for 90 women through the Development Bank of the Philippines, and of Php 3.304 millions to 4,352 women through the Land Bank of the Philippines in 1997.

1.3.4. A program named "Tulong sa Tao" (peoples' assistance) released a total amount of Php 1,779 billions to 138,939 micro-entrepreneurs, of which 67 percent (or a total of 93,561 of the sub-borrowers) were women. These generated 232,206 employment in 13 regions nationwide. The implementor, Bureau of Small and Medium Business Development (BSMBD) of the trade department, allocated financial assistance to help women in project development and in training on non-traditional activities such as furniture, bricks, tile, cabinet, wood and novelty items making and wood finishing. In

1997, the project assisted some 124,129 micro-enterprises and generated 125,837 jobs nationwide. In the same year, it provided training to 34,428 individuals, 51.1 percent of whom were women. The Cottage Industry Technology Center (CITC), an attached agency of the trade department, conducted trainings that benefited 1,500 women in 1996. These were designed to improve women's skills for livelihood through home-based enterprises such as weaving and making of slippers, soap, candle and hand paper.

1.3.5. Under the new administration, an overall pro-poor bias was adopted by many line departments. The agriculture department implements a rolling store program for the poor that sells cheap commodities. It served 120,500 households in Metro Manila. Vegetable production was also launched to benefit a targeted 25,000 urban poor families within the resettlement areas who will be provided with technical assistance to produce vegetables, crops, broilers and ornamentals.

1.3.6. A mass-oriented livestock and food production program was implemented to provide livelihood and stabilize food supply in the 20 poorest provinces in the country. Entrepreneurial development and training on food processing, packaging and marketing were conducted for 2,356 rural women and youth. The program on Livelihood Enhancement for Agricultural Development 2000 financed projects that benefited 12,480 coconut farmers. Capital assistance amounting to Php 22.19 millions were released to finance alternative projects (seaweed production, fish vending and wholesaling, crab fattening, etc.) of 567 individual borrowers and cooperatives.

1.3.7. The Self-employment Assistance Program for Women, which provides non-collateral loans to women, is a community-based credit assistance program that provides seed capital to organized groups of women, persons with disabilities and disadvantaged groups without interest and collateral but is required to roll-back the loaned amount within a maximum period of two-years to generate savings. From 1993-1998, the number of self-assistance associations funded that are composed of women were 381 with 9,535 individual members. Another program, the Productivity Skills Capability Building for Disadvantaged Women, provides skills training to marginalized/disadvantaged women for self, open employment and sheltered workshop. Women from depressed villages of 16 regions are targeted. From May 1991 to December 1998, 212,485 women have participated in the training. The Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurial Development (WEED) Program, provides low interest and affordable loan schemes to home-based workers together with entrepreneurial training. As of 1998, the labor department organized 15,556 women workers into 495 groups/organizations to be able to access WEED resources for income generation purposes. It likewise conducted 227 orientation sessions/training on WEED project for 6,076 women workers. In addition, it established 297 income generating projects benefiting 1,933 women workers as of 1998.

1.3.8. A financial assistance program to help villages manage micro finance projects for marginalized sectors was implemented by the Department of the Interior and Local Government. Two villages were piloted in 1998 to establish a Management Committee that was responsible for managing and relending the financial assistance to beneficiaries.

Every village organized a Kapanalig (allies) circle composed of 10 women/men beneficiaries who were provided with loans of Php 70,000.00 per beneficiary to establish a micro-finance enterprise. The circles will be encouraged later to organize a cooperative within their respective municipalities.

1.3.9. Income-generating and nutrition projects of 82,000 mothers also received capital support from the National Nutrition Council. The Quedan Corporation, another government-owned and controlled corporation under the agriculture department, is implementing three credit programs for women. These are: Quedan Financing Programs for Food and Agriculture Retail Enterprises (FARE), Livelihood and Aqua Marine Productivity (LAMP), and Coordinated Agricultural Marketing Productivity (CAMP). For the period 1995-1998, said programs, extended a total of Php 305.7 million to 24,892 women.

1.3.10. Laudable initiatives in line with promoting gender-based methodologies and addressing the feminization of poverty include: a) development of a policy paper on homeworkers; b) study on the migration of women workers and its psychosocial impact to families; and c) applying gender analysis in the design of post harvest facilities.

1.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

1.4.1. The above initiatives reflect the government's resolve to address the problem of poverty. Yet, many Filipinos continue to find themselves struggling against the current economic crisis. The adverse effects of the crisis - cuts in budget for social services, laying off of workers in the country and overseas, the rise in the cost of basic necessities, etc. - are bound to affect women more, since in the Philippines, they are the ones primarily responsible for managing the household finances.

1.4.2. While there are sectors who appreciate the efforts of the government, many believe that the government could still do a lot more. The gender policy in the SRA framework still require specific translation into operational terms. Specific targets must be adopted to ensure that women would actually benefit from it.

1.4.3. The positioning of women in the anti-poverty councils could still be improved by ensuring that the rest of the basic sector representatives also carry a gender-enlightened perspective. The programs and projects to be implemented must be reviewed to ensure that proportionate benefits would accrue to women and that they are consulted in the processes of implementation.

1.4.4. The problems of women as poor are manifold and the envisioned responses could be overwhelming, even for well-meaning implementors of SRA programs. A critical challenge, therefore, rests in the need to develop and provide practical guides and approaches that would help field personnel operationalize any anti-poverty programs and projects with a gender perspective. The absence of data on poor women, particularly in the villages targeted by the projects also pose a big challenge. Methodologies for

collection of gender responsive field data shall therefore be a continuing focus of the government.

1.4.5. To mitigate the impact of economic difficulties in the country, the following are envisioned to be a continuing part of government's concern in dealing with poverty:

- exemption from budget cuts of funds for social services and economic programs that are directed at vulnerable groups, including poor women;
- institution of policies and mechanisms to regulate and monitor increases in tuition fees, housing rentals and basic commodities; and
- re-thinking of current macro-economic policies and possible granting of priority assistance to local businesses to protect them from collapse or further weakening.

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1. Overview

2.1.1. The field of education is one area where women in the Philippines generally enjoy almost equal status with men. As of 1994, the literacy rate for women was even slightly higher than the men, placed at 94 percent compared with 93.7 percent for men. One of the efforts of government to sustain this was to implement a non-formal education system and literacy programs for women and girls in indigenous communities. This aimed to reduce the wide gender gap in literacy rates in the most depressed provinces of the country. To make the educational system gender responsive, textbooks, instructional materials and school curricula were reviewed to correct sexist biases and stereotypes. It was also during this period that the first batch of women cadets of the Philippine Military Academy, the bastion of future male military officers, were graduated and were commissioned as officers of the Armed forces of the Philippines. Three of the pioneer women cadets who graduated in 1997 are topnotchers garnering the 3rd, 8th, 9th places. The batch of 1999 had a woman cadet as topnotcher of the graduating class.

2.1.2. The national educational policy guarantees free education for everybody, including women, up to the secondary level. It is in the field of education where women in the Philippines generally enjoy almost equal status with men. The Beijing Platform for Action's concerns in this area are therefore generally supported by government actions.

2.1.3. Recent statistical figures (1994) show an improvement in the educational status of women in the Philippines. Nationally, and in both the urban and rural areas, literacy rates have been on the uptrend for both sexes, but more so for women. The percentage of women who are functionally literate is slightly higher (85.9%) than that of men (81.7%). Compared to their rural counterparts, women in the urban areas have higher functional literacy rates (89.9% vs. 81.6%). One of the probable reasons for this is the availability of better educational opportunities in urban areas.

2.1.4. With respect to school enrollments, there is no marked difference. However, there are slightly more women who have never gone to school, roughly equal proportions of women and men attaining an elementary and high school education, and more women reaching and completing a college education. In the university enrollment, women outnumber men in Education (77.6%) and in the Health Sciences (75.2%) but are the minority in Engineering (19.25%) and the Law (17.6%).

2.1.5. Significant gains made in ensuring access to basic education could be attributed to the following measures taken by education department: such as the reduction of classroom backlogs; reduction of incomplete elementary schools through the provision of additional classrooms and teachers and the creation of multi-grade classes in appropriate areas; reduction in the number of rural barangays without elementary schools and the number of municipalities without high schools; and reduction in teacher shortage. Further, the

school building program was boosted by sourcing funds from the private sector and availing of grants from the Japanese government to finance the Educational Facilities and Improvement Project.

2.2. Policy and institutional developments

2.2.1. Section 2, Article XIV of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for the establishment and maintenance by the State of a “system of free public education in the elementary and high school levels.” At present, pre-school education is not covered in the public elementary school system. However, there are private kindergarten schools and child-learning centers run by the government servicing the need for pre-school education in the country.

2.2.2. Republic Act 7877 was enacted in 1995 declaring unlawful the practice of sexual harassment in the employment, education and training environment and prescribed policies on the disposition of cases.

2.2.3. To curb disparities in the male-female ratio of its training candidates, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) instituted a policy that encourages women to enrol in industrial courses traditionally dominated by men. In 1997, the country launched a technology-based education and training program for women through the National Vocational Training and Development Center for Women (NVTDCW). Also known as the TESDA Women’s Center, the NVTDCW was established to improve the economic status of women through technical education and training. Women-friendly facilities are available at the Center including: a multi-purpose hall, dormitory, day-care center/nursery and space for networking of NGOs. The Center adopts a holistic approach to women’s economic empowerment through technical skills training, entrepreneurship training, social skills training, research, advocacy, career guidance/job placement assistance and counseling services.

2.2.4. From its first batch of 91 graduates, roughly 20 percent have either found employment in different companies or established their own businesses. To ensure equal opportunities in its skills training programs, TESDA requires that at least 10 percent of trainees per class are women. The Center is currently offering 27 pre-employment skills training in nine (9) trade areas, namely: automotive, electronics, welding, ceramics, agro-processing, hotel and restaurant, garments, crafts, gifts and housewares, and jewelry. These courses are designed in such a way as to impart the basic technical skills necessary for immediate employment. These trainings run for six months, with four months in-Center training and two months off-Center or on-the-job-training (OJT). It also undertakes research on the enhancement of women’s economic capabilities. In the future, the Center shall offer skills upgrading and trainers’ training to enhance Training Methodology. It also provides empowerment skills training in advocacy, work values and attitudes development, gender sensitivity and entrepreneurship development.

2.2.5. Republic Act No. 8248, also known as the Science and Technology Scholarship Act of 1997, provides equal opportunities to both young women and men to pursue careers in science and technology.

2.2.6. The Philippine Military Academy (PMA), began to welcome women in 1993 with the first batch of women graduating in 1997 and continued to accept women since then. Various changes have been made to address the particular needs of female cadets, such as the renovation of barracks to segregate them from their male counterparts. The initial clothing allowance of female cadets is higher than their male counterparts by Php 5,998.90 in recognition of their reproductive/biological needs. To date, PMA has a total of 935 cadets, 55 of whom are females. Seminars on Gender Sensitivity were provided to the Staff, Group heads, Faculty and Civilian Supervisors and selected personnel. Training for members of its Decorum and Investigation Committee and Staff Officers on handling sexual harassment cases was held in compliance with the law on sexual harassment. Likewise, Social Graces Seminar was conducted for cadets as well as a Host Parents Program to provide healthy family environment, rest and recreation for military and civilian personnel. Gender sensitivity is also being integrated in the Social Psychology classes.

2.2.7. Topics related to GAD, particularly, Violence Against Women (VAW) was integrated into the medical curriculum of one of the country's major universities offering medical courses. With this pioneering effort, negotiations are under way to convince the higher education commission to integrate a course on the handling of VAW cases in all medical schools in the country.

2.3. Program and project developments

2.3.1. To address the wide gender gap in the illiteracy rate of six most depressed provinces of the country, the government adopted the Female Functional Literacy Program in Mindanao, home to a significant number of indigenous communities. It involved inter-agency collaboration in training and development of materials that were based on the needs of the students and their cultural norms and practices. Some 15,000 illiterate women, or 12% of the target, have benefited from the project.

2.3.2. The Government also expanded alternative non-formal education systems for indigenous communities such as *Magbasa Kita* (let us read) that teaches women and girls and parents of working children to read. Relatedly, school-based child-minding centers were set up in the cultural communities so that older children, mostly school-aged girls who take care of younger siblings, could attend classes despite their task to take care of their siblings.

2.3.3. Rural women, young women, women in indigenous communities and women with

disabilities comprise the priority group for educational programs of the government. The program measures, which address their unique needs and disadvantaged position include: gender sensitization for rural women, scholarships for women ages 16-22 in all indigenous cultural communities, education and training and employment of women with disabilities, deployment of village nutrition scholars and leadership training for women.

2.3.4. The University Center for Women's Studies (UCWS) in collaboration with the

Women's Studies Association of the Philippines (WSAP) entered into a project entitled "Building GAD Capability of Regional Women's/Gender Studies and Resource Centers."

The project seeks to build capability in gender planning and gender policy formulation as well as ensure sustainability of GAD programs and projects in government. At the end of the project, it is expected that Women's/Gender Studies and Resources Centers are established and networks of GAD resource pools set in place which will make available trained academic and professional researchers in gender planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

2.3.5. The Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) offers Functional Education and Literacy Programs (FELP) in ten out of sixteen regions of the country. Some regions conduct Female Functional Literacy classes with Maternal and Child Care as core topics.

2.3.6. The Philippine Council For Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) has a gender program for the agriculture, forestry and natural resources sector entitled "Program on Engendering the National Agriculture and Resources Research and Development Network." The project has the following components: gender advocacy and training, publication of gender-related materials, strengthening of and technical assistance to gender regional focal points/core group; and organization of gender resource collections, among others.

2.3.7. An increasing number of universities and colleges are offering women studies. A consortium of such universities, known as Women's Studies Association of the Philippines (WSAP), has 50 member-schools and over 300 teacher advocates all over the country. The members undertake teacher training and curriculum development on Women Studies. Although there are no formal courses on gender sensitivity, the same is being integrated in Social Psychology classes in selected state colleges and universities.

2.3.8. Gender reforms in the educational system are continuously being pursued, including the revision of textbooks, curricula, instructional materials and teaching methods towards gender responsiveness. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) continues to monitor the implementation of gender mainstreaming curriculum and the integration of gender and development (GAD) concepts into the syllabi of selected subjects.

2.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

2.4.1. A very positive situation is indicated in this area. Some problems, however, continue to put women in a disadvantaged position and these shall remain as a concern of the government in the years ahead. Among these are: gender tracking, disproportionate representation of women in decision-making, preferential educational opportunities for boys by the parents, and multiple burdens of the girl-child.

2.4.2. Illiteracy remains a problem, mainly for those who live in far-flung areas and those who cannot afford to go to school. There is a challenge for the Philippine government to spend more resources and expand its programs particularly to indigenous communities. Reforms also need to be sustained to make education less sexist and able to inculcate women-friendly ideas such as joint parenting, reproductive rights, and non-violent means of handling conflict. The mindset and consciousness of teachers and academic mentors, and even parents, have to be transformed to enable them to fully participate and accept the principle of gender equality. There is also the issue of gender tracking, where certain fields of study have predominantly more women or men students. Women outnumbered men in education and the health sciences, but men dominate in engineering courses and law. More men also attend the training programs of the TESDA for executives, managers and supervisors. More women, on the other hand, graduate from programs for professionals, clerical personnel and services and sales workers.

2.4.3. The disproportionate representation of women in top positions persist in spite of the fact that the country's educational workforce is heavily female dominated. There are also indications that women, both as educators and learners, remain vulnerable to sexual harassment.

2.4.4. The public school system, including state colleges and universities, have always adopted coeducation of boys and girls. However, there is no law in the Philippines which prohibits the establishment of private exclusive schools for boys and girls. Disparity in the quality of education remains, particularly between the public and private schools. The latter is known for quality instruction, highly qualified teaching staff, and better facilities.

2.4.5. The objective to promote lifelong education and training for girls and women remains to be an area where much improvement is needed. A flexible and broad range of education, training and re-training programs must be made available to women in general. Moreover, more scholarships should be offered and granted to poor but deserving female students.

2.4.6. The task of keeping the children in school and ensuring that they learn well remain to be serious challenges. Difficulties were met just in maintaining cohort survival rates. In addressing this problem, solutions shall have to extend beyond the usual input infusion. Careful consideration must be given to the socio-economic environment of the learners and serious attention must be drawn to enhancing the relevance of the school curriculum, enriching the learning experience, empowering the frontline managers (i.e. superintendents, principals and teachers), enhancing teachers' competence in facilitating learning and evaluation of learning and enhancing partnerships with stakeholders, particularly with LGUs through the Local School Boards. The ten-year Master Plan for

Basic Education seeks to address these concerns, through the twin thrusts of decentralization and modernization. There is still a need, however, to review the gender-responsiveness of this Plan. Lastly, efforts must be made to mobilize the civil society, such as the private sector and the grassroots community, to focus more on education and to provide the necessary support mechanisms.

2.4.7. The objectives under Women and Education are being fairly addressed. The Philippines continues to pursue gender reforms through the continuous review of textbooks, instructional materials and school curricula to ensure their gender responsiveness. Similarly, the country will continue to integrate gender perspective in the curricula of colleges and universities and to strengthen further and expand measures such as the educational fund support, scholarship opportunities for teachers, alternative approaches to literacy, school-based child care centers, and female functional literacy. Gender sensitivity training and the teaching of gender concepts shall likewise form part of these initiatives in order to raise gender consciousness among members of this sector for them to better understand gender discriminations occurring within their jurisdiction.

3. WOMEN AND HEALTH

3.1. Overview

3.1.1. Health is an area where women's conditions have been improving through the years. Women's mortality rate has been decreasing and is generally lower than that of men (4.2 deaths per 10,000 women population vs. 6 deaths per 10,000 men population). Male mortality rates are about a third higher than female mortality during infancy, and more than twice higher than women's mortality at older ages or from age 20 to 64. Reflecting woman's biological advantages in terms of longevity, women's life expectancy at birth was found to have risen from 70.2 years in 1995 to 71.0 years as reported by the Populations Projections Unit, National Statistics Office (NSO) and the Commission on Population (POPCOM). Men's life expectancy also increased but remained lower than that of women by 5.3 years. This number is projected by the NSO, Populations Projections Unit.

3.1.2. Nevertheless, a look at women's health situation in the areas of nutrition, maternal, childbearing/reproductive and other health concerns indicate that much remains to be done in addressing women's general state of health.

3.1.3. The five leading causes of death among men and women are similar (diseases of the circulatory system, diseases of respiratory system, infective and parasitic diseases, accidents, poisoning and violence, and neoplasms) but men are most prone to deaths from accidents, and women from cancers. The most common cancers afflicting women are those of the breast, lungs and uterus, while the most common cancers among men are those found in the lungs, stomach and pharynx.

3.1.4. Despite declines in the country's maternal mortality rates, about 5-6 women die of pregnancy-related causes everyday. The major causes of maternal deaths are postpartum hemorrhage, eclampsia, and severe infection. In most cases, 58 percent of maternal deaths occur within a day of admission in medical facilities, indicating late medical attention to complications of deliveries as a major cause. Maternal deaths from other pregnancy-related hemorrhages and those with abortive outcomes are the next leading causes, accounting for about 16 percent of maternal deaths. Maternal mortality rate (MMR) in 1998 was registered at 172 deaths per 1000 live births.

3.1.5. Tetanus toxoid (TT) injections are given during pregnancy to prevent neonatal tetanus as part of adequate maternal care. The 1993 NDS showed that 65 percent of births came from pregnant mothers who had received at least one dose of TT immunization. The 1998 NDHS reported that this level has increased to 69 percent of all births.

