



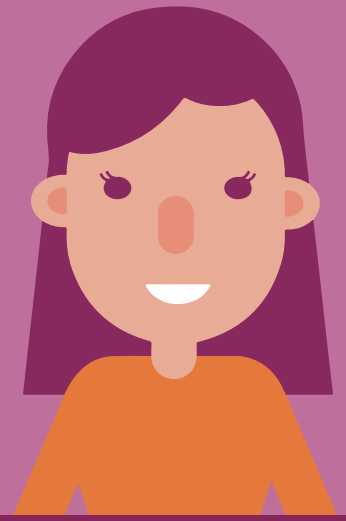
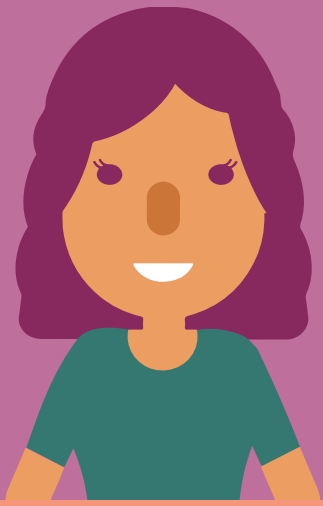
Progress Report on the Philippines' Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from 2019 to 2024

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Section 1: Highlights

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action turns 30 Next Year

Over the past five years, the Philippines has made strides to advance gender equality and empower women. The country currently ranks 25th globally and 3rd among Asia-Pacific economies in the 2024 Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI).



SUPPORTED BY



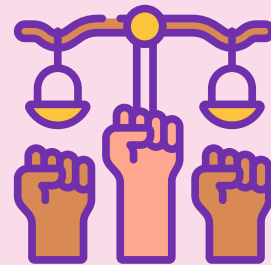
POVERTY

Women, when at the helm of households, tend to experience lower poverty rates and higher income and savings levels.



ARMED CONFLICT

Launched the 4th Generation National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security for 2023 to 2033.



HUMAN RIGHTS

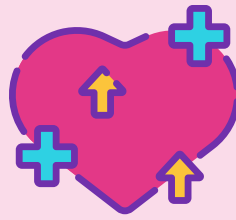
Proposed amendments to address discriminatory provisions in the Revised Penal Code, the Family Code, and special laws are currently under consideration in Congress.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1st in Educational Attainment sub-index, attaining full parity across all educational attainment indicators, as per 2024 GGGI.

37.11% increase in female enrollees in STEAM programs (2020-2023).



HEALTH

2019 Universal Health Care Law (R.A. No. 11223) enabled access to quality and affordable healthcare.

Adolescent birth rate reduced to 25.0 percent in 2022, surpassing national SDG target of 30.3 percent.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

New laws (R.A. Nos. 11648, 11596, 11930, and 11313) passed to strengthen protection mechanisms vs various forms of gender-based violence.



ECONOMY

Increased maternity leave days to 105 under the Expanded Maternity Leave law.



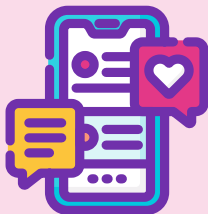
POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

Proportion of women in managerial positions reached 53 percent in the 2021 Labor Force Survey.



INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM

Passed an initiative to create a comprehensive online GAD statistical database, ensuring timely, relevant, and accurate gender data.



MEDIA

PCW promotes gender-fair standards and makes educational materials on women's empowerment.



ENVIRONMENT

Gender perspective has been integrated in numerous policies and strategies to enhance climate action and disaster resilience.



THE GIRL CHILD

Banned child marriage and enhanced the protection of children against sexual abuse, exploitation, and discrimination.

THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION (BPfA)+30 REVIEW PROCESS

The BPfA+30 Philippine Progress Report was developed through a comprehensive and inclusive process involving various stakeholders to ensure a broad representation of voices and perspectives. The Philippines has continuously monitored and worked towards achieving the goals under the 12 critical areas of concern of the BPfA, integrating these targets into national and sectoral plans for women and gender equality.

The formal national review process for BPfA+30 began on March 1, 2024, followed by a series of national and sub-national consultations and workshops. These consultations were organized to gather inputs at both national and local levels. Participants included representatives from diverse groups of women, national and local government agencies and mechanisms, civil society organizations (CSOs), the academe, private sector, and other stakeholders in recognition that a whole-of-society approach is necessary to achieve the objectives of the BPfA.

To ensure thoroughness, technical working groups (TWGs) were established for each of the six dimensions of the BPfA+30 report. Each TWG was co-led by a national government agency and a CSO. The TWGs convened to assess progress and incorporate insights from the consultations.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The country's investment in gender equality since 1995 – through national policies and standards, institutional mechanisms and, generally, the promotion of an enabling environment for women and girls to meaningfully participate in and benefit from development – continues to reap positive outcomes 30 years hence. One of the landmark policies is the Magna Carta of Women, which is the Philippine translation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This national law firmly established the commitment of the Philippines to progressively realize gender equality. Among other measures, it institutionalized gender mainstreaming mechanisms in all offices and levels of government, including the Gender and Development (GAD) Budget, which makes the allocation of at least five percent of government funds mandatory for women and gender equality. The Magna Carta of Women also provided women's organizations and civil society a stronger base to demand State accountability on women's human rights issues, as the law also recognized the intersecting and compounding forms of discrimination against women and girls on the basis of gender, socioeconomic status, (dis)ability, age, ethnicity and religion, among others.

The Magna Carta of Women and the synergy of efforts from all stakeholders to promote gender equality over the years, are the foundations of the country's accomplishments in the past five years, along the lines of the BPfA.

Notably, the country has significantly advanced in upholding the human rights of women, strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming, promoting access to education and training of women, improving women's health, strengthening the legal and policy framework for addressing violence against women, and reinforcing initiatives on women, peace, and security.

The last five years have, nonetheless, been a challenging one due to the negative impact of the global Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on women and the economy, health, and security. Also highlighted were issues on the digital divide and technology-mediated gender-based violence (GBV) as work, education, access to goods and services, and social interactions shifted to virtual platforms due to extended community lockdowns. On the domestic sphere, prevailing gender roles and stereotypes pushed women and girls to more hours of unpaid care work, and intimate partner violence and forms of sexual violence against children reportedly increased during the height of the community lockdowns. Programs have been implemented to mitigate the dire effects of the pandemic and these programs include economic and skills-development programs targeting displaced women workers, including repatriated women migrant workers. Emergency measures, such as cash grants or short-term cash-for-work programs, and subsidies, were also implemented, targeting vulnerable sectors, including indigent households, solo parent families, and senior citizens.

From 2019 to 2024, the Philippines also enacted the following legislations bolstering the existing policies, mechanisms, and actions to empower women by increasing their access to social services and resources, and broadening protection against violation of their rights, especially marginalized women and girls:

- Universal Health Care Law (Republic Act No. 11223)
- Creation of the Department of Migrant Workers (Republic Act No. 11641)
- Law on raising the age of sexual consent from 12 to 16 years old (Republic Act No. 11648)
- Law prohibiting the practice of child marriage (Republic Act No. 11596)
- Law providing cash assistance and other subsidies for solo parents (Republic Act No. 11861)
- Expanded Anti-Trafficking Against Persons Act (Republic Act No. 11862)
- Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children Law (Republic Act No. 11930)
- Law granting benefits to octogenarians and nonagenarians (Republic Act No. 11982)

These national laws are in addition to local ordinances, some of which even provided a higher standard of response to gender issues (e.g., supplemented national pension amounts, expanded covered sectors, and broader range of services). Women's human rights and gender equality are also highlighted in national development plans, such as in climate change, disaster risk reduction and management, and peace and security.

PROMISING PRACTICES

With the strengthening of gender mainstreaming strategy and improvements in the proper allocation and utilization of the GAD budget in government, each agency contributes to empowering women within their respective functions. The Philippines' implementation of gender-responsive budgeting or GAD planning and budgeting is one of the country's notable practices in achieving the objectives of the BPfA. By mandating all government agencies to allocate at least five percent of their budgets to GAD initiatives, the Philippines strives to ensure that gender considerations are systematically integrated into all aspects of public policy and programs. This approach not only empowers women through gender-targeted policies, programs, and services, but also promotes transparency and accountability in the use of public funds for gender equality. Through gender-responsive budgeting, the government addresses specific gender issues, improves resource allocation, and enhances the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming efforts, thereby advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across sectors.

This gender mainstreaming strategy also ensures that gender considerations are embedded in all government initiatives, enhancing the gender-responsiveness of flagship programs and preventing gender

initiatives from being treated merely as separate or stand-alone activities. One concrete example of addressing gender inequalities is the implementation of the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)*.^{*} This government flagship program actively and systematically targets gender disparities as part of the program's overall objective of breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty. It acknowledges that addressing gender issues within households contributes to the overall improvement of the family, benefiting not only women but all family members. Gender analysis has been employed in the program's design to address women's practical and strategic gender needs. Family development sessions are conducted to promote positive family values, enhance knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward shared responsible parenting, and prevent gender-related violence. Women are actively engaged and empowered through their participation in the program's conditional cash transfers. By including women in decision-making processes and community activities, the 4Ps has significantly enhanced women's economic participation and social empowerment.