3.1.6. Looking at maternity services, 1998 figures on percentage of home delivery services by type of attendant revealed that most deliveries (41.3%) were attended by

“hilots” (traditional birth attendants); other (25.5%) were assisted by midwives; and the rest (30.9%) sought medical assistance. From the figures, it may be deduced that most women, particularly those in the rural areas and indigenous communities were seldom reached by medical services. In 1994, the figures were 57 percent; 35 percent and 37 percent respectively.

3.1.7. The Philippines attained considerable progress in expanding coverage of contraceptive practice. Between 1968 and 1998, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of married couples of reproductive age using modern methods of contraception from 2.4 percent to 28.2 percent. Nonetheless, large proportions of couples still use ineffective methods, discontinue the use of effective methods or do not use any method at all. Many of these couples desire to have children but a significant portion of the users of ineffective methods or current non-users do not want another child.

3.1.8. With respect to disability or impairment, there are more disabled males than females, who accounted for 51.11 percent of the total population of disabled persons in 1990. Among women, low vision had been the most common type of disability, covering almost 41 percent of the total disabled female persons in 1995.

3.1.9. In the field of women’s nutrition, there is a general downtrend in the prevalence of anemia in the country, dropping from 37.2 percent in 1987 to 28.4 percent in 1993. Although the incidence of anemia has been decreasing among the population, its prevalence is still high among infants and pregnant and lactating women. As of 1993, anemia afflicted almost half of all infants (42.9%), 44 percent of pregnant women and 43 percent of lactating mothers. Next to anemia, thiamine deficiency appears more widespread than riboflavin deficiency. The same pattern is true among children aged 6 months to 6 years of whom 34 percent and 9 percent respectively, exhibit visible signs of thiamine and riboflavin deficiency. The prevalence of goiter due to iodine deficiency is similarly increasing and is more common among women. In 1993, one-fourth of pregnant women aged 13-49 had goiter, as did 18 percent to 22 percent of lactating mothers.

3.1.10. Malnutrition as another health area, is very much a women’s concern. A 1993 survey revealed that adult non-pregnant women were affected by both under and overnutrition. Using body mass index (BMI) or weight (kg.)/height (m.), more adult non-pregnant women (20 years and above) were found to be either underweight (16.1%) or moderately or severely obese. The same survey showed that 21 percent of pregnant women have weights less than 90 percent of standard weight-for-height. There is a threat not only to the nutritional and health status of the infant, once born, but also to the health and nutritional status of the mother. Vitamin A deficiency, as manifested by low levels of Vitamin A in the blood, afflicts 10.1 percent of girls 6 months to 6 years old (which is slightly higher than the 10.1 percent observed among males of the same age group) and 3.0 percent and 5.2 percent of pregnant and lactating women, respectively.

3.1.11. Iron deficiency anemia also afflicts a large portion of Filipinos. Groups most affected are infants aged 6 months to less than one year old (49.2%), the elderly (45.6%),

pregnant women (43.6%) and lactating mothers (43%). Adolescent females 13-19 years old and adult non-pregnant women are likewise affected at 23.9 percent and 24 percent for iron deficiency and anemia prevalence, respectively. Compared to 1987 level, anemia prevalence decreased significantly among all these groups except for the elderly and pregnant women where the decreases were not significant as 1996 figures showed.

3.1.12. An indication of the extent of iodine deficiency disorders in the country is the prevalence of goiter. Goiter prevalence is high among females, especially those either pregnant (27.4% among 13-30 years and 22.8% among 21-49 years old) or lactating (22.3% among 13-20 years and 17.2% among 21-49 years old). Compared to the 1987 results, the prevalence of goiter in 1993 among females increased significantly, except for girls 7-14 years old which posted a slight increase between 1987 and 1993. Note that goiter prevalence among males ranges from 3.1 - 0.6 percent; while the total prevalence for both males and females aged 7 years and above was 6.7 percent in 1993.

3.1.13. The cumulative number of reported cases of HIV-positive and AIDS patients from 1984 to 1997 indicates that there are more males (57.85%) than females (42.15%) afflicted by the disease. Of the total HIV-positive cases (968) from 1984 to early 1995, 318 or 32.85 percent have developed full-blown AIDS, 169 or 53.14 percent of whom have already died. Sexual contact is the most common mode of HIV transmission. Majority (71.59%) of this came from heterosexual contact while 21.59 percent came from homosexual relationships. The median age for infected men was 32 years and 25 years for women. Statistical data covering the period of 1984 to January 1999 indicates that there are more male patients at 57.64 percent compared to female patients at 38.79 percent. There is a considerable decrease in the number of HIV-positive and AIDS patients compared to 1997.

3.1.14. Drug abuse and/or substance abuse is less common among women than men. Only about 7 percent of the total users are women, but their number is increasing faster than that of male users. From 1993 to 1996, the number of female drug users increased by 23.48 percent while the number of male users increased by 68.97 percent. Female users tend to be younger than male users. For the period 1993 to 1996, the highest percentage of reported female users was recorded at ages 15-19 (22.7%) while that of male users were at ages 20-24 (25.78%).

3.1.15. The Philippines has not achieved the 20 percent budget allocation suggested by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that should go to total human priority expenditures, which include basic education, primary health care, reproductive health care and low-cost water supply and sanitation services. In 1997, it allocated only 16.4 percent of its budget to these services. The UNDP also suggests a 20 percent minimum allocation for such services from official development assistance (ODA). In 1997, the Philippines spent only 14 percent of ODAs in this area.

3.2. Policy and institutional developments

3.2.1. Health is declared in the Constitution as a basic human right. Section 15 of the Article on State Policies provides that “ *the State shall promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.*” Section 11 of the Article on Social Justice and Human Rights says: “*The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development... There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged sick, elderly, disabled, women and children.*”

3.2.2. A number of health related frameworks reflect the government’s policy to respond to concerns on women’s mortality and morbidity, poor nutritional levels, inadequate access to medical services, reproductive health and related infections.

3.2.3. The health department’s Ten-Year Investment Plan (1996-2005) entitled “Investing in Equity in Health” embodies the overall goals and strategies for the health sector. Its key objectives are to assure the sustainability of national health programs, support the process of devolution, rationalize sector spending and enhance institutional capabilities in management and planning. The public investment packages costing Php 25.235 Billion set aside a considerable portion, approximately 30 percent of total country program cost, for the improvement of women’s health.

3.2.4. The government adopted a gender responsive population program framework to improve the current population planning and policy development. Gender equality and women empowerment were among the major components of the Philippine Population Management of the Commission on Population (POPCOM). The POPCOM is advocating for a population development planning that is gender sensitive at the national, regional and local levels. Efforts are also being undertaken to review and revise the present Program framework to incorporate relevant aspects of women’s health, gender issues and other concerns in both conceptual and operational terms. These efforts include the constitution of TASK FORCE on family planning/ reproductive health (FP/RH), the development of reproductive health indicators, and establishment of Women’s Desks to address cases of violence against women.

3.2.5. The Philippine Family Planning Program adopted the following policies: (a) rejection of abortion as a family planning method; (b) improvement of family welfare, with focus on women motherhood and child survival; (c) freedom of choice in what family planning method to use; and (d) promotion of family solidarity and responsible parenthood.

3.2.6. The passage of the Paternity Law Act (RA 8187) in 1996 allowed married male employees to take seven days off from work with pay for the first four (4) deliveries of their legitimate spouses. The Department of Health (DOH) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) issued a joint memorandum spelling out the rules and regulations of this law’s implementation in the bureaucracy. It is expected to enable men to help take care of their children or assist their wives recover after deliveries or miscarriages.

3.2.7. Under the Social Reform Agenda, the Department of Health issued the implementing rules and regulations of the Barangay Health Workers/Incentive Act (RA

7883). This law specifically benefits village health workers, majority of whom are women.

3.2.8. Republic Act 8172, otherwise known as An Act Promoting Salt Iodization Nationwide (ASIN), mandates the use of iodized salt nationwide to eliminate iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) among the populace, particularly women and children. The use of iodized salt means eradicating IDD and its consequences which include brain damage, mental defects, and mental retardation; congenital physical defects such as deaf-mutism and squint, loss of I.Q. Points, miscarriage and stillbirths, and goiter. Women are primarily at risk and more affected by IDD.

3.2.9. Institutional mechanisms created during the period include the Office of Special Concerns of the Department of Health which coordinates all programs and projects related to women's health and institutionalizes the integrated approach to women's health service delivery. The office oversees the implementation of the Family Planning Service, Nutrition Service, National Aids Prevention and Control Program, Dental Health Service and Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Program.

3.2.10. The national women's machinery and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) implemented the "Policy Development and Advocacy for Women's Health, Population and Development" project which aimed to develop, advocate and implement policies and legislation for women's health and population concerns, as well as measures to address violence against women. At the end of the project in December 1998, major accomplishments with respect to health are as follows: (a) Women's Health, Population and Development Desk (WHPDD) was instituted to institutionalize interventions on women's health, population and development; (b) formulated and popularized policy/legislative papers, including ten policy briefs on priority women's health and population issues; and (c) conducted public awareness through information dissemination such as the Beijing Watch Bulletin, media dialogues, press releases, information leaflets/brochures and video documentation.

3.3. Program and project developments

3.3.1. To address the continuing problem of women's poor access to health care and services, the DOH vigorously pursued the implementation of the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project. For the period 1995 to 1999, the project was allocated around Php1.8 billion for the delivery of component services that aimed to decrease maternal mortality and morbidities among women. Its major components were family health for the urban poor project, sustainable community-based Family Planning/Maternal Care Unit with special focus on the strengthening of maternal and child health services project.

3.3.2. The DOH Office for Public Health Services (OPHS) implemented the LGU Performance Program (LPP). LPP is a five-year (1995-2000) USAID-assisted project which aims to improve the health of mothers and children by increasing the utilization of

FP, MCH and nutrition services. Under the project, the DOH worked closely with LGUs to plan and implement comprehensive population, family planning, and child survival programs. The LPP provides both financial and technical assistance, including logistics management, training, IEC, program monitoring, operations research, advocacy, networking, and program management.

3.3.3. The *Women's Health and Development Program* was created "to ensure women's health and development through participatory strategies that enable women to take control over their health and their lives." Its objectives are to: (a) develop a sound technical basis for policy and action on gender and women's health issues; (b) promote integration of gender perspective into health policies, services and programs; (c) develop a database and test interventions especially on prevention of emerging gender issues like violence against women (VAW); (d) increase participation of women in the design, implementation and evaluation of health programs and policies; and (e) advocate for and disseminate information on the health situation of women with a gender perspective. The Women's Health and Development is now the socio-political framework for advocacy, policy, communications and national objectives for health. The program has a national level focus and will monitor and evaluate progress on gender awareness and the development of gender-sensitive health care services. It will also be the prime articulator of policy and has now evolved a major communications campaign to champion women's health as part of women's rights.

3.3.4. The Family Planning program was also enhanced by adopting a Reproductive Health care approach, with Family Planning (FP) serving as a cornerstone in the delivery of integrated (RH) services. The FP/RH program's operation was expanded with projects that adopted a life-cycle, gender responsive and client-centered operational framework.

3.3.5. The reproductive health (RH) program was created to monitor progress in: (a) family planning; (b) maternal health care; (c) prevention of abortion and management of its complications; (d) prevention and treatment of reproductive tract infections including STDs, HIV and AIDS; (e) prevention and appropriate treatment of infertility and sexual disorders; (f) prevention and treatment of breast cancer, cancers of the reproductive system and other adverse gynecological conditions; (g) counseling and education on sexuality and sexual health; (h) adolescent reproductive health; (i) male reproductive health; and (j) prevention and management of cases of violence against women.

3.3.6. Under the RH program, the health department addressed specific critical areas that have been previously neglected through: (a) Reproductive Tract Infection Teams composed of combined managers of HIV-AIDS, STDs and Iatrogenic/Post Abortion Infections; (b) Natural Family Planning Program to strengthen initiatives and provide information and choices in under-served areas; (c) Adolescent Reproductive Health Program to focus on the special needs of adolescents in relation to reproductive health and sexuality; and (d) Reproductive Health and Health Financing Initiative to study issues on sustainability of family planning and reproductive health services through health insurance and alternative financing models. Currently, the Reproductive Health Program is the technical framework for all initiatives involving the health sector

specifically at the level of regional offices, hospitals and medical centers. The program was tasked to oversee capability building, training and quality assurance in reproductive health care services.

3.3.7. *Family Health Packages.* These are jointly developed by regional field offices and local government units to address specific health needs of communities at the primary level. In order to support decentralization, local governments will be encouraged to identify their priorities while the regional offices will provide technical assistance on how to meet the national objectives for: (a) safe motherhood; (b) immunization; (c) family planning; (d) reproductive health; (e) water and sanitation; (f) women's health; (g) dental health; (h) nutrition; (i) early child health and development; (j) adolescent health; and (k) health of older persons.

3.3.8. Currently, Family Health Package serves as the service delivery framework at the level of barangay health stations, rural health centers, municipal health facilities, and district hospitals. Separate initiatives are being currently explored to encourage private midwives and nurses to establish clinics and centers that can provide combinations of family health care services based on local needs.

3.3.9. The Department of Social Welfare and Development - Bureau of Women's Welfare (DSWD-BWW), in coordination with the Department of Health, integrated in all its programs/projects modular packages on Personal and Child Care Skills Development. One of the modules discussed self-care of women from puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, child birth, breastfeeding, weaning, detection of breast cancer, common disorders of women and use of herbal medicines.

3.3.10. The DOH implemented the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program which encouraged pap smear tests, disseminated information, educated the public on breast self-examination and provided training on early detection of breast and cervical cancer for service providers. The project is aimed at detecting the diseases early and managing treatment/pain relief for those afflicted.

3.3.11. Mother and baby-friendly hospitals were set up to encourage mothers to breastfeed their babies from 0-6 months and continue breastfeeding them. The nursing stations were established inside passenger terminals.

3.3.12. The health needs of the elderly women were addressed through a national program on the Health for Elderly Women which formulated a module on health care of the elderly. Some 130 day care centers for the elderly were established in selected areas of the country. A total of 84 centers are already completed and 46 centers are still under construction.

3.3.13. *Home and Community Food Production Program* was implemented to improve and ensure family food security by providing seeds, seedlings and other planting materials to target beneficiaries for the establishment of kitchen gardens in homes, communities and schools. It also includes small animal dispersal with the DA and LGUs

at the helm. During the past three years, an average of 186,631 vegetable gardens have been established. Through the animal dispersal scheme, a total of 178,508 families and mothers of underweight pre-schoolers were reached in 1993-1994 and around 47,575 in 1995 or an average of 113,042 families for the whole period.

3.3.14. The *Micronutrient Supplementation and Food Fortification* provided Vitamin A, iodine and iron and pushed for the addition of micronutrients to foods commonly consumed by Filipinos. “Araw ng Sangkap Pinoy (ASAP)” provided iodized oil capsules, seeds and planting materials for vitamin A, C and iron-rich foods. Through regular health services, iron supplements were given to more than 0.2 million pregnant and lactating women in 1994 and more than 0.6 million in 1995 or an average outreach of about 0.4 million women. The health department also enjoined food manufacturers to fortify their products with micro-nutrients.

3.3.15. *Credit Assistance for Livelihood Program* provided 68,314 families and mothers with seed capital for income generating projects in 1994. An additional 97,324 families were covered for the reporting period.

3.3.16. *Nutrition Education* which promotes desirable food and eating practices through the conduct of Mother’s Class and the use of mass media reached 709,383 mothers in 1994 and 664, 868 mothers in 1995, or an average outreach of 677,126 for the period. The *Food Assistance Program* provided supplemental feeding mostly for lactating and pregnant mothers and underweight children to improve their nutritional status. Food assistance was provided to 305, 159 pregnant and lactating women in 1994 and 243,687 in 1995. The Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS) Program involved the recruitment, selection, training and deployment of volunteers tasked to link the nutritionally needy and at risk with service providers. As of 1995, a total of 19,300 BNS or volunteers, majority of whom are women, have been trained and deployed nationwide.

3.3.17. The Fourth Country Programme for Children of the Government of the Philippines (GOP) and UNICEF provided, among others, nutrition education, micronutrient and supplementation projects, family food production and food security and nutrition advocacy interventions among decision makers.

3.3.18. A nutrition program was undertaken by the Department of Health (DOH) in 1998 to respond to malnutrition concerns of pre-school children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Community-based nutrition measures were pursued in identified nutritionally-depressed areas to alleviate poverty. A child growth project was carried out in nine (9) provinces. It aimed to lower malnutrition among children through breastfeeding, improved weaning practices and growth promotion. Bulgar wheat and green peas were distributed to moderately and severely underweight pre-schoolers and pregnant and lactating women. Weighing scales were also provided to communities to monitor the weight of pre-school children.

3.3.19. The Department of Agriculture (DA) implemented the *Aksyon Para Sa Nutrisyon*, a community-based nutrition action program. This program covers

Nutritionally-Depressed Municipalities (NDMs) which were granted seed money amounting to 3.5 million for nutrition and agri-fishery livelihood projects. Likewise, the DA launched the *Bayang Mayaman sa Iron, Iodine at Bitamina A* (BIDA) in cooperation with the Nutrition Center of the Philippines and Proctor & Gamble Philippines. The project involves the production of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to be used in nutrition education activities in schools, homes and communities.

3.3.20. The National AIDS/STD Prevention and Control registered the following accomplishments during the period: (a) continuous assessment of the status of infection in the country to guide in the setting of appropriate interventions; (b) IEC for risk individuals as well as for general population; and (c) strengthening of clinical management. At the local level, measures are being taken to alleviate the well-being of women who worked as entertainers in the former military bases. The City Health Office of the Social Hygiene Divisions and the City Social Welfare Office of Olongapo City extended regular monitoring of physical condition, medical assistance, skills training, scholarship for children of HIV positive/AIDS victims, educational assistance thru Parent Effectiveness Services where integration with the community of the former entertainers and their families is facilitated. The National AIDS/Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention and Control Program was adopted to prevent the spread of AIDS/STD, especially among those working in the sex and entertainment industries, and cushion their psychological impact on the patients, their families and communities.

3.3.21. Research tools for women empowerment were developed and used such as the *Framework for Analyzing Gender Responsive Population Policies with a Reproductive Health Perspective*. This provides the gender and reproductive health criteria for assessing the degree of gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women in population policies. It also helps ensure that effects and benefits of the policies and projects will be shared equally between men and women. Another framework, the *Framework for Women-Centered and Gender-Sensitive Policies and Programmes for Women's Health*, shifts approaches to women's health from Pre-ICPD to Post-ICPD Program of Action and Beijing Platform for Action. It is a tool that rightfully contextualizes family planning in the matrix of gender relations and health reproduction

3.3.22. The involvement of men, particularly in women's health initiatives is a subject of a study in a Project called Men-Women Partnership Study, 1998. This is a pioneering attempt at documenting and examining the extent to which men are involved in women's health projects. The study is hinged on the realities that men exert considerable influence on their wives, their activities including their health-seeking behavior and that some of men's practices and behaviors directly place their wives and children's health at risk.

3.3.23. Researches were conducted on (a) exposure to toxic substances and its effects on the reproductive health; (b) working conditions of women in the semi-conductor industry; (c) ergonomic problems among salesgirls; (d) women in semiconductor industries and computer operators; (e) Home-based Maternal Record; (f) Women's Health; (g) RTI Anti-biotic Surveillance Prevalence of STD; and (h) Women's Occupational Diseases.

Gender indicators have also been developed and conceptualized. There is still a need to operationalize these indicators, both at the national and local levels.