Areas for improvement remain. While the 4Ps family development sessions emphasize positive values and attitudes on the rights and welfare of women, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other vulnerable groups,

* *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program is translated in English as: Bridging Program for the Filipino Family. It is also known as 4Ps and, formerly, Bangon Pamilyang Pilipino. This is a conditional cash transfer program of the Philippine government under the Department of Social Welfare and Development.*

developing comprehensive strategies to address the intersectionalities of these identities will improve the program's responsiveness. For instance, increasing cash transfers for families with members facing intersectional gender-related disadvantages may be further studied to ensure that those on the margins will, indeed, not be left behind.

FUTURE PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Looking ahead, the Philippines will continue to build on its achievements while addressing the gaps identified. Priorities for the next five years include ensuring equality and non-discrimination under the law, enhancing quality education and lifelong learning, eliminating violence against women and girls, improving access to health care and reproductive health services, and promoting women's economic empowerment and labor rights. Central to these efforts is changing social norms and practices that perpetuate discrimination and violence against women.

The Philippines remains committed to accelerating gender mainstreaming in government, engaging various stakeholders, and improving data collection and analysis to comprehensively track progress comprehensively. Guided by the principles of equality, inclusivity, and diversity, the country will continue to make significant strides toward gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.



Section 2: Priorities, Achievements, Challenges and Setbacks

1. MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM 2019 TO 2024

Over the past five years, the Philippines has made remarkable strides in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women, marked by significant achievements and a proactive approach to addressing challenges. The country ranks 25th globally and 3rd among Asia-Pacific economies in the 2024 Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI).



1.1 Women and Poverty

Poverty statistics show that women have a slight advantage compared to men. The poverty incidence among women is marginally lower at 18.4 percent compared to men at 18.5 percent.¹ Additionally, families headed by women exhibit a lower proportion of poverty at 9.1 percent, in contrast to 14.7 percent for those headed by men.² Other economic indicators further highlight this trend, as female-headed households report higher average annual family incomes of PHP 321,000 (USD 5,500) compared to PHP 302,000 (USD 5,200) for male-headed households.³ Similarly, average annual family savings are greater in female-headed households, amounting to PHP 82,000 (USD 1,400) versus PHP 77,000 (USD 1,300) for their male counterparts.⁴ These figures may

suggest that women, when at the helm of households, tend to manage slightly better economically, resulting in lower poverty rates and higher income and savings levels.

Nonetheless, there is a need to continue strengthening measures to address specific concerns of women related to poverty, such as low labor force participation rate, and bridge the poverty gap, not only between women and men, but also among those in urban and rural areas, which is in line with the current administration's plan to reduce the poverty rate to a single digit by the end of its term. Efforts must focus on providing targeted support, enhancing economic opportunities, and ensuring equitable access to resources and services for women and men, particularly in rural areas where poverty rates are typically higher.



1.2 Education and Training of Women

In the 2024 GGGI, the Philippines ranked first in the Educational Attainment sub-index, attaining full parity across all educational attainment indicators. Various initiatives have been implemented to expand access to education regardless of sex, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, disability, or age. Among these programs are the Madrasah Education Program, Indigenous People's Education, and the Alternative Learning System.

Financial assistance programs have been instrumental in supporting education for all levels, with initiatives, such as free tuition in state universities and increased allowances for families under the 4Ps during the pandemic. Additionally, efforts to address reproductive health and child protection through Comprehensive Sexuality Education and e-learning courses for school-based child protection committees highlight the ongoing focus on holistic education and safety for learners. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the education system adapted by introducing online, modular, and blended learning formats, which have remained relevant post-pandemic, ensuring continuity of classes even during adverse conditions like the 2024 heatwave.

Challenges, nonetheless, remain, such as the inadequacy of digital infrastructure to support online learning formats, especially in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, as well as addressing gender stereotypes and biases in educational materials and practices. Despite improvements in access to basic education, concerns about the quality of the education system remain. The Human Capital Index estimates that a Filipino child starting school at age four would complete 12.9 years of education by age 18; however, when considering actual learning outcomes, this is equivalent to only 7.5 years.* Regular assessment and

evaluation of actual learning outcomes of students is necessary to ensure that the education system not only provides access, but also delivers meaningful and effective education.