3.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

3.4.1. Given the prevailing decentralization of government functions, one challenge for the health sector is to develop the capabilities of local governments to carry out the devolved functions that were previously the responsibilities of the national government. More resources have to be provided so that health programs could be expanded and be carried out in areas where they are still not implemented. There is also a need to document the specific effects of these programs and services on the well-being of women.

3.4.2. It is evident that existing health programs and services respond to the needs of women as mothers, wives and carers of children. However, the reports show that other age groups such as adolescents, menopausal women and elderly women are not given equal attention. There is therefore a need to intensify implementation of current programs and services in a holistic manner so that they may adequately respond to the needs of women and girls throughout the life cycle.

3.4.3. Male participation in family planning, either by their own use of male methods or through their greater support of sustained practice by women, is an aspect that has not yet received adequate attention. Given the dominant influence of males in decision-making about reproductive choices, it is clear that the gender dimensions of family planning need to be enhanced in addition to the traditional emphasis on bio-medical aspects of quality care.

3.4.4. The development of women-sensitive program indicators that could be used as basis for planning and policy-making for women's health in the entire life cycle is likewise wanting. There is also a need to monitor and evaluate the impact of programs/projects on the general improvement of women's health condition.

3.4.5. The Department of Health has adopted a reproductive health approach that relies on decentralization of services to suit the needs and capacities of local government units and has improved the delivery of contraceptive supplies to service outlets. Nevertheless, there is a gap between policy and implementation with many government programs and personnel still geared towards population control rather than reproductive health. Gaps such as the treatment of reproductive tract infections, the treatment of abortion consequences and programs on violence against women remain. Contraceptive supplies continue to be dependent on foreign inputs which poses a possible threat because a great majority of women (about 74%) rely on government service for their contraceptive supplies.

3.4.6. The country has to confront the following gaps and issues on women and health: (a) improving the quality of reproductive health is often seen as too costly; (b) difficulty

in implementing, monitoring and evaluating programs and policies for the advancement of women; (c) lack of quality health care services and facilities owing to limited funds and/or resources; (d) gap in data collection systems; (e) no unified understanding of the concept of reproductive health and reproductive rights; (f) lack of understanding of the concepts relating to gender issues in different social and cultural contexts; (g) insufficient understanding among health practitioners and policy makers on the best and most appropriate implementation of the RH approach.

3.4.7. In strengthening the Preventive Programmes that promote women's health, the DOH, enumerates the following gaps/issues: (a) include GAD concerns in the formal and non-formal education; (b) build and institutionalize partnership among GOs, NGOs, POs, church groups, the private sector and International Organizations (IOs) on the basis of trust and collaboration towards a common vision of women's health and rights; and (c) sustained advocacy of gender equality and reproductive rights. Gender awareness efforts have also to be intensified. There is still a significant proportion of the bureaucracy, industry and grassroots with low level of consciousness on gender and women's issues. While efforts to address VAW are very encouraging, there is still a need to pass laws penalizing domestic violence, strengthening the rights of daughters in incestuous rape, and suppressing the trafficking in Filipino women. GAD database/sex disaggregated data have to be instituted to draw a woman's face on the statistical system. Moreover, the statistics will help laws, programs and projects to effectively response to issues on women. There is also a need to increase male involvement in reproductive responsibility.

3.4.8. The DOH, in undertaking gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually-transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues, cited the following gaps/issues: (a) difficulty in implementing RH program; (b) need to mainstream gender in LGUs and grassroots levels; (c) increasing unprotected sexual activities among adolescents which also increase the risk of acquiring STDs/HIV/AIDS; (d) unwanted pregnancy and abortion for the women; (e) lack of information/data on women and RTIs, STDs/HIV/AIDS; and (f) social and cultural considerations which can affect the approach towards STDs and HIV/AIDS.

3.4.9. Moreover, in the promotion of research and dissemination of information on women's health, some gaps identified are as follows: (a) lack of research studies that focus specifically on women; (b) lack of data on women and women's health and rights to aid policy makers; and (c) the need to refine indicators for them to be relevant and user-friendly.

3.4.10. Government's program on health generally affirms the Platform's strategies. This consists of health, nutrition, and population services, training, making health infrastructure available and information dissemination on women's health in various stages of their life cycle. The government will continue to pursue the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project, with the following objectives: (1) to improve the quality and range of women's health services and to make these services address their gender needs; (2) to improve its capability to provide policies and for local governments to

provide women's health services; (3) to improve community partnership for women's health; and (4) to conduct researches on women's health.

3.4.11. Lack of awareness is a cross cutting issue affecting the implementation of programs to increase women's access to health and related services. Efforts are being exerted to rationalize training programs on family health, reproductive health, and women's health and development through the development of a national curriculum. This national curriculum will be shared with local training institutions, specifically medical, nursing and midwifery schools. Moreover, they will be encouraged to participate in training on gender, reproductive health services and family planning.

3.4.12. A review of information systems is a need and will continue to be undertaken to analyze the true problems of women in relation to reproductive health and other diseases/conditions. By the end of 1999, the DOH will publish baseline data on women's health and national objectives for prevention and promotion. The health department will undertake further actions to increase women's access throughout the life cycle, to provide appropriate and affordable and quality health care, and undertake information and related services. By the end of 1999, the DOH will publish baseline data on women's health. Improved status of women through education and provision of livelihood opportunities will be targeted. Measures toward women's health and nutrition, safe motherhood and child survival, especially as part of the family planning programs, will be vigorously promoted. Health facilities and centers for wellness will cater to the critically ill and those needing health assistance and promotion. Gender-sensitive FP and reproductive health services will be continuously pursued.

3.4.13. Further actions/initiatives to implement the Preventive Programmes of DOH are as follows: (a) strengthen gender mainstreaming in the LGUs and grassroots levels; (b) orient and train LGU workers, planners and policy makers at all levels on gender sensitivity and on comprehensive women's health service delivery; (c) enhance skills in gender and RH responsive planning; and (d) gather sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information. The government will continue to increase, develop and strengthen a pool of GAD advocates, trainers and rescue mobilizers at the national and local levels. It will coordinate and maximize the GAD budget towards making women achieve political empowerment, economic autonomy and reproductive self-determination. Increase in the national budget for health will be advocated as well as the prioritization of women's health services to ensure that constituents are healthy, productive and self-reliant.

3.4.14. Capability-building activities that focus on awareness raising and skills development on gender, and population and development concerns will be aggressively pursued. Gender based population and development indicators system for planning shall be enhanced and information on gender issues and concerns as they relate to population, including male involvement in population programs will be promoted. Awareness raising activities on women's reproductive rights will be intensified.

3.4.15. On the matter of gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually-transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues, the DOH identified further actions/initiatives as follows: (a) advocacy for enhanced measures on STDs and HIV/AIDS; (b) strengthening of the Reproductive Tract Infection (RTI) component of the RH Program; (c) and generating data on women and reproductive health.

3.4.16. The Philippines shall continue to implement initiatives that respond better to women's total health not only to their maternal and reproductive health. Developments aimed to assure sustainability of national health programs, support to the process of devolution, rationalize sector spending and enhance institutional capabilities in management and planning are the priorities that will be given immediate attention.

PART IV:
PHILIPPINE VISION IN ADVANCING
THE GAD AGENDA BEYOND THE YEAR 2000

4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

4.1. Overview

4.1.1. Some of the most common forms of violence experienced by Filipino women are domestic violence or wife abuse, rape, including marital rape, incest, sexual harassment, sex discrimination, forced prostitution and international trafficking, pornography and abuse of women portrayed by media, and custodial abuse when the woman is a patient, a ward or a detainee.

4.1.2. The issue of violence against women (VAW) continues to figure in the national consciousness. Although the increasing number of reported VAW cases may look alarming in some ways, advocates view it as a positive development. On one hand, it indicates that victims are no longer ashamed nor afraid to report VAW incidents to authorities. On the other hand, the rising number of reported cases has become a compelling reason for policy makers and program implementors to consider VAW among their priorities for action.

4.1.3. Government agencies continue to extend services to VAW victims and survivors. The social welfare department reported 41,667 cases of women in especially difficult circumstances from 1991 to 1997. Cases of battered women constituted the biggest percentage of these, at 59.8 percent. The rest were cases of illegal recruitment (7.6%), rape (7 %), involuntary prostitution (7.1%), armed conflict (3.6%), incest (1.6%), women in detention (0.7%), and other forms of violence (12.1%). Reported figures show that cases of wife battery and involuntary prostitution rose while the rest declines. The DSWD maintains nine substitute homes, 16 crisis intervention centers and community-based support mechanisms for women and children in especially difficult circumstances which handled 9,595 cases this year. As of September 1998, there were 36.16 percent of physically abused wives, 13.23 percent rape victims and 9.46 percent victims of incest staying in substitute homes.

4.1.4. The Philippine National Police (PNP) reported that in 1998, there were 2,633 cases of physical injuries, followed by 1,054 cases of rape and 426 cases of acts of lasciviousness.

4.1.5. The increasing acceptance of violence against women as a policy concern for the government stems from the realization, long emphasized by women's groups that VAW has devastating consequences to women as well as to society in general. Violence inflicted against women is life-threatening, affects the physical and psychological health of women and their families especially of their children, and eventually impacts on their level of productivity and full human potential which in turn, has serious consequences to development itself. The government soon began to see that not only is violence against women entirely preventable, but that acting decisively to eliminate it will minimize the enormous social and health and economic costs that women and society are experiencing as a result of society's inaction.

4.2. Policy and institutional developments

4.2.1. The Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025, sets the main policy framework for addressing the problem of violence against women. It identifies violence against women as priority planning concern of the government and cites three goals in solving the problem: (a) prevention and elimination of violence against women; (b) provision of services to the victims; and (c) punishment as well as rehabilitation of offenders. The strategies and programs in carrying out these goals are envisioned to be reinforced by a three-point policy framework that runs along the lines of equality, justice and safety for women which will be carried out through an inter-agency approach by developing and implementing strategies and sharing of resources.

4.2.2. The enactment of an Anti-Rape Law (RA 8353) may be considered as the biggest accomplishment in this critical area of concern during the reporting period. The law expanded the rape definition; de-gendered it and recognized the existence of marital rape. It provides that rape is now a public crime (rather than crime against chastity), expanded its coverage by recognizing acts such as insertion of any instrument into the genital or anal orifice of another person as “rape by sexual assault”. The law also acknowledged that rape may be committed against both sexes and implicitly recognized the concept of marital rape through a clause that extinguishes the crime when rape happens during the marriage and the wife forgives the husband. At present, information campaigns are being waged by women’s groups to promote understanding of the new law’s provisions.

4.2.3. Two laws were approved in the year 1997 which strengthened government mechanisms to address VAW. Republic Act 8505, an Act Providing Assistance and Protection to Rape Victims was enacted. It directs the setting up of a women’s crisis center in every province to extend such services as legal aid and counseling to VAW victims and survivors. Another law, Republic Act 8369 or the Family Courts Act, creates family courts which will have jurisdiction over cases of domestic violence and other forms of physical abuse within the family.

4.2.4. Another law, the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act (RA 7877), continues to be implemented in government and private institutions. Training sessions and counseling were held for members of Decorum and Investigation Committees and para-counselors of private companies and educational institutions to combat sexual harassment and enforce the law. Reports submitted to the national women’s machinery showed that nine government agencies had adopted rules and regulations to implement the law and 27 are in the process of developing their own. Twenty five of the agencies initiated the setting up of committees to handle cases while 13 agencies have plans to conduct training for their staff.

4.2.5. VAW was considered in the framework of the government's Social Reform Agenda (SRA) which carries with it a vision for "legal protection of women and children against all forms of violence (rape, pornography, sexual harassment and domestic abuse)...". One of its flagship programs, the Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS), provides for expansion of services for women in especially difficult circumstances and the setting up of substitute homes for women in crisis and especially difficult circumstances. These will provide temporary shelter to protect women victims of violence from further harm and services that would restore their psycho-social functioning. Substitute homes of this kind are already operationalized in Regions I, II, III, IV, V, VII, VIII, X, XI and XII. Another is under construction at the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), northern part of the country where many indigenous people live.

4.2.6. Various legislative measures were proposed for adoption in Congress. One of these is a proposal seeking to strengthen the provisions of Republic Act 6955 which declared unlawful the matching of Filipinas for marriage to foreign nationals on a mail-order basis. Said initiative seeks to address problems/issues which involve trafficking of women in the guise of matching them for marriage to foreign nationals. The bill envisions to institute policies to suppress the trafficking in Filipina women, establish the necessary institutional mechanisms for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking, and provide penalties for its violations. Other bills were also filed against violence to women in intimate relationships, domestic violence, and incest.

4.2.7. Institutional mechanisms responding to VAW were either initiated or strengthened. To organize a coordinated public and private actions on VAW, the social welfare department organized a Quick Reaction Team (QRT) both at the central office and regional offices. This is an interdisciplinary team that strengthens and ensures appropriate, immediate and timely legal, psychosocial and group support for women and child victims of sexual abuse. Its action points were: recruitment and mobilization of at least 3-5 volunteer lawyers, 3-5 volunteer para-legal, 3-5 volunteer psychologists/psychiatrist and para-professionals, 3-4 families as part of the support group or victims themselves who would want to compose themselves as support team for those who have just decided to make their situation known; formation of QRT in selected provinces/ CIDSS areas; mobilization of media group; identification of resources outside of DWSD; and management of old cases based on the inventory of cases made by QRT and newly reported cases.

4.2.8. The Philippine Military Academy (PMA), which opened its courses to female cadets in compliance with the Women in Development and Nation Building Act, created its own Decorum and Investigation Committee and adopted rules and protocols that would prevent abuse or sexual harassment of female cadets.

4.2.9. The justice department also created a task force on the protection of women against abuse, exploitation and discrimination pursuant to Department Order No. 381 dated 10 September 1998. This was assigned to handle investigation and prosecution of violations on the Anti-Rape Law, Anti-Sexual Harassment Act, Anti-Mail Order Bride

Law, acts of lasciviousness, white slave trade and forcible abduction and other related crimes and other forms of violence committed against women. This department is also a member of the Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) on Intermarriages which addresses the problem of trafficking in Filipino women through intermarriages. The IAC is intended to establish specific procedural protocols in the enforcement of laws against traffickers, promote information sharing among agencies, and establish cooperative programs.

4.2.10. In the absence of a law, the President issued a directive to all heads of government agencies to: (a) take personal advocacy against domestic violence; (b) strengthen the frontline services to victims; (c) educate the public on the issue; and (d) press for the adoption of a law against domestic violence. Government agencies responded by setting up VAW desks or focal points in the workplace, conducting awareness raising sessions and introducing innovative approaches to existing frontline services such as the *fast lane* and *one-interview-system* in the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

4.2.11. The Philippine National Police had set in place 1,632 women's and children's desks in its stations/precincts. These desks handle cases of women and children-related offenses and are staffed by police officers who have been trained in the proper handling of such cases. A total of 5,620 cases on crimes against women were reportedly handled by these desks from November 1993 to May 15, 1997. For the period covering the year 1998, the number of cases totaled to 3,463.

4.2.12. The interior and local government department, in coordination with the social services and development department in Quezon City, piloted four (4) Barangay Family Councils in the city as part of their program on domestic violence prevention and protection. The Council responds immediately to the needs of VAW victims and refer them to agencies for further support service. It is composed of members from the barangay, health centers, police, and NGOs who were trained to handle cases on VAW within the area.

4.3. Program and project developments

4.3.1. Awareness campaigns and program enhancement dominated the types of programs undertaken during the period. In 1997, for example, a nationwide campaign against VAW was undertaken where national and local government agencies mobilized action around the theme, "*Yes to Women's Health, No to Violence Against Women*". Regional celebrations were held with the objective of increasing public awareness on the programs that government has put in place to improve women's health and to increase public awareness on the availability of services to victims of violence against women. Recently, a ribbon campaign was launched to sustain the public information campaign on the problem of violence and its economic and social effects to victims and families.

4.3.2. The Hospital Assistance for victims of a Violent Environment or HAVEN was piloted for women victims of violence. It provides medical and legal services and serves as drop-in center for victims of VAW. Project HAVEN has been envisioned as a “one-stop-shop” where all services needed by the victim could be provided. When a victim goes to the emergency room for medical treatment, she is then referred to Project HAVEN Center for the intake form to give background information about her. A case history is then established. Thereafter, possible crisis interventions are determined. Services needed by the victim are provided such as counseling, temporary shelter, legal assistance, financial assistance for medical treatment, psychiatric support and social services. The victim is given schedule for further counseling. The Center was initially run by an NGO and was supported by the government in 1997.

4.3.3. Under the Special Project for Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) now maintains 11 substitute homes, 16 crisis intervention centers and community-based support mechanisms spread throughout the Philippines for women and children in especially difficult circumstances. The general objective of this project is to enable women in especially difficult circumstances to resolve their problems and to be restored to normal functioning, thus regaining their self-worth and dignity through protective and rehabilitative services. The project utilizes two approaches: the first approach is Institution Based wherein the women are accommodated in facilities called Substitute Home Care for Women in Especially Difficult Circumstances or “Bahay Tuluyan ng Kababaihan.” While at the home, appropriate services are provided based on needs. The other approach is community based where the women who need not be placed in substitute homes could be helped by social workers within their homes or in the community with appropriate interventions. Services are provided such as temporary custody, clothing and personal care items, medical services (*such as physical examinations, dental check up, clearance for sexually transmitted diseases, psychiatric evaluation and treatment, psychological testing*), maternal and child care skills development, self-enhancement skills development (*ego-building, stress reduction/crisis management, spiritual enhancement/renewal, sports development, values development, revival of cultural tradition, etc.*), livelihood, social communication skills development, legal services, counseling, casework, groupwork, community participation skills development and others such as educational services, transportation assistance and after-care services. To help the victims in filing their cases in court, the DSWD retains a lawyer for all regional offices. The women can avail of these services by going directly to the substitute home or any DSWD Field Office or by referral. The client may be referred by the DSWD Field Office, other government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), local government units, people’s organizations, church groups and concerned individuals. The last method is through outreach wherein the client may be directly contacted by a social worker.

4.3.4. Recognizing the vital role of the judiciary in addressing VAW, the Philippine Institute of Judicial Administration (PIJA) of the University of the Philippines Law Center had conducted various trainings for court judges and prosecutors. To enhance these initiatives, PIJA, in partnership with the welfare and interior departments, is working out a project entitled “Training on Domestic Violence for Judges, Prosecutors,

Law Enforcers and the Community” with support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The proposed project aims, among others, to make the participants in the criminal justice system aware and responsive to the dynamics and strategies of domestic violence and to evaluate existing legal procedures and practices relating to cases of domestic violence. The project also hopes to explore improvements in the quality of justice and to advance and exchange knowledge which would prevent and control domestic violence.

4.3.5. The multidisciplinary training seminar workshop for judges is designed for three days.

One of its interesting features is a mock trial which will illustrate the handling of domestic violence cases. An actual case decided by the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court will be presented to bring out the true feelings and reactions from the participants. In this way, it will give the participants the opportunity to examine how domestic violence affects the behaviour of the defendant and the survivor in the courtroom and how the court can intervene effectively. Out of this program, the Institute aims to produce a manual on domestic violence which is intended for echo training to those who have attended the seminar workshop. It will also serve as a training tool and a guide for a range of options, alternatives and strategies that are being used. It will contain information on actions taken by the police, prosecutors, judges, health service workers, social service workers, women’s groups, and by government agencies to respond to the problem of domestic violence. Its purpose is to share this knowledge to address the problem on domestic violence. The Institute intends to conduct six (6) training sessions nationwide on areas with relatively high reported incidence of domestic violence. The project concept is currently being enhanced with the support of the UNDP to make it more expansive in scope.

4.3.6. The national women’s machinery and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) developed policies and legislative proposals for women’s health and population concerns, as well as VAW through a project entitled, policy development. It reviewed services and protocols of frontline agencies handling VAW cases to determine how these can be improved so that they can be more responsive to the needs of the victims and survivors. In 1998, a how-to manual for government VAW workers containing necessary information, knowledge and skills on how to respond to VAW cases and concerns was developed.

4.3.7. The national women’s machinery also works with NGOs and the National Statistics and Coordination Board (NSCB) to develop methodologies for the generation of statistics on VAW. This project shall integrate and consolidate administrative records from the police, the social welfare, and the non-government organizations (NGOs). In this way, summary statistics such as the number of victims, type of violence, age, sex distribution, etc. can be generated and tabulated. These summary statistics will provide, to a limited extent, a general picture of the degree of seriousness of the problem on violence against women and children (VAW-C). Due to the limitations of administrative data in the generation of statistics in this area, a technical working group (TWG) was created for the development of the data framework for the statistics on VAW-C. A

workshop was conducted in March 1998 with the objective of achieving a common understanding of administrative-based data as a source of statistics on standard concepts and definitions related to the generation of statistics on violence against women and children.

4.3.8. The national women's machinery published a series of primers on key women's issues, one of which was VAW. The various forms of VAW were discussed as they occurred in the Philippine setting, why they happen, and the remedies available to the victims. The publication also contained a directory of agencies serving battered women.

4.3.9. Trafficking is another form of violence that victimizes women and children. Documented stories of abuse and the commodification of women and children challenged government effort to protect the rights of migrant women. A direct offshoot of this problem was the anti-trafficking project carried out by government and the civil society, with funding support from the Belgian government. Among its components were training for frontline agencies and NGOs on how to handle trafficking cases; review of existing government systems and procedures on assisting trafficking women and children; and dialogues with concerned agencies on how to improve these systems and procedures.

4.3.10. Other mechanisms include Equality Advocates (EQUADS) in the bureaucracy to attend to complaints of gender, political and sexual harassment in government service. "Hotline sa 9," a TV public service program assisting women and children victims of abuse and exploitation was likewise initiated. Protective mechanisms prior to deployment of Filipinas overseas have likewise been institutionalized by the labor department, providing repatriation and airport assistance to 1,059 Filipinas overseas who were victims of various forms of violence at the job sites. The labor department, as a member of the technical working group of project, "*Development of Indicators to Measure Violence Against Women and Children*", conducted a series of consultation and workshops to come up with legal and operational definitions of the different forms of violence against women and children. It also packaged relevant statistics on women workers and child and developed variables and parameters regarding violence against women and children.

4.3.11. Protective pre-deployment mechanisms were likewise institutionalized by the labor department to prevent exploitation and abuse of Filipina overseas workers. This include a more stringent procedure and documentary requirements for women migrant workers in vulnerable occupations which set the following age requirements: (a) 30 years old if bound for Saudi Arabia and Bahrain; and (b) 21 years old for female entertainers. Literacy requirements for domestic helpers and female entertainers including the ability to speak, write and read English, was also imposed.

4.3.12. The labor department follows stringent administrative measures in the selection of destination countries and employers for women workers, particularly those in vulnerable occupations. These include the policy on Selective Deployment of Filipino Women Workers (Department Order No. 32, series of 1996), the Full Disclosure Policy

(Dept. Order No. 35, series of 1996), and memorandum of agreement on Anti-Human Smuggling and other forms of illegal recruitment. In 1998, the department signed and issued Governing Board Resolution No. 5, prescribing a minimum age of 21 in the hiring of household workers with some exceptions in countries where age requirement is higher or to pre-identified countries where the legal employable age is 18.

4.3.13. A mandatory orientation module on migration was developed by DOLE for inclusion in the elementary and secondary school curricula in cooperation with the education department and the foreign affair's Commission of Filipinos Overseas. This aims to equip entrants to the labor force with information to make intelligent decisions as to work and worksite preferences. As of June 1998, 50 percent of schools in Manila have been covered in the actual classroom application of said module. Lessons on VAW were also included in the literacy classes of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education.

4.3.14. The National Bureau of Investigation continues to render medical assistance, legal advice, counseling, and case management to domestic violence cases. Its GAD focal point conducted a seminar on violence against women and gender sensitivity and distributed flyers/leaflets on sexual harassment. Relatedly, the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), also extended legal assistance to victims of violence through their program for women victims.

4.3.15. Cognizant of the unabated exploitation and trafficking in Filipinas overseas, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) strengthened its policies and programs. Data banking and computerization program was instituted in the Commission on Filipinos Overseas which includes a *serial sponsors' watchlist* which alerts Filipinas on foreigners that have petitioned for more than one fiancée. CFO continued to maintain sex disaggregated data that serves as input to policy formulation and program development. Efforts are underway for the development of a *case monitoring system* to effectively document and monitor cases referred to CFO for assistance. Said information system is also intended to be harmonized with the information system of other government agencies which will participate in the *Shared Government Information System**

4.3.16. Guidance and counseling services were provided to 14,644 Filipino fiancees/spouses of foreign nationals, of whom 92.1 percent are women. This service is intended to help them cope with difficulties in intermarriage and settlement overseas. The counselees were provided with information about migration laws as these affected them, marriage concerns, ways of coping with difficult situations, available welfare and support services abroad, and their rights. A total of 284 Korea-bound Filipino fiancees/spouses attended its counseling seminars in 1998. Ninety seven special courses on Japanese culture and language, were also attended by 4,569 fiancees/spouses of Japanese nationals. The course, which was pilot-tested in August 1997, is being conducted for free in cooperation with the Japan International Volunteer Center.

4.3.17. Through the CFO, the government maintains a public assistance and information program which has the following features:

- (a) assistance to nationals/welfare cases - In 1998, 371 requests, which include blacklisting of foreigners due to domestic violence, request for financial support from foreign spouses, and abandonment were settled;
- (b) Migrants' Advisory and Information Network (MAIN)* - Five seminar-workshops for MAIN focal persons in Tuguegarao, Baguio City, Cebu City, General Santos City and Cagayan de Oro City were conducted in 1998, training 619 MAIN focal persons from 6 regions, 24 provinces and 11 cities in the country. These seminars aim to provide focal persons with a comprehensive understanding of migration realities, cases and challenges at different stages of migration, including common perspective on migration issues. The MAIN is a collaborative undertaking of 12 government agencies which include the DFA, DOLE, DILG, DSWD, BI, PIA, CHR, POEA, OWWA, NBI, NCRFW, and CFO.
- (c) Migrants' Advisory and Information System (MAIS) – This is a computerized information system that seeks to make information on migration readily available to the public. It features the country profiles of 35 major countries of destination of Filipino emigrants and fiancées/spouses of foreign nationals, and 1,758 support networks in said countries. MAIS can be viewed as a tool for making informed decisions.

4.3.18. Educational Modules on International Migration and Development was instituted to integrate issues and concerns on international migration into the social studies and values education subjects in the elementary and secondary levels. Lessons include topics on the role and rights of migrant women workers, the evils of “mail-order bride” schemes, and the values of patriotism, love of country, and pride in Filipino culture and heritage among Filipino students. CFO and DECS have completed the preparation of the modules. Some 20,000 copies of these modules have been printed for distribution to participating schools nationwide. A total of 436 education specialists/regional trainers have also been trained on the application of the modules in public schools. The CFO collaborates with the Episcopal Commission on the Care of Migrants and Itinerant People-Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (ECMI-CBCP) for the integration of the modules in Catholic Schools. Some 1,200 private school teachers have been trained in Lucena City, La Union, Ormoc City, Naga and Metro Manila. In consonance with the President’s instructions on 11 December 1998, plans are underway to extend the teaching of migration as an area of learning in the college level. Preliminary consultations with selected universities have been initiated for the development of teaching modules and syllabus for this purpose.

4.3.19. Researches were also undertaken with the view of improving services to VAW victims. These include studies on the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment,

* see related discussion under Human Rights of Women

women's desk officers' investigation, assessment and reporting of domestic violence cases, study on women offenders in selected rehabilitation, as object of exploratory research on sexual harassment.

4.3.20. In the area of research, the UP Center for Women's Studies and UNICEF jointly studied various manifestations of family violence such as physical, verbal, economic, emotional, and social abuse. Among the 1,000 documented cases studied, physical assault accompanied by verbal and economic abuse were the most frequent types of domestic violence often perpetrated by male spouses on their wives. The typical abusive male was 35 years, 12 years older than his victim, and usually wielding power and authority in the family.

4.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

4.4.1. In the next five years, the administration will continue to pursue the measures discussed in the preceding section. In addition, there will be additional initiatives to address the gaps and problems relative to adoption/strengthening of laws, enhancement of services, capabilities of case handlers, programs for offenders and accessibility of the courts.

4.4.2. There is a growing consciousness that violence against women is not a private matter anymore, and government has to intervene to eliminate it. Most of government's efforts, however, focus on services such as medical assistance, counseling, legal services and livelihood training to enable victims of domestic violence to become economically independent should they opt to separate from their partners.

4.4.3. While these efforts are very encouraging, gaps have to be immediately addressed to hasten the eradication of the problem. Laws penalizing domestic violence, strengthening the rights of daughters in incestuous rape, suppressing the trafficking of Filipino women and amending Article 341 of the Revised Penal Code on the white slavery trade are among the priority measures that have to be passed. More effective data gathering and a unified documentation system among concerned agencies also need to be established. These will help track the levels and magnitude of VAW and the services required for quick and effective response.

4.4.4. Strong laws must be enacted, and policies and procedures adopted to support and protect the survivors. These may include redefining existing laws and changing established policies to reflect the experience of survivors and assess and update the responsiveness of the existing legal system to the various forms of violence against women. Programs on VAW should also be directed at perpetrators and the rest of the family members to stop the cycle of violence in domestic relations. Creative and more positive ways of handling conflict should be included in the counseling packages for family members. Rehabilitation program for offenders should also be piloted in order that the violent behaviors could be corrected.

4.4.5. Efficiency of the courts is important in the prosecution of perpetrators. A more gender sensitive bench is also called for in hearing domestic violence cases. How the courts respond to domestic violence is largely shaped by their understanding, and notions, even by incorrect beliefs of the nature of violence. Victim services and remedies in the form of women's shelter, counseling and other support can only go so far as addressing the psychological and physical needs of the abused woman is concerned. Far more important is the question of "justice" which should inevitably be settled by the proper judicial tribunal.

4.4.6. Accessibility of the courts to domestic violence victims should be enhanced. For instance, court facilities should be specifically designed to provide protection and security for victims and their witnesses. The provision of separate waiting areas for victims and offenders would reduce the victim's anxieties and the likelihood of threat, intimidation, harassment or recurring violence is reduced. Providing accurate information on criminal court processes, protecting the victim through appropriate court orders and preventing the perpetrator from using further illegal means to continue the coercive control of the victim should be done.

4.4.7. Anti-VAW mechanisms and support services must also be made available at the community and local levels where most of the violence occur. Local officials need to be trained on how to handle VAW cases. More studies on the causes and consequences of VAW and the effectiveness and present measures addressing it must be conducted.

5. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

5.1. Overview

5.1.1. It was only during the past years that women have been active in peace-building efforts and peacemaking initiatives at the national level. At the grassroots level, especially in indigenous communities, women, for an even longer time, had the potential, if not always the opportunity, to make or build the peace. Recently, they have been asserting their demand for formal recognition in the peace pact system and process of delineating ancestral domains.

5.1.2. For women, peace is the attainment of good inter-relationship within the community, being able to sleep securely throughout the night and having mobility at all times. It is a condition where the government is able to efficiently delivery basic social services, and bring about socio-economic upliftment and well-being.

5.1.3. Considering the ill effects of armed conflicts on the lives of women and children, an urgent appeal for immediate cessation of hostilities is requested by the women's groups and hopes for the speedy resumption of peace negotiations.

5.2. Policy and institutional developments

5.2.1. To promote conflict resolution and reduce incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations, the government directed the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to reaffirm adherence to international humanitarian law and human rights agreements in the conduct of military and police operations.

5.2.2. Mechanisms were created to achieve lasting peace. The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), a government entity was set up and tasked to coordinate the peace process negotiations with rebel groups. A woman executive director once headed said office. As of 1998, the 10-member government peace negotiating panels has appointed two (2) women panel members, one each for the peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), respectively.

5.2.3. The Internal Refugee Assistance Center for victims of armed conflict was set up. It provides assistance to women caught in armed conflict or in especially difficult circumstances.

5.3. Program and project developments

5.3.1. The government responded to this concern by enhancing the participation of women in conflict resolution through representation in decision-making processes and protecting women living in situations of armed and other conflicts.

5.3.2. Recognizing that women are natural promoters of peace, the government tapped Christian, Muslim and Lumad women to play an active role in moving the peace process forward. Series of dialogues, briefing and training workshops were conducted among them to strengthen their participation in the peace process. Muslim women held a Basic Orientation on Women and the Culture of Peace while Lumad women had a Pre-basic Orientation Seminar for the Lumad Local Community Leaders. Government provided technical and financial assistance to the Bangsamoro women for the Muslim Women's Peace Conference. Said meeting identified strategies to harness the women's perspectives in the settlement of hostilities in communities caught in armed conflict.

5.3.3. Protection, assistance and training to refugee and displaced women were undertaken by the social welfare department which serves as the lead agency in providing services to individuals in crisis situations. It maintains a program for women in especially difficult circumstances which served a total of 1,412 women victims in 1997. The services included counseling, livelihood assistance and temporary shelter.

5.3.4. A chain letter for peace was launched. It contains a stub that will be dropped in the local barangays to track how many persons support the peace campaign and generate suggestions on how to attain lasting peace in Muslim Mindanao.

5.3.5. The government adopted the Social Reform Agenda (SRA) as the major mechanism for reform toward peace and identified women as among the critical groups in society who need to be addressed by it. Under the program, the government assisted 6 of the 9 Peace Zones and an indigenous community as Special Development Areas which were granted Php5 million each for development programs. Women in the zones and NGOs working in the communities coordinated with government in implementing the program.

5.3.6. The Armed Forces of the Philippines launched several projects through civil-military operations and civic action and in coordination with non-government organizations. It likewise conducted livelihood programs, seminars and fora which helped alleviate the plight of women and children who are in the midst of armed hostilities.

5.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

5.4.1. Considering that accomplishments reported under the area of women and armed conflict are minimal, the government needs to further strengthen the participation of women in the resolution of armed conflict. It should appoint more women in the peace panels/processes in order that non-violent options may be given space in the agenda for

peace negotiations. Gender sensitivity seminar for peace panel members must also be conducted.

5.4.2. A study on the conditions of women and children living in areas of armed conflict should also be undertaken to help peace panel members understand its physical, psychological and social impacts to women and children. This would guide them in developing policies and programs that could effectively manage its consequences.

5.4.3. As needed, provision of support services to women and children in situations of armed and other conflicts should be sustained. The concerned government agencies should also undertake further studies on alternative non-violent means of addressing armed conflict. The education and training institutions should also be mobilized to develop research on peace and implement education programs on conflict resolution.

6. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

6.1. Overview

6.1.1. The country's economy has not been able to escape the downturn that hit the other economies of the region. While there are initial signs indicating that it is recovering, adverse impact of the crisis continues to be felt. Women, as economic players, are among those affected.

6.1.2. Government efforts responding to the women and the economy concerns overlap with those addressing women in poverty. This area of concern focuses on livelihood assistance, investment and marketing assistance, technologies for women, employment opportunities, and programs on family welfare, among others.

6.1.3. There is an observation that some economic programs tend to duplicate each other. This may be so because no single agency could adequately cover said area of concern. In this case, agencies have to strengthen coordination and information exchange with each other regarding their respective economic programs for women. The livelihood assistance programs must also be assessed to determine their impact and whether they are able to respond to the gender needs of their target beneficiaries.

6.2. Policy and institutional developments

6.2.1. Major policies were passed that greatly helped to address the strategic objectives of women and the economy. These include:

- Republic Act 6725, which strengthens the prohibition on discrimination against women with respect to terms and conditions of employment, promotion and training opportunities;
- Republic Act 7882, which provides for assistance to women engaging in micro and cottage business enterprises. It directs the provision of assistance to Filipino women in their pursuit of owning, operating and managing small business enterprises. Specifically, it states that any woman who shall have been certified, after appropriate training under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) or any government or government-accredited training institution is eligible to operate a micro and cottage business enterprises. The TESDA was also mandated to provide free technical training programs to all women who would avail of the benefits under this law;

- Republic Act 7192, which provides that a substantial portion of official development assistance received from foreign governments and multilateral agencies and organizations be set aside and utilized by government agencies to support programs and activities for women. It also provides that women of legal age, regardless of civil status, shall have the capacity to act and enter into contracts which shall be equal to that of men. Under this law, women shall have the capacity to borrow and obtain loans and execute security and credit arrangement under the same conditions as men. They shall have equal access to all government and private sector programs granting agricultural credit, loans and non-material resources, and shall enjoy equal treatment in agrarian reform and land resettlement. The same law also recognizes the eligibility for insurance coverage of a spouse who devote full time to managing household and family affairs “to the extent of one half of the salary and compensation of the working spouse”, subject to the consent of the insured spouse;

- Republic Act 8289 addresses the needs of small and medium entrepreneurs. It benefits the poor, including women, as it gives them opportunities to set up and manage their own business;

- Republic Act 8291 revises the Government Service Insurance System Act and expands the coverage of insurance of government workers. Since women are half of the government workforce, this law benefits women government workers as well as the widows of male civil servants; and

- Republic Act 8042 provides for the establishment of Replacement and Monitoring Centers that would develop livelihood programs and job opportunities for returning migrant workers.

6.2.2. Administrative issuances were also adopted in support of the enacted policies. These are:

- The labor department’s Order No. 21, series of 1996 calling for the establishment of a network of welfare centers catering to overseas performing artists (OPA) to rationalize the conditions, requirements and procedures for the deployment of OPAs;

- The agrarian reform department’s Memorandum Circular No. 18, series of 1996, which adopt and provides clarificatory guidelines in generating and issuing emancipation patents (EPs)/certificates of land ownership (CLOs) to qualified agrarian reform beneficiaries. It ensures gender equality between

spouses who are beneficiaries of CARP, particularly in the generation and issuance of EPs and CLOAs;

- In nonformal education, the TESDA's affirmative policy ensures that women are trained in all industrial courses traditionally dominated by men. It requires that at least 10 percent of total TESDA annual training graduates are women. From 1995 - 1996, approximately 18,482 women were trained in various technical courses, e.g. automotive, electronics, electrical maintenance, machine repair, etc. A monitoring system to track employment path of these women is under consideration.

6.2.3. In 1996, the labor department's implementation of the child labor program was lodged with the Bureau of Women and Young Workers, the unit mandated to protect and promote the welfare of working children.

6.3. Program and project developments

6.3.1. Concerned government agencies have been implementing programs and projects to operationalize said policies and issuances. Notable among them is the implementation of the Social Reform Agenda that offers employment opportunities and access to credit and resources to women. It replicated the approaches of the Grameen Bank and carried out other specialized credit schemes for disadvantaged women. Program interventions for women workers were also undertaken through the conduct of a general labor inspection among establishments that included GAD related issues, development of an inspection guidelines on women workers' concern and strengthening the national policy on homeworkers.

6.3.2. Initiatives were undertaken by government agencies at promoting women's economic rights and independence. The trade and industry department convened groups of businesswomen from different disciplines to tackle the issues of women in business. Said activity culminated in a gathering of some 150 top women chief executive officers, and financial officers and owner of small, medium and large enterprises. The process gave birth to the establishment of a Women's Business Council Philippines, to become the voice of women in business.