1.3 Women and Health

In line with the Philippines' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) commitment to reducing the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel increased from 88.4 percent in 2017 to 89.6 percent in 2022, and the proportion of births delivered in health facilities rose from 77.7 percent to 88.4 percent in the same period. Additionally, the adolescent birth rate has been reduced to 25.0 percent in 2022, surpassing the national SDG target of 30.3 percent. The proportion of currently married women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods also saw a gradual increase from 56.9 percent to 59.1 percent between 2017 and 2022. The prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding improved significantly from 48.8 percent in 2015 to 60.1 percent in 2021.

* *The figures are based on 2018 and 2019 international assessments of the performance of Filipino students. Second Congressional Commission on Education, Miseducation: The Failed System of Philippine Education, EDCOM II Year One Report (Pasay City: Congressional Commission on Education, 2024), xxvi.*

Despite these achievements, challenges remain. The overall contraceptive prevalence rate declined sharply from 54.3 percent to 41.4 percent in 2022. Addressing adolescent and unplanned pregnancies continues to be a top concern, as these issues intersect with sexual violence and intimate partner abuse. Government agencies, such as the Department of Health (DOH), the Commission on Population and Development (CPD formerly POPCOM), and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) have intensified their efforts through awareness-raising and community and school-based information campaigns, as well as the delivery of reproductive health supplies. The 2019 Universal Health Care Law (Republic Act No. 11223) has also been a significant development, ensuring automatic enrollment of all Filipinos in the National Health Insurance Program, thus enabling access to quality and affordable healthcare services with minimal out-of-pocket expenses, especially benefiting indigent and marginalized women and girls.



1.4 Violence against Women

The overall protection against gender-based violence in the Philippines has seen significant advancements. New laws have been passed from 2019 to 2024 to strengthen protection mechanisms against various forms of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment,

sexual exploitation, child marriage, trafficking in persons, and online sexual abuse or exploitation of children. The Philippines has consistently maintained a Tier 1 ranking since 2016 for fully meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons, as highlighted in the 2023 US Secretary of State's report. At the grassroots level, protection has been strengthened with the establishment of *Barangay* (Village) Violence Against Women Desks in 84 percent or 35,358 out of 42,046 villages nationwide, as well as Local Committees on Anti-Trafficking, Child Pornography, and Violence Against Women and Their Children (LCAT-CP-VAWCs) across provinces, cities, and municipalities.

However, the fight against gender-based violence faces emerging challenges, particularly in digital spaces. The rapid evolution of digital threats underscores the necessity for continuous adaptation and innovation in protection strategies. Identifying perpetrators and prosecuting cases in these digital spheres pose significant challenges due to the anonymity and technical sophistication involved. The government is actively working to address these issues through the development of advanced technology and the enactment of additional legislation aimed at combating gender-based violence in digital or online spaces.



1.5 Women in Armed Conflict

The country continues to champion the Women, Peace, and Security agenda with the launch of the fourth-generation National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAPWPS) for 2023-2033. This comprehensive framework aims to foster sustainable peace and drive positive transformations in the lives of women in conflict-affected areas. It addresses several challenges identified in previous plans, including fragmented implementation of strategies across the plan's pillars, informal collaboration between CSOs and the government, and limitations in data collection. The new plan seeks to bridge these gaps by enhancing coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, improving data collection mechanisms, and raising public awareness about the importance of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. It emphasizes the crucial role of CSOs in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, ensuring their representation in the National Steering Committee on Women, Peace, and Security. This inclusion facilitates the meaningful participation of CSOs in the peace process and helps shape the future direction of the NAPWPS.



1.6 Women and the Economy

The proportion of young women aged 15-24 who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) saw a significant decline from 23.8 percent in 2019 to 15.4 percent in 2022, indicating a narrowing of the gender gap as the NEET rate for young men decreased from 13.5 percent to 10.1 percent over the same period. Additionally, the Women's Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) rose from 46.6 percent in the 2018 Labor Force Survey (LFS) to 51.2 percent in the 2021 LFS. The 2024 GGGI Report highlighted the Philippines' achievement of gender parity in professional and technical roles and significant progress towards parity in overall labor force participation, reaching an all-time high of 69.3 percent.

Despite these advancements, efforts need to be strengthened to further increase women's labor force participation rate to the 52-54 percent target by 2028 under the Philippine Development Plan, 2023-2028. It outlines strategies to mainstream gender and green competencies and, address gender biases and stereotypes that hinder women's entrepreneurship and career advancement. These measures aim to create a more inclusive and equitable workforce, promoting economic opportunities for women across sectors.