6.3.3. Relatedly, the women's national machinery, hosted a conference of the Women Senior Leaders Network from Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies which came up with recommendations on integrating gender

concerns in the agenda of APEC. The national women's machinery was involved in the development of a framework for the integration of women in APEC. It acted as one of the co-chairs of the Ad-hoc Task Force for the integration of women in APEC along with New Zealand and Canada. Said Task Force was tasked to develop the framework for the integration of women in APEC. Specifically, the country acted as the lead writer/coordinator together with the People's Republic of China and Chinese Taipei.

6.3.4. Women's participation in the economy is seen in cooperative production and micro-enterprises activities. The agrarian reform department's program on micro-enterprises ensures that women are benefited and are able to access to capital. In terms of performance, its credit assistance program under the program beneficiaries development (CAP-PBD) for Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs), benefited 1,885 women beneficiaries covering 10 regions nationwide.

6.3.5. The government through the agriculture department adopted various lending schemes that granted loans to women beneficiaries payable within 5 years or more and with no collateral requirement. An example is the Grameen Bank Replication Program, mostly availed of by rural women that had some 20,004 recognized members, 18,182 of whom availed loans amounting to Php 80.9 million, and with savings totaling some Php 8.9 million as of 30 June 1996.

6.3.6. As discussed in a previous chapter, initiatives were undertaken by the trade and industry department through its program named "Tulong Sa Tao" (peoples' assistance). Its credit program released through the government financial institutes greatly benefited the women under this sector.

6.3.7. Program on career guidance counseling and labor market information was conducted by the labor department, which provided maternity benefits for women workers in the sugar industry under the social amelioration program. In addition, efforts to promote women's access to training and employment and livelihood opportunities were facilitated through: a) Public Employment Service Office (PESO) Program, which provides technical assistance to the network of PESOs nationwide and in 1998, conducted training for 198 new PESO Managers and employment counseling for 100 participants; b) Special Program for Employment of Students (SPES) Program, which benefited 94,018 male and female students while 13,417 youth participated in the Work Appreciation Program (WAP); c) Tulong Alalay sa Taong May Kapansanan (TULAY) 2000, a program for male and female persons with disabilities (PWDs) that assisted 2,381 persons for wage employment and 1,381 for self-employment assistance while 582 PWDs were trained on livelihood skills; and d) Phil-Jobnet, which ensures fastrack matching of

available jobs in the market for both women and men.

6.3.8. The labor department likewise initiated programs to uplift the plight of women workers as entrepreneurs. These include: a) Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurship Development (WEED), which supports women in the areas of self-employment, entrepreneurship and cooperative endeavor. It provides low interest and affordable loan schemes to home-based workers together with entrepreneurial training, b) Work Improvements in Small Enterprises (WISE), which aims to improve productivity through practical and low-cost improvements in small and medium enterprises, and c) Promotion of Rural Employment through Self-Employment Entrepreneurship Development (PRESEED), which provides employment, technical assistance and entrepreneurship training to rural workers including women. It also extends loans to rural workers below the poverty line. Under this program, existing policies and guidelines provide access to resources, employment, markets and trades to both men and women. The program does not discriminate men and women from participating in any entrepreneurship training. The labor department likewise conducted seminars on the employment equality law and its implementing rules and regulations.

6.3.9. The national women's machinery in coordination with statistical agency is undertaking a project on the "Conduct of a Pilot Time-Use Survey in the Philippines Towards the Development of Framework for Measuring Women's and Men's Contribution to the Economy", which aims to formulate estimation procedures and standards for evaluating unremunerated work done by women and men.

6.3.10. To address the under remuneration/undervaluation of women's work, the labor department conducted a nationwide occupational wage survey in all non-agricultural establishments in the private sector employing 10 or more workers. Relatedly, an attached agency of the said department, the TESDA, set-up a Women's Center which conducts researches towards increasing women's participation in economic development. The research includes a documentation and analysis of the policy and legal frameworks on the economic empowerment of women; a compilation of resource book on the economic empowerment of women; a situation analysis of economic activities of women in urban low-income communities in Metro Manila and a gender analysis of technical/vocational education and training (TVET) delivered by TESDA technical/vocational institutes.

6.3.11. A notable initiative of the labor department in line with eliminating occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination include: a) workers in unionism training and development program, which aimed to eliminate barriers and inequalities in women's participation in unions through training, advocacy, and support to women's concerns in trade and labor unions; b)

research study on migration of women workers' migration: its psycho-social impact to their families; c) program on counseling of female domestic helper applicants under the anti-illegal recruitment program; and d) issuance of implementing rules and regulations on job contracting, where most of the workers are women, to prevent abuse of this practice by entrepreneurs. With regard to promoting harmonization of work and family responsibilities, the same department conducted a research on the best practices in harmonizing work and family responsibilities between women and men. Relatedly, its Bureau of Working Conditions rendered opinions on leave benefits provision of the Paternity Leave Act of 1996 (RA 8187) and disseminated flyers on the law, while its Bureau of Women and Young Workers conducted two (2) fora on said law with 97 participants from private companies and workers' organizations.

6.3.12. The national women's machinery has a project entitled, "Conduct of Pilot Time-Use Survey in the Philippines Towards Development of a Framework for Measuring Women's and Men's Contribution to the Economy", which aims to develop a methodology for conducting a national time-use survey through the initial conduct of a pilot time-use survey and formulate estimation procedures and standards for evaluating unremunerated work done by women and men. As of 1999, two (2) methods have been identified for use in the pilot time-use survey, namely: 1) direct interview method; and 2) diary method. In progress is the finalization of the survey design, tabulation plans, questionnaire and manual including data items to be included in the survey. Classification for time-use activities has been drafted as well as the methodology for segregating the GDP.

6.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

6.4.1. While there are indications that greater focus is continuously being given to women's rights and equal access to economic resources, particularly in the rural areas, there is a need to address the issues of displacement of peasant families and threats to food security as a result of indiscriminate conversion of agricultural fields into urban and industrial zones; the respect for ancestral rights; the persistent tendency to grant credit to male farmers; the low participation of women in planning and decision making and loans extended to women which remain small and often insufficient to scale up project operations. Moreover, there is a need to conduct a gender assessment of the reported programs to determine their responsiveness, adequacy and areas for improvement.

6.4.2. In addition, subsequent interventions should deal with initiatives to value or recognize the non-monetized economic contributions of women, the representation of rural women in formal structures of development planning and

decision-making, and more information on rural women's participation in non-traditional community activities.

6.4.3. To address the issues on women and economy, the government should direct its efforts at pursuing the following interventions:

- Fast track implementation of government economic programs and projects.
- Adopt policies and program interventions for women's equal access to resources, credit, employment, markets and trade.
- Adopt program interventions to increase women's participation and representation, to include rural women, in formal structures of development planning, decision-making and in community activities.
- Assess government policies and programs to determine its gender responsiveness, adequacy and areas for improvement.
- Implement program initiatives to value or recognize the non-monetized economic contributions of women.
- Identify safety nets and cost cutting measures that are more sensitive to the impact of the present economic crisis on women.
- Re-think current macro-economic policies and possible granting of priority assistance to local businesses to protect them from collapse or further weakening.

7. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION MAKING

7.1. Overview

7.1.1. Although women have entered politics and governance, they still continue to be a minority in the area of power and decision-making. With reference to 1995 and 1998 data, there was no significant increase in the number of women running for elective posts much less those who actually won. In 1995, there were 6 female candidates (21.4%) of the 28 total candidates for senatorial posts. On the other hand, there were 56 female candidates (9.2%) out of the total 611 candidates for congressional posts.

7.1.2. In the 1998 national and local elections, two women (16.67%) became senators out of 12 posts and 25 women (12.08%) occupied congressional seats out of 207. As of October 1998, the preliminary results from Commission on Election (COMELEC) showed that women covered 233 out of 1,544 (21.3%) of the total gubernatorial posts and 9 out of 75 (13.64%) of the total vice-gubernatorial posts. One woman sectoral representative now sits as a member of the House of Representatives and is heading the Committee on Women. One of the deputy speakers of the House of Representatives is a woman, another first in the history of the said Chamber.

7.1.3. Meanwhile, more women than men are in the government bureaucracy, with women accounting for 53.81 percent of the total 1.38 million government personnel in 1997. Two women are included in the present Cabinet (12.5%) heading the social welfare and tourism departments. Presently, the Supreme Court has two women justices out of the fifteen justice positions. Women comprised 17.8 percent (301 of 1,694) of the total incumbent judges in Philippine courts in 1997. Three women out of the fifteen incumbent justices are in the SANDIGANBAYAN which has the exclusive original jurisdiction of trying cases on graft and corruption committed by government officials and employees. However, the Court of Tax Appeals (with three justices) has remained all-male and so have the three SHARI'A Courts. Women comprised 29 percent of the country's 121 State prosecutors in 1995. Women's organization continue to grow in number both at the national and local levels. Some 558 women organization and associations have registered with the Security and Exchange Commission from 1990-1994.

7.1.4. There were a total of 138 women in 1995 in the diplomatic service, which accounts for 41.6% of the total number of diplomatic posts. Thirty-seven were Chiefs of Mission with the rank of Ambassador, 21 were Minister-Counselors, and 80 were holders of Foreign Service Officer positions. In 1995, women police officers comprised 3.1% of the total 2,658 police force registering a decrease from 4.1% posted in 1990. Women have also become active members of labor unions. Between 1994 and 1996, almost 60% of registered members of the public sector labor unions were women. In comparison with other ASEAN country, more gender equity has been achieved in the country. The 1998 Human Development Report showed that the Philippines is setting pace in the region. It gave the country the second highest score, together with Malaysia, in its

Gender Empowerment Measures (GEM) for the whole of Southeast Asia. The country ranked 46th from among the 174 member countries, worldwide.

7.2. Policy and institutional developments

7.2.1. The Constitutional policies recognizing the role of women in nation building and committing to promote the fundamental equality before the law of women and men were translated into legal instruments. One of the significant laws passed was Republic Act 7192, which guarantees equality for women in government policies, programs, legal capacity to act, admission to clubs and military schools. It mandates all government agencies to integrate women's concerns in national development. Meanwhile, Republic Act 7796, mandates the President of the Philippines to appoint members of the TESDA Board from the private sector, two from employer/industry organization, *one of whom is a woman*, three from the labor sector, *one of whom is a woman*, and two from the National Association of Private Technical Vocational Education and Training Institutions, *one of whom is a woman*.

7.2.2. Republic Act 8371 was approved in 1998 directing indigenous women to be represented in decision-making processes at all levels. However, the implementing agency is not yet fully operational.

7.2.3. There was an active participation of women in the 1998 election, particularly in line with Republic Act 7941. This act provides for the election of party-list representatives through the party-list system to include women among others.

7.2.4. Various administrative instruments were also adopted in line with the government's efforts to further operationalize equality instruments for women's participation in public and political life. These included the: (a) Presidential Memorandum dated May 19, 1995 mandating the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to develop and implement programs that will institutionalize support mechanisms and provide women with adequate time and opportunities for career advancement; (b) SRA-CIDSS Flagship Commitment promoting the election of local sectoral representatives, including women, and to increase the representation of women in decision-making bodies at national and local levels to at least 30%; and (c) Executive Order 368 approving the membership of the National Women's Machinery to the Social Reform Council (SRC) acting as technical adviser in ensuring the integration of women's concerns in the SRA programs.

7.2.5. Significantly, a Memorandum Circular (MC) on Equal Representation of Women and Men in Third Level Positions was adopted in 1999. The MC is seen as a major policy issuance for the career advancement of women in government service as its objectives include: (a) the nomination and appointment of both women and men to third level positions; (b) the maintenance of a pool of qualified women and men nominees for every vacant third level position in government; and (c) the encouragement of a 50-50 representation of either sex in third level positions, as deemed practicable.

7.2.6. The Women Empowerment Bill, a proposed policy directive that would address women's limited participation in a decision-making, was included in the priority legislative agenda of the current Congress. House Bill Nos. 5221 and 946 is envisioned to be a major step towards the attainment of equitable distribution of power and decision-making in all levels of government. Another policy measure being proposed is an enabling law on women's sectoral representation in local council. This will operationalize the provision in the 1991 Local Government Code which states that there shall be one sectoral representative from the women sector among others in the local legislative bodies.

7.2.7. The implementation of these proposed policy directives may be enhanced through the "Directory of Women on the Move", which can aid appointing officials in identifying qualified women nominees for third level positions in government.

7.3. Program and project developments

7.3.1. The Career Advancement Program for Women in Government Service (CAPWINGS) was adopted to stream women up to positions of power and influence by enhancement of support mechanisms, policy strengthening and development, capability building and advocacy, training and other enabling mechanisms. The program is currently being pursued in various line departments and their attached agencies and regional offices. Thirteen line agencies also established Women In Government Service (WINGS) desks in their employees' unions to mobilize and monitor support for the program.

7.3.2. The following programs and activities were likewise undertaken by various government agencies to accelerate greater participation in the area of decision-making: advocacy on equal opportunity in the workplace, promotion of woman's role as decision makers, gender sensitivity workshops for men, multi-level gender orientation, trainers' training on local legislation and self-empowerment, women leadership training, social communication skills development for women in decision making, mentoring program for second and third level women in government and conduct of strategic planning activity.

7.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

7.4.1. Filipino women generally enjoy equal rights in political and public life. This equality in right, however, does not translate into equality in actual situation. Socio-cultural, economic and other structural factors deter women's participation in electoral politics and governance. Electoral politics is regarded as dirty and basically for men only. Women who ran or are elected for office are mostly the wives/widow or immediate relatives of politicians. Lack of political education for women, multiple burden of politics because it is a public activity, and discrimination against women employees still

persists. There has been a campaign to push and train women as political leaders but so far, no significant increase in women's representation in political leadership may be noted.

7.4.2. With the prevailing low representation of women in political and public leadership, the sustained incorporation of women's perspectives in public decision-making may not progress considerably. Stereotyped notions about gender roles, weak political education, and multiple burdens of women are factors that reinforce the currently perceived reasons for their lack of interest in electoral politics and public affairs.

7.4.3. Relatedly, power and decision making are still largely a man's world in the Philippines. Women who are able to penetrate this world are faced with inadequate coordinating and networking mechanisms to monitor and provide support for them. Potential women leaders have very few opportunities to develop their skills and capabilities. They seldom participate in local and community councils. The CAPWINGS has to fast track measures to respond to the peculiar needs of women workers in all levels of the bureaucracy.

7.4.4. Fundamental changes and reorientation have to be more aggressively pursued right in the home and starting in the primary grades. Career counseling, actual exposures to political processes and examination of structural constraints to women's participation in these fields have to be consciously addressed. Affirmative action should be taken in the form of mandatory inclusion of women in training and apprenticeship programs of political organizations. Interim quotas, NGO lobbying and monitoring, training, and mentoring should be pursued. Cultural biases that relegate women to positions in the background have to be discarded. Women need to be educated on how to determine which political party or candidates to support, based on the party's or candidate's espousal of a clear political agenda for GAD. Also, they have to be trained to discriminate between candidates who are sincerely working for women's concerns and their empowerment and from those who just want votes.

7.4.5. Government must intensify actions to help women break the glass ceiling in the bureaucracy. Initiatives must be strengthened to enable more women to handle key positions in the bureaucracy through training on leadership, communication, negotiation and assertiveness, among others.

8. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

8.1. Overview

8.1.1. The national machinery for the advancement of women was established at the start of the Decade for Women in 1975. In the first decade of its operations, it concerned itself with organizing women into a nationwide movement, conducting research and policy studies and lobbying for the issuance of executive and legislative measures concerning women, establishing/maintaining a clearinghouse and information center and monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

8.1.2. With the change of government in 1986, the national women's machinery reviewed its mandate towards mainstreaming women's concerns in policy making, planning, programming and monitoring and evaluation systems of all government agencies. It envisions to promote women's advancement through influencing the government to work for gender equality and mainstreaming.

8.1.3. Henceforth, it coordinated and catalyzed the formation and establishment of institutional mechanisms in government to sustain the initiatives and fruits of gender mainstreaming at the national and local levels to include data bases, information networks, and mechanisms offering direct services to disadvantaged women, among others.

8.2. Policy and institutional developments

8.2.1. The strengthening of policy interventions along this area of concern include passage of several laws on women, strengthening the implementation of policy directives, creating mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and integrating gender concerns in major program frameworks that impact positively on mainstreaming gender in the government's systems, functions and processes.

8.2.2. As directed by Executive Order 348, government offices organized focal points for gender and development to ensure that plans, programs, projects and processes implemented by them respond to gender concerns. To date, there are 56 focal points organized in the national level and 10 at the local/regional level.

8.2.3. The passage of RA 7192 provided the mandate for agencies to fully implement gender mainstreaming in their respective work. It

specifically stipulates that all government departments shall ensure that women benefit equally and participate directly in the development programs and projects of the government. Further, it directs them to review and revise all their regulations, circulars, issuances and procedures to remove gender biases therein.

8.2.4. To support gender mainstreaming, the General Appropriations Act provides the legal basis for mobilizing resources for gender mainstreaming through its Section 28. It specifically mandates all government entities to set aside at least 5% of their total annual appropriations for implementing women/gender related programs and projects. An increasing trend in the total number of reporting agencies was noted between 1995-1998.

As expected, the reported appropriation figures also went up from Php 990.8M in 1995 to Php 1.5B in 1996 and Php 2.931B in 1997 and slightly decreased in 1998 with Php 2.69B. In 1997, there were 26 agencies who either met or exceeded the minimum requirement of five percent of their total agency budget. This decreased to 20 agencies in 1998 due to the austerity measure adopted by the government. The GAD budgets were allocated for institution building and programs and projects that were either women-specific or gender-responsive.

8.2.5. To further support the provision, the Women in Development/Gender and Development (WID/GAD) was classified in the 1996 to 2000 National Budget Calls as among the priority programs of the government along with the Social Reform Agenda and General Agreement on Tariff and Trade, etc. The National Budget Call for Year 2000 specifically directs agencies to identify the gender issues being addressed by their Program, projects and activities (PPAs) in the GAD Plan. It also provides that in case of difficulty in determining if a PPA is GAD-related, agencies should present a brief justification to explain its relevance to GAD.

8.2.6. The budget department, in partnership with the national women's machinery, issued Joint Circular 97-01 that directs agencies to submit report of compliance of their GAD PPAs from fiscal years 1995-1998. This Circular aims at assessing the directions and nature of agency compliance with the GAD Budget and determines the total magnitude of the 1995-1998 GAD Budget for inclusion in the Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing of the government.

8.2.7. To influence gender mainstreaming at the local level, the 1998 Local Budget Memorandum (LBM) No. 28, which spelled out the guidelines for the allocation of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of Local Government Units, also directs the LGU to set aside a minimum amount of 5

percent of their 1998 appropriation for PPAs designed to address gender issues in their localities.

8.2.8. The Multi-sectoral Committee on International Human Development Commitments (MC-IHDC) was created to oversee the coordination and monitoring of the country's international human development commitments, one of which is the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW). It is mandated specifically to monitor, review and evaluate the Philippine compliance to these commitments, as well as recommend the policies, strategies, programs and projects to the Technical Board of the Social Development Committee of the national planning body. It also serves as a venue for coordinating the activities designed to monitor compliance to said commitments. The Committee is composed of government agencies, non-government organizations and people's organizations (POs). It is headed by the national planning body with several government agencies serving as lead agencies for the four international commitments which are the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) and the Istanbul Conference on Shelter and Human Settlements or the HABITAT II.

8.2.9. The Social Development Committee (SDC), the highest social development policy making body under the Board of the national planning body, provided the venue for discussing policy issues particularly those that relate to GAD. In 1998, the following topics were discussed: (1) Draft Executive Order Ensuring Equal Representation of Women in Third Level Positions; (2) Prostitution in the Philippines; and (3) Draft Anti- Domestic Violence Act.

8.2.10. The national women's machinery established direct links with local women NGOs, women advocates in the academe and the private sector, and regional and international institutions that worked for the advancement of women. In response to the thrusts of the new administration, it adopted a 7-point agenda which aims to tap and involve the public as well as private sectors in all levels of government to promote GAD towards reaching more women in the communities and making more tangible and visible outcomes for women.

8.2.11. Other interventions to integrate gender concerns in the major policies of government were undertaken through:

- Review of the Policy Operations Framework of the Population Policy Operations Project (PPOP) and the framework to integrate not only population in the different identified areas (i.e. migration, water, agriculture, human resources, housing and urbanization, and public financing), but also gender and development.
- Formulation of GAD inputs to provide the gender perspective in policy documents notably the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) for 1999-2004. Membership of the national women's machinery in the planning committees for the formulation of the MTPDP has been made with the support of the national planning body. The gender responsiveness of government frameworks like the Plan 21 (Sustainable Human Development), and the 1999 General Appropriations Act, among others, were also reviewed.
- Integration of gender concerns in the National Anti-Poverty Framework of the Social Reform Agenda (SRA) of the new administration. The framework recognized that gender is a cross-cutting perspective that shall guide the formulation and implementation of interventions for and with the basic sectors, consistent with the administration's commitment to pursue gender responsive development. Consequently, it shall install gender responsive monitoring parameters and indicators in priority program management of the SRA. The framework has identified the Women in Development and Nation Building Act of 1992 as one of the social reform legislation that will be fully implemented within the next six years.
- Active participation in the Social Reform Agenda Technical Working Group. The group, constituted by government agencies, NGOs representing the basic sectors and people's organization, is tasked to assist the women's sector and to ensure that gender perspectives would be integrated in the process of adopting policies and programs for the basic sectors which include the farmers, migrant and formal labor, indigenous peoples, women, children and youth, persons with disabilities and senior citizens.
- Hosting of the Ministerial Meeting on Women in APEC which aimed at, among others, coming up with recommendations on how women's concerns could be integrated into APEC processes. As validated in a round-table consultation among local GOs and NGOs, and integrated with the concerns of women representatives from the region to the Women Senior Leaders' Forum, policy papers on selected APEC concerns (Industrial, Science & Technology, Human Resource Development, Mobility of People, Agriculture and Fisheries and Small and Medium Enterprises) were developed to serve as advocacy tools for the inclusion of gender issues and concerns of women in the forefront of the APEC discussions.

8.3. Program and project developments

8.3.1. A five-year strategy (1996-2001) to strengthen the national women's machinery and its key partner agencies in government was drawn up and is being implemented through the support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The project will enhance the machinery's strategic capabilities to influence how government legislation, policies and programs are developed and carried out for greater impact on women. A technical assistance package is being developed and will be implemented by the national machinery to further strengthen the capability of the Focal Points in gender mainstreaming.

8.3.2. A project entitled, "Policy Development and Advocacy on Women's Health, Population and Development" has been implemented in partnership with UNFPA. Policy papers on priority women's health and population issues were developed highlighting among others, policy recommendations and advocacy plan to address these issues. Series of consultation workshops with GOs and NGOs were conducted to validate the policy papers.

8.3.3. Researches in support of policy and program formulation were also conducted by various government agencies. These included studies on Gender and Perception of Influence in Policy Making Related to Upland Ecosystem, Gender Roles in Agricultural and Aquacultural Productivity in Western Visayas, Gender and Development toward Empowerment and Gender Equity and Equality, and Piloting Strategies for Gender Integration in Local Development Processes.

8.3.4. An orientation and training session on gender responsive policy making and legislation was conducted for the staff of the Senate and House Secretariat. The training aimed at developing and deepening the understanding of the participants on women situation and issues. The training also sought to strengthen the working relationship between the executive and legislative branches in the formulation, facilitation and lobbying for gender responsive legislation and executive policies. A guidebook for gender-responsive legislation was drafted for purposes of influencing legislative policies of the government towards making them more gender-responsive.

8.3.5. Direct linkage and continued partnership with and support to the strengthening of national machineries of other countries was likewise undertaken. The government actively participated in different international undertakings as follows: Association of Southeast Asian Nations Women's Programme; Women Leaders' Network; APEC Ministerial Meeting on Women; Regional Dialogue Between Women Business Leaders in ASEAN Countries; Congress of Women in Politics; and Second and Third Meetings of Senior Officials of National Machineries.

8.3.6. Development of database and information system was undertaken in aid of policy formulation and program administration. Likewise, research and statistical organizations were tapped to improve data on gender issues and research methodologies, and generating data for planning and evaluation. The following projects were undertaken to mainstream gender into the national statistical systems:

- Development of Methodology to Generate Statistics on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC);
- Conduct of Pilot Time-Use Survey in the Philippines Towards the Development of a Framework for Measuring Women's and Men's Contribution to the Economy;
- Refinement of Existing GAD Indicator System;
- Development of a Training Program on Statistics for Gender Responsive Local Development Planning; and
- Capability Building Program of the National Statistics Office (NSO)

8.3.7. To ensure the availability of data and information on GAD, statistics and non-statistics collection and databases such as sectoral databases, the machinery's resource pool, women's resource directory, bibliographic database, annotation of GAD tools, and compilation of laws on women have been updated and developed. Information materials such as Anti-Rape Primer, Info Kit, Factsheets and Philippine Plan for Gender and Development have been produced, printed or reprinted.

8.3.8. Agencies started initial efforts to compile, analyze and disseminate gender disaggregated data. Gender responsive indicators were included in the agricultural labor force survey (BAS), and the committed and pipelined programs and projects for official development assistance (ODA). The national planning body also generated data on GAD related programs and projects in the Philippines. Gender Responsive Data have been collected and an estimation of the Gender and Development Indices and Gender Equality Measure has been undertaken by the government.

8.3.9. At the regional level, activities toward gender mainstreaming are likewise being undertaken among which are production of a handbook on regional situationer of women and men, a list of gender responsive programs and projects in the region for the years 1996-1998, and a regional handbook on GAD concerns, integration of women's concerns in implementing and monitoring its Regional Poverty Alleviation Action Plan and monitoring of GAD activities.

8.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

8.4.1. The above accomplishments show an encouraging picture. Continued strengthening of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women were undertaken and will be undertaken in several fronts. A foundation attached to the national women's machinery is being envisioned to help the machinery carry out its GAD mainstreaming mission through establishing networks, providing training and monitoring services, support development, publication and distribution of information materials and implementation of pioneering projects, among others. Likewise, a Philippine

Development Authority for Women is being proposed to strengthen the mandate of the national women's machinery towards operationalizing the 7-point agenda of the machinery and responding to the emerging demands for promoting gender equality and women's advancement and strengthening the institutional mechanisms for linking with the women's movement and reaching to more women in the civil society. The PDAW is also envisioned to spearhead activities that will raise resources to fund programs/ projects for the women's movement and its agenda. As such it is also encouraged for foreign donors to set up a global fund for women which endeavors to support women towards economic development.

8.4.2. To strengthen and sustain the gains and initiatives, there is a need to continue increasing allies at the local and legislative fronts particularly in monitoring the agencies' implementation of the gender equity policies of the government and the mainstreaming efforts. Technical support in implementing GAD plans of agencies should be instituted through a GAD resource referral system and conduct of technical assistance strategy. Accountabilities in addressing GAD concerns among statistical and data collection units of concerned line departments and LGUs should be defined. Gender mainstreaming in the regions need to be appraised and an effective monitoring and evaluation system to track the effects of implementation should be set up.

8.4.3. Measures that will strengthen the national machinery for women have to be undertaken. This is in view of the increasing recognition of its catalytic role in gender mainstreaming and the limitation in its present structure brings. At present, the national machinery can only assist a few agencies in the national level while clamor for intervention at the sub-national level has been growing. In the meantime, advocacy for the passage of the bill strengthening the national machinery needs to be intensified.

8.4.4. Interventions addressing the following specific commitments in the PFA need to be undertaken:

- further strengthening the national machinery and other government bodies to enable them to reach to more women in the communities
- undertake activities on legal reform in the areas of family, condition of employment, social security and income tax, among others
- undertake measures to encourage and promote the active involvement of the public, private and voluntary sectors to work for gender equality and increase participation of women as agents and beneficiaries of the development process
- intensify advocacy in the generation of sex-disaggregated data at the national and sub-national levels

9. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

9.1. Overview

9.1.1. Being a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Philippine government recognizes that all women's rights are human rights and vice-versa. As such, a strong body of legal and administrative measures has been adopted over the years to fulfill the international and local provisions on human rights. At the domestic front, the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act, Anti-Mail Order Bride Act, Anti-Sexual Harassment Act, and the Family Courts Act are only a few of the laws that protect women's human rights.

9.1.2. Meanwhile, the Philippines plays an active role in promoting the integration of the human rights of women into the UN system. It supports and ratifies relevant resolutions on women's rights and participates in pertinent conferences of international bodies to include among others the Asia-Europe Expert's Meeting on Child Welfare and Regional Conference on Complying with the Standard of Convention of the Rights of the Child: Issues and Concerns within ASEAN.

9.2. Policy and institutional developments

9.2.1. The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that the State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect of human rights. The full recognition of this principle underlies the country's national campaign to advance women's status in all fronts. The Constitution created the Commission on Human Rights as an independent office mandated to cause the respect for, protection and promotion of human rights.

9.2.2. The Philippine Human Rights Plan (PHRP) developed in 1995 carries a distinct chapter for women and consolidates the human rights perspective plan for women for the period 1996 - 2000. Concretely, the women's chapter discusses the human rights issues, goals and objectives, policies, strategies and program/project areas. It also stipulates the government's responses and private initiatives, a call to national action for legislative, administrative and program measures and schemes for partnership and collaboration. Gender concerns are now being incorporated to the PHRP both as a sector and cross-cutting concern.

9.2.3. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), and the Philippine Commission on Human Rights (CHR), forged a partnership to ensure the full and integrated implementation of the PHRP and the long-term plan for women. The following priority programs were identified: (a) advocacy and consciousness raising, both for gender and human rights advocates; (b) setting up of institutional mechanisms to include support services such as agency focal points for women, desks on women in government, pool of GAD specialists, trainers and advisers,

and resource mobilization; (c) legislative agenda for women; and (d) research and data base.

9.2.4 The Government created an Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights through Administrative Order 370 in December 1997. The Committee is composed of top officials from 16 government agencies, and is mandated to respond to requests for information on human rights violations perpetrated on individuals or groups in the country and prepare the Philippine reports to the human rights bodies of the UN. Recent actions were focused at the program level on the needs of women migrants, public information on newly enacted laws on women, and strengthening of institutional mechanisms for the promotion of human rights at the local level.

9.2.5. The gender responsiveness of institutional mechanisms for human rights was also enhanced. A GAD Focal Point was strengthened at the CHR and a GAD implementation plan was adopted in 1997. Regular gender sensitivity training were conducted and a pool of trainers on gender and human rights was set up. Human rights investigators and lawyers were also trained on women's human rights. A stage presentation on sexual harassment was also produced.

9.2.6. The institutionalization of the Committee on Decorum on Sexual Harassment in the Commission on Human Rights was adopted. The Women's Sectoral Working Group was activated with the formal designation of the Women Sector Legal Advisers. Cases on sexual abuse and women victims of human rights violations is continuously investigated and monitored with the referral of cases to agencies concerned. Special assistance is also granted specifically financial assistance to victims, legal assistance and counselling to victims of human rights violations. The CHR continues to advocate for the adoption of laws protecting women's human rights.

9.2.7. At the field level, organizational development training for the establishment of the Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRAC) was conducted. Operationalized in 1995, the BHRAC serves as a nationwide mobilization project for human rights protection and advocacy at the grassroots level. Its four-wheel functions are: (a) receiving and monitoring of complaints of human rights violations, (b) education and information campaigns, (c) coordination and referral, and (d) community mobilization. To date, there are 12,431 BHRACS.

9.2.8. The Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 (Republic Act No. 8042), established a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos through the provision of more stringent penalties on illegal recruitment, travel advisory/information dissemination campaigns, and shared information system among government agencies, among others. The Commission of Filipinos Overseas (CFO) submitted amendments to this Act which focuses, among others, on the provision of incentives to professionals and highly skilled Filipinos overseas, redefinition of illegal recruitment and information network for Filipino migrants.

9.2.9. The CFO likewise obtained the cooperation of Filipino and international organizations

based overseas for the conduct of post-arrival orientation services for emigrants. Through the post-arrival services, newly-arrived Filipinos in host countries are linked with employment agencies, migrant resource centers, support groups, and Filipino associations in their areas of settlement.

9.2.10. The rights of indigenous peoples on their ancestral domain have been upheld through Republic Act 8371. This law also created the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. Section 26 of the said law ensures participation of indigenous women in the decision-making process in all levels, as well as in the development of society, to be given due respect and recognition.

9.2.11. In conjunction with the “World Rural Women’s Day,” Proclamation 1105 declared October 15, 1997 and of every year thereafter as “National Rural Women’s Day” to highlight the largely unrecognized contribution of rural women to food security and to the development of the rural areas. This declaration recognizes the role and tremendous contribution of rural women to our country’s economic development and food security.

9.2.12. The Government actively took part in the final drafting of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Optional Protocol has been proposed to provide for better enforcement of women’s human rights. This would give women the right to complain to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women about violations of the Convention by their Governments and would enable the Committee to conduct inquiries into serious or systematic abuses of women’s human rights in countries that have become a party to the Optional Protocol. At present, individuals or groups of individuals cannot obtain remedies in an international forum for breaches of CEDAW that affect them. The Committee is unable to focus on individual victims or to make recommendations on their behalf. The Optional Protocol would provide a forum for these concerns.

9.3. Program and project developments

9.3.1. The Migrants Advisory and Information Network (MAIN) aimed at ensuring the effective dissemination of information related to migration. It continues to raise the consciousness of the public on the realities of migration and provide information and counseling services to prospective migrants. Participating agencies established an advisory and information network at the regional, provincial, city and town levels to provide visible and accessible information services on migration throughout the country. Information campaigns were held nationwide and education modules developed for inclusion in social studies and values education in the schools. Information materials, which included a guidebook on the rights of women migrant workers, were developed and disseminated. By establishing MAIN in the provinces, it is envisioned that grassroots information on migration which can serve as basis for people to make

informed decisions about migrating or working overseas shall be accelerated.

9.3.2. The CFO, the agency mandated to promote and uphold the interest and well-being of Filipinos overseas, has implemented a Shared Government Information System which is being mobilized to facilitate data sharing among agencies concerned with the movement of Filipinos overseas. The system allows the free-flow of data exchanges and sharing among agencies concerned in the movement of Filipinos overseas. The system will be used by the Philippine Government as basis for the development of measures to promote the well-being of overseas Filipinos. Participating agencies include the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Tourism, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and the Bureau of Immigration.

9.3.3. The CFO has likewise developed and implemented the Sponsor's Watchlist Information System. The system traces foreigners who have petitioned more than once and those with reported cases of violence and abuse. It serves as input to counselling services and provides additional information about the background of the foreigner spouse/fiancee. Inter-agency information campaigns in migration-related and intermarriage issues were also conducted in selected municipalities, cities and provinces. Magazines in popular form were distributed in support of the information campaign.

9.3.4. Other services provided to Filipino migrants include counseling to help couples cope with the difficulties of inter-marriages, feedback and exchange of personal letters with Filipinos married to foreign nationals, peer counseling of emigrants aged 13 to 19 years, and predeparture and post arrival orientation. The orientation includes women workers' rights to help them protect themselves against abuse and violence. Likewise, more stringent restrictions were implemented at air and sea ports to prevent the proliferation of illegal recruiters who provide escort service to arriving migrants. Strict administrative measures were instituted in the selection of destination countries and employment for migrant workers to minimize the risk of getting them into countries and occupations with highly exploitative terms and reduce the vulnerabilities of overseas Filipino workers.

9.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

9.4.1. On the whole, initiatives to promote and protect women's rights are increasing. Nevertheless, initial implementation surfaced a number of infirmities in the content of some laws that should be immediately addressed. For example, technological advancement has outgrown the medium covered by the present law on mail order bride because nowadays Filipino brides are no longer matched by mail but advertised via the internet. The Anti- Sexual Harassment Law is also weak in addressing sexual harassment done in public places, in instances where moral ascendancy is absent, and in other work environments such as in the movie and entertainment industry, among others.

9.4.2. Women's rights are also observed to be violated with the existence of some

discriminatory laws that contain gender-inequalities. Protection of women's rights to equal treatment before the law is not adequately addressed as in the case of lengthy and humiliating investigation process in sex-related crimes, lack of protection from offenders' reprisals, abuses against women, rape and sexual assault against women-political detainees, and militarization resulting in other forms of violations such as harassment, detention, unlawful arrest, rape, torture and murder. Violations against women in the workplace include sex-based discrimination and sexual harassment to women contract workers. Non-recognition of reproductive rights as human rights, poor state of women's health, gender tracking to traditional educational opportunities and stereotyping and sexism continue to violate women's rights.

9.4.3. The overall administrative mechanism for implementation and monitoring of laws and policies on women's rights have to be assessed to clarify the responsibilities of agencies concerned. Bills that seek the mandatory training on human rights of all government officials and employees, institutionalize human rights in the system of education and set up human rights desks in local government units should be revived in the present Congress.

9.4.4. The Philippine Government shall continue to implement the Philippine Human Rights Plan, a 30-year perspective plan which embodies a call to national action for advancement of multi-sectoral human rights agenda. The Plan is designed to address most pressing human rights problems/concerns of each sector both at the national and regional levels. The Multi-Sectoral Human Rights Agenda covers women, children, youth, indigenous cultural communities, muslim communities, elderly, persons with disabilities, mentally disabled persons, prisoners/detainees, internally displaced persons, migrant workers, public sector labor and private sector labor. Specifically, this call to a national action covers adoption of appropriate measures presented at three (3) levels : Legislative, Administrative and Programme of Action. The CHR will continue to conduct regular gender sensitivity programs/training to employees of the government as well as the investigation of cases on sexual abuse and violations of women's human rights.

9.4.5. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) has initiated efforts to amend the Migrant Workers Act to include internet/cyberspace mail order brides within the provisions of the law. It is hoped that the NCRFW with the participation of the CFO would be able to advocate for the amendment of the Migrant Workers Act in the light of existing trends on mail-order brides.

9.4.6. The strengthening of institutional mechanisms for human rights at the national and field levels shall be continuously implemented as well as the implementation and monitoring of the United Nation's Women's Convention (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women). In particular, Article 6 on the suppression of traffic in women and exploitation or prostitution, Article 9 on equal rights of women and men to acquire, change or retain their nationality and that of their children, Article 10 on equality on education, Article 11 on elimination of discrimination in employment, Article 12 on equality in the field of health care, Article 13 on equal access

in economic and social life, Article 15 on women's equality before the law and Article 16 on equality rights for women and men in marriage and family relations.

9.4.7. Finally, the government through the CHR needs to pursue full implementation of the Philippine Human Rights Plan in view of its vision to engage in sustained efforts to achieve credible action on seeking justice, re-orienting the agents of the State along human rights norms, advising the government on national policies and legislations on human rights, and catalyzing closer partnership and collaboration with national and international human rights organizations.

9.4.8. The CHR shall continue to re-affirm their roles as the advocates of principles, standards and practices, moulder of public consciousness, convenor and adviser of other organizations and interest groups and direct service purveyors on human rights.

10. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

10.1. Overview

10.1.1. Media, a very potent medium has the capacity to influence how people look at the world, and as such, must promote a balanced and non-stereotyped image of women and men. They must also provide access for greater participation of women, where women can freely practice their rights to free speech and expression, avail of new communication technologies, or become key decision-makers in the news desk or production room.

10.1.2. Media can be powerful allies of women in their quest for a gender fair and equal society. Issues on women, however, still continue to be downplayed in media, although there are already a number of gender advocates among columnists, opinion makers and producers who regularly discuss or feature women issues. Most of the time, women continue to be portrayed in very limited, sexist and stereotyped roles, in all forms of media. Media practitioners are also not aware that gender-differentiated language can significantly affect the way readers, viewers and listeners perceive women.

10.1.3. Women are no longer a minority among media practitioners, and it is safe to assume that there is equal number of women and men in the reportorial ranks. Slowly, media practitioners are now holding decision-making positions both in the print and broadcast media. In the advertising industry, the leading advertising agencies are headed by women presidents or Chief Executive Officers. Further, there are quite a number of women in the film industry as producers and directors. A revealing fact is that what used to be a formerly male-journalists dominated coverage beats, like politics, business and economy, military and police are now filled up with women reporters both in the print and broadcast media.

10.2. Program and project developments

10.2.1. The media has been mobilized to inform the public about women issues and concerns upon the initiatives of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA). This was especially true during the 1998 celebration of Women's Month which adopted the theme, "Yes to Women's Health, No to Violence Against Women." Violence Against Women (VAW) was extensively discussed in talk shows in both radio and TV and in articles and features in newspapers and magazines. A TV plug on VAW was produced and aired during the entire month of celebration.

10.2.2. The PIA embarked on various activities to raise public consciousness and awareness on women's issues. It coordinated with women media advocates and mobilized print and broadcast media to help disseminate information and raise awareness on gender issues/concerns; developed and produced information, education and

communication materials on gender issues and distributed them to media for further dissemination; and conducted regional dialogues on women's issues. To promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media, the PIA integrated the briefing module on women's rights in all training programs of its central and regional offices. It has likewise developed a directory of women media experts. Local media interviews/kapighans were organized in support of the Migration Advisory Information Network regional activities.

10.2.3. Filipino women's heroism and active involvement in the writing of history over the past 100 years were highlighted by the media in the country's Centennial celebration. Among the events which received substantial media mileage were the Re-enactment of the Making of the Filipino Flag in Hongkong and the recently concluded International Congress on Women's Role in History and Nation-Building. The event highlighted the women's "herstory" in various fields with emphasis on the emerging roles of women.

10.2.4. The first APEC International Conference on Women was hosted by the Philippine Government where both national/foreign media projected the other fields where women issues have been mainstreamed relevant to trade, science and technology, labor and human resource development. These have provided a mind shift from the traditional/stereotype projection of women in media.

10.2.5. The later part of 1998 saw the massive campaign against smut magazines. The government embarked on the anti-smut campaign wherein lewd magazines were confiscated and burned by local officials right before their constituents.

10.3. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

10.3.1. The government finds difficulty in addressing its PFA commitments due to the absence of a lead government agency/instrumentality responsible for policy-making and monitoring for women and media. Hence, there is a need to create a positive media environment among media practitioners, particularly in re-orienting/sensitizing women media practitioners on the important roles they play in highlighting women's issues vis-a-vis other human related issues.

10.3.2. Media's limited perception on women's concerns need to be addressed. Media confines and equates women's concerns and issues to violence against women (as in rape, incest, etc.) and to militant women's groups. Media is intimidated with GAD related technical terms such as gender and development, gender sensitization, gender mainstreaming which discourages them from writing about it.

10.3.3. Policies are inadequate to address the issues of women and the media. There is a need to advocate for the passage of laws on women and media such as the anti-pornography bill.

10.3.4. The government needs to exert efforts to continuously address the identified strategic objectives on women and media. Past reports showed that it has been a consistent area where least actions were reported. Such government actions should focus more on the concerns of media as a medium particularly the promotion of a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women.

10.3.5. Concerns like increased participation and access of women to expression and decision-making should also be addressed. To achieve these objectives, the government should pursue among others, the following: 1) identify and mandate a lead agency to take on the concerns of women and media; 2) promote the effective participation of women in formulating and implementing media policies that will rid the industry of gender biases and discrimination in dealing with both its workers and its audience; and 3) to sensitize media practitioners and advertisers and make them aware of the harmful messages that stereotyped images of women and men transmit to their readers and viewers.

11. WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

11.1. Overview

11.1.1. A sustainable environment is central to women's roles as nurturers and caretakers of families, producers and consumers. In the Philippines, women are the stewards of the environment. They are the primary collectors and managers of wood fuel, non-wood forest resources and water. They are the primary users of communal land and forests. As such, their participation is crucial in environmental management and in the allocation of resources within the household and the community. In addition, women's role in environmental management is increasingly being recognized. Various studies are conducted to see how women could participate more in development efforts for the sector. Their effort, however, is hampered by the lack of information and training programs that would equip them with skills and capabilities for more meaningful participation in environmental programs.

11.2. Policy and institutional developments

11.2.1. Laws and policies were enacted to help curb the issues on women and the environment. One of these laws is Republic Act 8371 which recognizes, protects, and promotes the rights of indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples and thus creates a national commission on indigenous peoples, and establishes its implementing mechanisms. Significantly, Certificates of Stewardship Contracts that granted land tenure of 25 years and access to training programs to both spouse beneficiaries were issued.

11.2.2. Administrative instruments were adopted to further operationalize women and environmental concerns. Women were included as members of the Protected Area Management Board wherein major decisions on protected areas are discussed and articulated. A policy integrating gender concerns in small to medium-scale forest plantation plans and activities was formulated. Furthermore, an Environmental Impact Assessment System which requires the assessment and determination of the impact of projects on women was created. Meanwhile, implementing rules and regulations of the Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) Program providing both men and women the opportunity to articulate gender-sensitive concerns was issued. Also, implementing rules and regulations of the Industrial Forest Management Program which establishes gender concerns in large-scale forest plantation plans and activities was formulated. Lastly, gender parity in the preparation of Community Resources Management Framework of the CBFM projects was institutionalized.

11.2.3. A Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development was adopted. This plan viewed environmental protection and the proper utilization of resources as compatible with economic growth and called for citizen's participation including women's participation in its implementation. Furthermore, a national program for the indigenous people was approved which tapped their involvement, including women, in the management of their ancestral domains and their resources and in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programs and projects affecting them.

11.3 Programs and project developments

11.3.1. In 1998, the "Green Brigade" Project was launched. The Green Brigade is composed of barangay youth aged 18-21 who make up the "Katipunan ng Kabataan" (Youth Brigade) or KK. It seeks to organize the youth in every barangay nationwide to monitor compliance or violation of environmental laws and to undertake projects aimed at promoting environment-consciousness among the barangay (village) citizens. It also seeks to formulate the National Youth Environmental Action Plan which serves as the blueprint of youth action to address specific environmental concerns of the barangays (villages).

11.3.2. An Environment Center was established at the military academy. Environmental and sustainable development courses were incorporated in its academic curriculum so that military graduates may be acquainted with the scientific and technical aspects of managing the Philippine environment and natural resources. The education bureau has been integrating environmental education concepts in learning materials developed for its Functional Education and Literacy Program (FELP) and Continuing Education Program (CEP). These efforts aim to enhance environmental awareness among out-of-school youth and adults and encourage community activities that are environmentally sound and supportive of sustainable use of resources.

11.3.3. The Non-Formal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A & E) Curriculum Framework has been developed. This curriculum framework includes competencies integrating environmental concepts. Sustainable use of resources is anchored on ecological concepts and includes population and environmental issues and problems and their impact in society. Sixteen learning materials on values responsive to environmental issues were also developed. "Dalaw-Turo with GAD" (GAD Caravan) which is a literacy program in the uplands and coastal areas which focused on core themes about the environment was conducted. This technology of utilizing performing arts to convey messages on environment has been quite effective in increasing awareness level of the target communities. The project "ISKOLAR" (Integrated Sangguniang Kabataan

Organizational Leadership and Reorientation) wherein GAD and the Environment is one of the modules was conducted.

11.3.4. The different state colleges and universities conducted researches highlighting women's participation for a sustainable environment. These are as follows: Women in Abaca Industry: An Assessment of their Contribution and Constraints in their Participation; Role of Women in Abaca Fiber and By-products Production/utilization; Women's Indigenous Knowledge in the Abaca Weaving and Textile Commercialization in Eastern Visayas; and Comparative Study on the Contribution and Constraints of Women and Men's Participation in Crop, Livestock and Fishery Industry. Likewise, researches on women's situation and participation in projects on community forestry, mangrove conservation and management, and rattan and bamboo production were conducted. Meanwhile, a research study on gender-based analysis of the Impact of Environment and Natural Resources Conservation and Management Policies: Focus on Coastal Areas is on-going. A case investigation on the participation of women in the reforestation activities is being undertaken purposely to assess the impact of women as the reforestation activity progresses. Studies on the role of women in community forestry, gender roles in small scale mining were conducted, and the gender-based analysis of the impact of environmental conservation and management policies was instituted.

11.3.5. Continuous advocacy has been conducted to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women through training, orientations and briefing, fora, photo exhibits, and production of IEC materials. Specifically, tools and forms for collection of gender responsive data were developed and gender specific sectoral situationers were packaged and disseminated.

11.3.6. A GAD module was integrated in the Center for Environmental Resource Course and a mandatory course for potential appointees as community environment and natural resources officers was institutionalized. A Handbook on GAD Mainstreaming in Community-Based Forestry Management (CBFM) has been completed. This Handbook features tools for CBFM persons as well as HRM officers so that they can be (a) ecosystems analysts, (b) community participation facilitators, (c) linkage builders, and (d) GAD champions.

11.3.7. A policy paper was developed under the NCRFW-UNFPA project, entitled "Towards a Gender-Sensitive Environmental Impact Statement System (EIS)." The policy paper seeks to strengthen the integration of women's concerns in the EIS system. Said paper suggested two sets of recommendations in order to address the concerns of women in the operationalization of an EIS. The first set of recommendations are for engendering the policy instrument, while the second set of recommendations are for engendering the policy support mechanism.

11.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

11.4.1. Future efforts to address the following concerns however, need to be pursued through more programs/projects. There must be active involvement from women in decision-making positions in environmental activities especially at the grassroots level. There must be continuing research study to validate the effects/impact of the program/project interventions on women. Mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels must be established and strengthened to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women. Specifically, the need to focus on the development of gender-sensitive databases, information and monitoring system and participatory research methodologies and policy analysis in collaboration with academic institutions and local women researches must be prioritized. Institutionalization of GAD tools to fully mainstream GAD in the environment department's regular activities is very significant. There is also a need for a conduct of project management training incorporating GAD tools.

11.4.2. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the collaboration of government agencies with NGOs, people's organization, private sector and other resource institutions and continue the initiatives/activities undertaken to integrate gender and development in environmental concerns. Finally, the PFA strategic objectives on environment have to be fully integrated and implemented.

12. THE GIRL CHILD

12.1. Overview

12.1.1. Reports of child abuse and child labor exploitation is growing. Results of a study conducted in 1996 revealed that 96.5 percent of victims of child abuse were young girls, 58.3 percent of whom were adolescents aged 11 to 17 years. From 1991 to 1996, 8,355 child abuse cases were reported wherein 2,650 of the cases were rape incidences. In 1997, 3,687 cases of abused women and children were filed nationwide. A huge percentage of these were crimes against girl children. Significantly, there has been a 16 percent increase in rape cases in 1997 compared with 1996 figures. Most of these are incest-related. Between the years 1994-1997, the death penalty had been upheld against 534 convicts, majority of whom raped children aged 12 years and below. Meanwhile, the estimated number of working children within the 5 to 14 age group in 1995 were from 5 to 7 million, 3.9 million of whom live in the rural areas.

12.2. Policy and institutional developments

12.2.1. New laws were adopted to respond to violence against children. Republic Act 8353 imposes the death penalty upon the offender when the victim is under 12 years or is demented. Death penalty is also imposed when the victim is under 18 and the offender is a parent, step-parent, guardian, a relative by consanguinity or affinity within the third civil degree or the common-law spouse of the victim's parent. Provisions on expanding the definition of rape and the penalties for the crime are being complied with. Implementation of this law is slated for review. Because of the sensitivity and difficulty of rape circumstances, women and children victims are guaranteed protection and crisis assistance through Republic Act 8505. However, implementing rules and regulations of said law are still to be formulated.

12.2.2. With Republic Act 8369, exclusive jurisdiction over child and family related cases were granted to family courts. Protection of women and child victims are assured through secrecy and confidentiality in all stages of the trial.

12.2.3. Another law enacted was Republic Act 8044 which created the National Youth Commission in 1995. Basically, the Commission provides leadership in policy formulation, prioritization and direction of all development programs of the government for Filipino youth. It also implements and oversees a national integrated youth promotion and development program. In June 1996, the National Summit on Girl-Child was organized. One of the major resolutions drawn from the Summit is about the initiation for the empowerment of the Filipino Girl Child by providing gender-sensitive and quality education, and by promoting, defending and protecting her rights and welfare to the fullest.

12.2.4. Policy advocacy progressed domestically through the formulation of the Philippine Plan of Action for Children (PPAC). It intensified the provision of basic services to children especially those in difficult circumstances. For instance, the Child Help Intervention and Protective Services (CHIPS) has contributed to greater vigilance against child abuse, and appears to have achieved some success in this respect, as evidenced by an increase in the number of reported cases. The CHIPS was converted into a Crisis Intervention Unit with a 24-hour Hotline that provides social services to children who are victims of abuse. Meanwhile, the Child Rights Center conducts investigation of child abuse cases, initiates legal action for and in behalf of child victims as well as child offenders, and monitors government compliance to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

12.2.5. In 1996, an advisory was issued on the prohibition of the employment of persons below 18 years of age as entertainers, guest relations officers and other similar or related occupational groups declared as hazardous undertakings. In response, a policy and technical guideline on the classification of hazardous and non-hazardous work establishments was drafted and a revised list of hazardous occupations and work to persons below 18 years old was prepared. This resulted to the adoption of the 1998 Memorandum Circular on the Technical Guidelines for classifying hazardous and non-hazardous establishments, workplaces and work processes. Meanwhile, a Memorandum of Agreement intended to address the growing incidence of child abuse in the work environment was signed by the International Labor Organization-International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO-IPEC) and partner agencies.

12.2.6. Finally, Proclamation No. 759 under the auspices of the Council for the Welfare of Children declared the 4th week of March every year as the week for the protection and gender-fair treatment of the girl child. On the other hand, Proclamation No. 731 declared the second week of February of every year as “National Awareness Week for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation.”

12.3. Program and project developments

12.3.1. An inventory form of existing programs and projects benefiting the girl child was prepared to serve as an overall situationer and augment an on-going research on girl children in especially difficult circumstances. This form was sent to all municipal and city government as well as non-government agencies involved in children and women’s welfare.

12.3.2. An integrated prevention and protection program for children in Tourism, Entertainment, and Hotel Industry was established coupled with information and advocacy campaigns including the production of information kits, musical presentations, photo exhibit and audio visual presentations on girl child issues.

12.3.3. Efforts were intensified to protect child workers. The Child Labor Program was

implemented which features the Sagip Batang Manggagawa (Save the Child Laborers) project, an initiative that provides labor assistance to child workers. From 1995 to 1998, a total of 158 rescue operations were conducted in different regions of the country which led to the release of 485 children from abusive employment practices. Six Task Force case conferences were conducted to provide information on the status of child labor cases and plan strategies for successful conviction. A quarterly newsletter on child laborers was launched which further strengthened the project. The handbook "Handling Worst Forms of Child Labor-the SBM Approach" was also developed.

12.3.4. The program, "Bagong Pag-asa Para Sa Kabataan" (New Hope for the Youth), is being implemented to provide integrated and comprehensive social welfare services to street children. Such services are provided through its center that serves as a processing center prior to the children's referral to other agencies or return to their families and/or relatives.

12.3.5. An information kit entitled "A Look at the World through the Girl Child's Eyes" was developed for policy makers. The kit contained statistical records and information on the varying situations and conditions of the girl child.

12.3.6. A 1998 study on "Child Labor in Agriculture: Causes, Conditions and Implications on Adult Employment" was conducted mainly to provide information base for the development of policies for protection and rational employment. The study specifically described and analyzed the current situation of child laborers and its effect on agriculture and adult employment.

12.3.7. Interventions were adopted to address the vulnerability and special needs of girls who are in emergency situations of armed conflict, street children, sexually abused children, working children and victims of violence. One of the interventions was the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive program on child abuse, exploitation and discrimination. Seminars on issues of children in especially difficult circumstances were conducted for law enforcers in line with the ongoing campaign to improve the delivery of services to children who are victims of violence.

12.3.8. A case monitoring system was set in place at the police department featuring a data bank of all cases on women and children filed with the police. As of the second quarter of 1998, 1,224 cases of crimes against children were reported. Of those crimes, 583 are rape cases, 142 are child abuse cases, 179 are physical injury cases and 179 are cases of acts of lasciviousness.

12.3.9. The Anti-Child Abuse Discrimination and Exploitation Division was set-up at the government's investigative department. Protective services, counseling, medical examination and assistance, and proper custody are also being given to rape victims, drug abuse victims, and child molested victims. A Task Force on Child Protection was formed at the justice department which investigates, prosecutes, and litigates cases of child abuse and exploitation. Meanwhile, the Philippine National Police also established women's and children's desks in all police stations throughout the country to administer and attend

to cases involving crimes committed against women and children.

12.3.10. The health department is drafting a strategic plan on adolescent health and reproductive health. The department also implements child growth projects in selected provinces to lower incidence of child malnutrition.

12.4. Obstacles and commitments for continuing action

12.4.1. Despite the laws, policies, programs and services, there is still an alarming increase in girl child violence and exploitation. The main reasons being the implementation and enforcement of these laws and policies suffer from insufficient institutional support, lack of viable statistical systems and monitoring mechanisms at both national and local levels, failing involvement of the victims to initiate resistance to factors that threaten their social and economic rights and lack of coordination among concerned institutions or organizations that would lead to sustained and convergent actions in high-risk areas.

12.4.2. Less focus was given to eliminating negative cultural attitudes and practices against girl child and women. Television soap operas have further sensationalized abuses on girl children and women further aggravating the growing perception of girl child and woman abuse as a normal, everyday scenario. Females continue to portray limited and stereotyped roles in news, radio, television, advertisements and film. The only times children make the headlines is when they are victims of heinous crimes, tragic disasters or diseases.

12.4.3. Focus on disseminating sexual and reproductive health information was given less priority. In 1995, the incidence of adolescent pregnancy has remained at 40 percent, a certain percent of which resulted from sexual abuse. Ten percent of births in the country occur out of wedlock. About 21 percent of the total estimated illegitimate births occurred among mothers in the 15-19 age group, and 53 percent among the 20-24 age group. The AIDS Registry reported in 1996 a cumulative total of 821 HIV AB seropositives of which 279 are AIDS cases. Twelve cases of children below 13 years and 20 cases of girl children out of the total cases were reported. Although television advertisements released were big steps in further spreading awareness about sex and health, there is a need to further educate women and girl children regarding sex and reproductive health. Moreover, child awareness programs about sex, health and body and cultural roles and attitudes must be implemented and further intensified to eliminate the growing erroneous perceptions about girl children and women.

12.4.4. Due to the prevalent economic crisis, the number of child labor cases is increasing. Main reason for working is to supplement family income or help in their own household's enterprise. There is a need to further integrate and boost projects concerning family services, child victim workshops, family-child orientations, and in-depth educational and awareness consultations for the parents especially the mothers to strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl child and reduce the

number of children in especially difficult circumstances.

12.4.5. Focus on family-assisted programs and projects that utilize preventive and proactive approaches such as Early Childhood Care and Development Project (ECCD) and Family Violence Prevention Campaign must be intensified. Community-based mechanisms such as the Barangay (Village) Council must be strengthened for the protection of children and for the mobilization of positive activities against exploitation and abuse.

12.4.6. The continuing ineffective and inadequate social development and development opportunities for children have to be addressed. Concerned government agencies must establish, institutionalize and support the needed mechanisms and structures for the increased participation and involvement of the basic sectors to include the youth sector at all stages of policy and program interventions at the national and local levels.

12.4.7. Finally, efforts must be made to forge a united and firm stand in giving justice to child victims. There must be full enforcement of laws which protect children.

PART III-B:

SPECIFIC ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE COUNTRY'S COMMITMENTS
MADE AT BEIJING

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COMMITMENTS MADE AT BEIJING

1. ACTIONS TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS

1.1. As the framework for operationalizing the PFA commitments, the government regularly monitored the implementation of the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development since its adoption in 1995. For three years, the national machinery continually evaluated the progress of the implementation of the PPGD/PFA from the reports submitted by agencies.

1.2. An increase of agency report submissions has been noted. This is interpreted as an indication of a growing recognition and appreciation among government agencies on gender mainstreaming, in general, and the extent to which the agencies have established monitoring mechanisms, in particular.

1.3. While several government agencies have included GAD as one of their key result areas (KRAs), the need to increase the number of agencies articulating gender concerns in their plans is apparent. Of the twenty-one (21) line departments, only five (5) have successfully included GAD in their performance commitments.

2. ACTIONS TO ENSURE RESOURCES FOR THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION'S IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. The Philippines had its first women's budget in 1995. Section 27 of the 1995 General Appropriations Act (GAA) was passed mandating all departments, bureaus, offices and agencies to set aside an amount out of their appropriations to be used for projects designed to address gender issues.

2.2. Since 1995, the GAD Budget provision has remained a special feature of the annual GAA. However, to make the policy adopt to the changes in the state of agency planning for GAD, certain provisions were introduced to wit:

- Introduction of a minimum ceiling of five percent (5%) of the total agency allocation in 1996;
- In 1998, inclusion of the Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations and the State Colleges and Universities among the agencies being mandated to allocate a budget for GAD programs, projects and

activities; submission of a GAD Plan identifying the gender issues being addressed by the proposed programs, projects and activities; and submission of the GAD Plans to the national machinery for review and endorsement; and

- In 1999, submission of an annual report to Congress, the budget department and the NCRFW indicating agency accomplishments and the corresponding amounts utilized for GAD programs, projects and activities.

2.3. The national machinery, together with the budget and management department, has reviewed the national budgeting forms and introduced some revisions. As a result, the Budget Call for Fiscal Year 2000 has identified GAD as one of the priority programs and carries with it the revised budgeting forms.

2.4. The budget and management department, issued Local Budget Memorandum # 30 requiring all Local Government Units to set aside a minimum of 5 percent out of their annual appropriations for programs, projects and activities designed to address gender issues. This move was carried out to boost resource allocation for GAD at the sub-national level.

2.5. The Department of Interior and Local Government, likewise, issued Memorandum Circular # 98-148 mandating all Local Government Units to rationalize mobilization of resources for GAD.

2.6. In 1995, at least 20 percent of the national budget has been allocated to social programs and services which benefited women most. In 1996, the allocation increased to 31 percent of the national budget. In the succeeding years, the percentage of the national budget continued to increase annually with 33.68 percent allocation in 1998 and 33.69 percent in 1999. Considering this trend, the Philippines is expected to continue to increase its annual budget allocation to social programs and services such as education, health, housing and welfare as well as employment.

3. ACTIONS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES IN THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

3.1. Several interventions were undertaken to respond to specific issues urgently affecting Filipino women among them are: a) availability of credit facilities for rural women; b) promotion and protection of the rights of women migrant workers through bilateral agreements; c) legislation of more stringent laws against trafficking, illegal recruitment and undocumented migration and laws shifting criminal liability from the prostituted women to

their pimps and procurers; d) setting up of support services for women migrant workers, especially victims of trafficking; e) access to health services addressing the various stages of the life cycle of all women; f) affirmation of couple's reproductive rights; g) rejection of abortion as a family planning method; h) increase in the country's yearly contribution to UNIFEM; i) technical assistance to neighboring countries in the field of women's advancement; and j) support to government and civil society cooperation. The following actions are implemented in partnership with civil society, especially women NGOs and groups.

a) availability of credit facilities for rural women

3.2. Republic Act No. 8425 also known as the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act established the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC). This law created a credit window for the basic sectors, including women, in the countryside.

3.3. Under Republic Act No. 7882, the Act Providing Assistance to Women Engaging in Micro and Cottage Business Enterprises, a total of Php27.99M from the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) was released to 90 women beneficiaries and Php3.304M from the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) benefiting 4,352 women beneficiaries.

3.4. In a program called "Tulong sa Tao Program" (People's Assistance Program) which supports small and medium scale entrepreneurs, a total amount of Php1,779,239,202 was released in the form of credit to 138,939 micro-entrepreneurs, 67 percent or 93,561 of whom are women. Thirteen (13) regions nationwide benefited from this program which generated 232,206 employment. Regions also allocate financial assistance to facilitate women clients' participation in project development and monitoring of livelihood projects. This project differs from the law mentioned earlier in that its financing is facilitated by the Department of Trade and Industry while the former involves government financial institutions (GFIs).

3.5. The Integrated Livelihood Program for Fisherfolk released capital loan assistance amounting to Php22.19M to finance alternative projects to 567 individual borrowers which include women and 11 cooperatives. Among the projects financed were seaweed production, fish vending and wholesaling, and crab fattening.

3.6. A lending scheme called Self-Employment Assistance Program for Women provided interest and collateral-free loans for women. There was a total of 9,535 beneficiaries of this project listed as of 1998.

3.7. A low interest and affordable loan schemes were extended to home-based workers together with entrepreneurial training through the program Women Workers Employment and Entrepreneurship Development (WEED). Beneficiaries of this program totaled 15,225 as of 1998.

3.8. Another project is the Promotion of Rural Employment through Self-Employment Entrepreneurship Development (PRESEED) which extends loans, among others, to women rural workers including those who belong below the poverty line.

3.9. The financial project called "DILG Kabuhayan sa Barangay Project" or KSBP for the rural areas nationwide aimed at developing their capability to manage micro-finance projects of the marginalized sectors in the community.

3.10. Another program provided seed capital to some 82,000 mothers for income-generating projects through the credit assistance for Livelihood Program under the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition.

3.11. The Linking Credit for Deposit Generation Program also targets women as beneficiaries. For the period of 1995-1998, said program extended a total of Php305.718M to 24,892 women beneficiaries who availed assistance under the following specific credit windows: Financing Program for Food and Agriculture Retail Enterprises (FARE), Livelihood and Aqua Marine Productivity (LAMP) and Coordinated Agricultural Marketing Productivity (CAMP).

b) negotiation of bilateral agreements with receiving countries to protect the rights of women migrant workers

3.12. Within the framework of bilateral efforts to encourage the protection and empowerment of the most vulnerable social groups, the Government of Belgium and the Government of the Philippines entered into a project called "Pilot Project Against Trafficking in Women." The general objective of this project is the creation of a social and policy environment where the plight of Filipino women trafficked into exploitative work and prostitution is addressed through preventive education, social assistance and legal reforms. The project aims to investigate, on a multi-disciplinary basis, the phenomenon of the international trade in women, and enhance prevention of this human exploitation. The specific agreement (SA) on this project was signed during a high-level bilateral

consultation on development cooperation between the Philippine and Belgian Governments in 1996. At the end of the project in 1998, the project implementors came up with the following recommendations:

- adoption of clear policies on women in migration
- redefinition of trafficking of women
- recognition of trafficking in women as a violation of human rights
- stringent measures on recruitment/employment agencies
- strong action against corruption
- legislation on trafficking in women
- legal recognition of migrant women in host countries
- bilateral agreement for the protection of migrant women workers
- prosecution of trafficking
- orientation and training of government entities
- information campaigns
- empowerment of women migrant workers and their families

c) legislation of more stringent laws against trafficking, illegal recruitment and undocumented migration and laws shifting criminal liability from the prostituted women to their pimps and procurers

3.13. Republic Act No. 8042 was passed into law in 1995, also known as the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act. This law established a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos through the provision of more stringent penalties on illegal recruitment, travel advisory/information dissemination campaigns, and shared information system among government agencies, among others. Proposed amendments to this Act focuses, among others, on the provision of incentives to professionals and highly skilled Filipinos overseas, redefinition of illegal recruitment and information network for Filipino migrants.

3.14. Meanwhile, at the Congress of the Philippines, a bill entitled “Anti-Trafficking in Filipino Women and Minors Act” has been filed. This bill is a consolidation of four separate bills on trafficking with the purpose of providing a comprehensive measure to address all forms of trafficking of women and children which subject them to forced labor, domestic servitude and prostitution. It will provide stiffer penalties to violators and guarantee a higher degree of protection and support for the victims of trafficking. If this bill becomes a law, the victims can have the option to seek redress under either law. A bill on prostitution is also currently being discussed. The bill seeks to address the

system of prostitution and imposes penalties on the perpetrators. It also provides protective measures and support services for victims of prostitution.

3.15. With the emergence of latest technological trends, women are now prostituted and trafficked via the internet or thru e-mail. Amendment to or revision of the current law to cover all modes of trafficking and prostitution is currently being pushed.

d) setting up of support services for women migrant workers, especially victims of trafficking

3.16. The Shared Government System was mobilized and implemented. The system involves the sharing of data among agencies concerned with the movement of Filipinos overseas. This system will be used by the Philippine Government as a basis for the development of measures to promote the well-being of overseas Filipinos.

3.17. The Sponsor's Watchlist Information System was also developed and implemented. This system traces foreigners who have petitioned more than once and those with reported cases of violence and abuse. It serves as an input to counseling services and provides additional information about the background of the foreigner spouse/fiancee.

3.18. Services which are provided to Filipino migrants include counseling to help couples cope with the difficulties of inter-marriages, feedback and exchange of personal letters with Filipinos married to foreign nationals, peer counseling of emigrants aged 13 to 19 years, and pre-departure and post arrival orientation. The orientation includes women workers' rights to help them protect themselves against abuse and violence. Likewise, more stringent restrictions were implemented at air and sea ports to prevent the proliferation of illegal recruiters who provide escort service to arriving migrants. Strict administrative measures were instituted in the selection of destination countries and employment for migrant workers to minimize the risk of getting them into countries and occupations with highly exploitative terms.

e) access to health services addressing the various stages of the life cycle of all women

3.19. The Philippine government has promoted a Post-Cairo initiative in policy reforms and program redesigns that signaled the understanding that population is at last seen as part of the necessary investment in people, without which none of its development or environmental problems will be solved. The Philippine

Population Management Program which articulate the principles of the ICPD Programme of Action is now viewed as a development intervention that will improve the quality of life of Filipinos. It primarily seeks to meet the unmet reproductive health needs of individual women and men which will facilitate attainment of their desired family sizes in a healthy manner. This is premised on the belief that meeting individual reproductive health needs rather than macro demographic targets will in the long-run feed back to social, economic, and environmental benefits that will improve the quality of life.

3.20. The risks and the rewards of spearheading compliance to the paradigm shift of the ICPD and compliance to its Programme of Action by the Government of the Philippines during the previous administration, on balance, reflect the commitment and the political will to take the necessary beginning steps towards turning full circle to the broader context of the health service delivery system. The operationalization of the Reproductive Health (RH) framework was initially through the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project supported largely by international donor and partner agencies. While the objectives of the project were good, it met problems of sustainability and fragmented projects wanting in coordination so crucial to cost effective fund utilization.

3.21. Recognizing these shortcoming of past efforts, the health department developed two major programs: (1) Women's Health and Development Program and (2) Reproductive Health Program. To date, both programs which seek to provide technical guidance and reinvigorate health, women and development initiatives with a holistic vision, have received funding from the government through the General Appropriations Act of 1999.

3.22. The Chapter on Women and Health discusses in detail the Reproductive Health program of the government.

f) affirmation of couple's reproductive rights

3.23. The new population policy recognizes the role of the State in providing the proper environment to ensure that couples and individuals are empowered to make the right choices which would contribute to the balance of population, socio-economic growth and the environment. This meant that couples and individuals are provided with information and services for good reproductive health throughout their entire life and that policies and programs are gender sensitive. Hence, the birth of a gender responsive population policy with a reproductive health perspective. Several factors helped create a climate conducive to the rethinking of population policies and program towards this direction and one of these is the FWCW which reiterated the agreements made

in Cairo regarding the “recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health.”

3.24. Couple’s reproductive rights form part of the government’s new health program specifically under the Reproductive Health Program (RH Program). Under the RH Program, new initiatives were created to address specific critical areas that have been previously neglected. Among these are the Natural Family Planning Program to strengthen initiatives and provide information and choices in underserved areas and Reproductive Health and Health Financing Initiative to study issues on sustainability of family planning and reproductive health services through health insurance and alternative financing models.

g) rejection of abortion as a family planning method

3.25. The Philippine Family Planning Program adopted the following policies for its implementation:

- the rejection of abortion as a family planning method
- improvement of family welfare, with focus on women motherhood and child survival
- freedom of choice in what family planning method to use
- promotion of family solidarity and responsible parenthood

h) increase in the country’s yearly contribution to UNIFEM

3.26. Since 1996, the Philippines had been contributing \$5,000.00 to UNIFEM.

i) technical assistance to neighboring countries in the field of women’s advancement

3.27. The government’s commitment to support international initiatives on GAD were pursued. The Philippines took an active role in the regional meeting of national machineries on the advancement of women, the conference on violence against women migrant workers, and the first conference of the Women Leader’s Network from countries of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The Philippines also hosted the APEC Ministerial Meeting on Women

which came up with a Joint Ministerial Statement calling for the creation of an ad hoc body to develop a framework for the integration of women's concerns in APEC processes.

j) support to government and civil society cooperation

3.28. In the Multi-sectoral Committee on International Human Development Commitments (MC-IHDC), which was created to oversee the coordination and monitoring of the country's international human development commitments, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the People's Organizations (POs) are represented. They are afforded the privilege to articulate strategies towards addressing the country's commitments to the various human development conferences.

3.29. The women NGOs and the NCRFW, work in tandem in monitoring the compliance to the PFA in their respective areas of concern and domain. One of these NGOs is the Philippine Beijing Score Board (PBSB) which was organized in 1996. Cross validation of data often occur between these two organizations. The PBSB is likewise active in public hearings conducted relative to PFA concerns.

3.30. Another NGO involved in monitoring is the Cairo-Copenhagen Beijing Interface (CCBI). Their initial efforts involved the conduct of a conference called "Paving the Road to Beijing" in order to link NGO gains in preparation to the Beijing Conference. After the conference, the CCBI drew up a matrix delineating the policy and program initiatives that the Philippines have to pursue to implement the PFA commitments.

3.31. On the other hand, the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP) was designated as one of the NGOs monitoring the implementation of Platform by an Executive Order dated September 1995.

3.32. An informal grouping of women leaders also convened in January 1996 which aims to formulate a mechanism for monitoring Philippine compliance with the Platform. The group is called "Gender Watch Philippines."

THE PHILIPPINES' VISION OF A GAD FRAMEWORK FOR THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND

Over the past two decades, the international community witnessed dramatic advancements in the direction of the global movement for gender equality. The First World Conference on Women in Mexico focused on negotiating for a global policy document where *issues* affecting women were discussed in order to arrive **at a plan of action**. In the Mid-decade Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, the focus was on global *policies* in order to arrive at a **programme of action**. The Third World Conference in Nairobi, Kenya came up with **Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women** to the year 2000. The latest conference in Beijing, China came up with a **platform for action**, in consideration of the Nairobi strategies, to address the identified twelve critical areas of concern to the advancement of women.

In all these, the emphasis has been on actions. In the Philippines, the frameworks adopted in the global conferences were translated into national development plans and agency implementation plans for women/GAD. Mechanisms were also established to facilitate the implementation of the plans. Presently, therefore, there is a Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGD), a 30-year plan that serves as the main vehicle for operationalizing the Beijing Platform for Action in the country. There are also some 70 agencies that have GAD plans, the implementation of which is supported by a share in the national budget. Focal points and other mechanisms are in place to support the implementation. It could be said that implementation is going on in full swing for years. The focus, nevertheless, have always been on **actions**.

This focus on actions could have been the reason why agencies tend to report actions rather than results. The constant mention, for instance of the creation of GAD Focal Points, the conduct of gender sensitivity trainings, the enactment of laws, and the implementation of numerous programs and projects on women, are all important. However, all these should be assessed on the basis of how they are able to contribute to the attainment of the vision.

This realization, therefore, invites interest over **a framework with a result-based perspective**. What benefits have been derived or could be

derived from all these actions? The realization moves the Philippines to work for a conceptual framework that would focus on specific **results**.

There is a need to go deep while being open also to the new areas for action.

As articulated in the Philippines' comment on the proposed framework of the UN Secretary General, there is a need to consolidate the gains from two decades of actions on GAD.

Thus, the framework that the Philippines adopted, and has started to apply in the on-going assessment of actions taken on the PFA, focuses on the two tracks of its gender mainstreaming strategy. The result-based framework calls for an assessment of results in two areas: (a) the organization, which animates the principles and intentions of gender equality; and the (b) lives of women who are the principal stakeholders of GAD actions.

The first reviews the benefits derived in terms of transforming government agencies toward gender responsiveness. What specific changes were attained in terms of the prevailing **organizational culture**? Have discriminatory policies, practices and norms been reduced or eliminated? What forms of transactions are in place that make it easy for GAD ideals to flourish? The reported presence of **enabling mechanisms** should be examined as to their capabilities and effectiveness to sustain the implementation of the GAD agenda beyond 2000. Are the GAD structures functional? Are the tools and instruments for GAD mainstreaming helpful? The **sustaining resources** should also be reviewed to determine whether they would ensure that the GAD implementation will be sustained beyond 2000. These include definite financial allocations for GAD, the inclusion of GAD in the key result areas of performance contracts of government offices and officials, among others.

The second area, which calls for specific results on the lives of women, calls attention to the desired improvements on the following dimensions that lead to the upliftment of women's lives: (a) welfare; (b) access; (c) conscientization; (d) participation; (e) control; and (f) empowerment.

The introduction of this framework would make it easier for agencies to understand their specific accountabilities in implementing the national GAD strategy. It will simplify their terms of reference and streamline their performance key result areas for GAD.

One of the strategies to get GAD going beyond 2000 is to get more actors, and the civil society in general, to actively get involved in the campaign. The people in the street and majority in the so-called civil society in the Philippines, however, does not speak nor understand the GAD language. The introduction of the framework will help define the “bottomlines” of the campaign. By doing so, the GAD agenda would be easier to communicate and be understood by the public and prospective supporters.

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ANNEX A
PRESENTATION OF THE PHILIPPINE REPORT
TO THE U.N. QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PFA IMPLEMENTATION