1.7 Women in Power and Decision-making

The proportion of women in managerial positions reached 53 percent in the 2021 LFS indicating a significant presence of women in leadership roles within the workforce. Within the government, 45 percent of Career Executive Service positions or those involving executive and managerial functions are occupied by females as of May 2024. While women's political participation has seen an upward trend, it still falls short of the critical mass needed for substantial influence, with women holding 26.2 percent of national parliament seats and 29.1 percent in local governments as of the 2022 elections. To address this gap, various initiatives have been launched, such as capacity-building programs for women, voter education, and legislative advocacy supporting temporary special measures to boost women's political involvement. Despite these efforts, persistent gender norms and stereotypes continue to impede women from fully breaking through the glass ceiling and achieving equal representation in power and decision-making roles.



1.8 Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Within the government, there is growing commitment to institutionalizing gender mainstreaming mechanisms, although the levels of functionality and performance across national and local levels vary. While there are challenges, such as differences in the functionality of mechanisms and resource limitations faced by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and Commission on Human Rights (CHR), these have been met with resilience and proactive measures. Gender mainstreaming has been successfully integrated into national development planning and investment programming, with a notable increase in the number of gender-responsive and gender-sensitive Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects, rising from 24 in 2019 to 62 in 2023. Local government units (LGUs) are also making significant strides in creating and operationalizing these mechanisms, despite some variability in performance among provinces, cities, and municipalities. To address the challenge of enhancing GAD budgeting processes, the PCW, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) issued Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2022-01, containing the revised guidelines and procedures for the formulation, submission, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including accounting of results of annual GAD Plans and Budgets

(GPBs) and GAD Accomplishment Reports (ARs) of national government agencies and instrumentalities. The PCW also launched the GAD Focal Point System Functionality Assessment Tool (GFAsT) in 2022, aiming to ensure comprehensive functionality of the GAD Focal Point System (GFPS) in steering and coordinating gender mainstreaming efforts within government organizations. Despite the collection of sex-disaggregated data, inadequacies in intersectional data on women, such as SOGIE, disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and age, hinder a more nuanced analysis of the country's progress toward meaningful gender equality for women across sectors and identities. Thus, in June 2023, the Interagency Committee on Gender, Children, and Youth Statistics approved a resolution to strengthen the generation and maintenance of gender statistics. This initiative, supported by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and UN Women, seeks to create a comprehensive online GAD statistical database, ensuring timely, relevant, and accurate gender data.



1.9 Human Rights of Women

To respect, protect, and fulfill women's human rights under the CEDAW and other treaties, the Philippines has been implementing the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) 1995 to 2025, alongside the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE)

Plan 2019 to 2025. These comprehensive frameworks highlight the country's dedication to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Despite the provisions of the Magna Carta of Women on equality of women and men under the law, proposed amendments to discriminatory provisions in the Revised Penal Code, the Family Code and special laws remain pending in Congress. In response, the Women's Priority Legislative Agenda is continuously being lobbied to expedite the enactment of laws that amend or repeal discriminatory provisions and to advocate for new legislation that promotes women's empowerment and gender equality.



1.10 Women in the Media

The Revised Gender-Fair Media Guidebook of 2017 continues to guide media practitioners in integrating gender sensitivity throughout media production processes, from conceptualization to distribution. Since its release, the Philippine Information Agency has led efforts to disseminate the guidebook, organizing 69 campaigns and numerous capacity-building sessions from 2021 to 2023. These initiatives have targeted media professionals nationwide, striving to foster gender-sensitive reporting practices.

Complementing these efforts, the Presidential Communications Office

(PCO) has conducted orientations on Gender-Fair Language and Gender-Responsive Strategic Communications, engaging a wide array of media professionals, government agencies, and civil society organizations. Additionally, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board addressed 168 complaints of gender-based violence in media content in 2023, highlighting ongoing efforts to regulate and improve content standards. The PCW also collaborates with media entities to promote gender-fair standards and disseminates educational materials on women’s empowerment. Initiatives, such as the Cine Juana competition and the *Tinig ng Kababaihan* (TNK, Voice of Women) radio program, further amplify these efforts to combat persisting gender biases and promote gender equality.



1.11 Women and the Environment

Gender perspective has been integrated in numerous policies and strategies to enhance climate action and disaster resilience. The Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 emphasizes sustainable finance and climate resilience through frameworks like the Sustainable Finance Framework and Roadmap, and the Securities and Exchange Commission Guidelines on Green and Sustainability Bonds. Key strategies on ensuring women’s participation and addressing gender needs have been included in the National

Climate Risk Management Framework and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2020–2030. LGUs have integrated gender-responsive climate and disaster risk measures into their plans through initiatives, such as Local Climate Change Action Plans and Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans.

In 2023, the International Development Law Organization, in collaboration with the Climate Change Commission, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and PCW, conducted a Gender Assessment of Climate and Environmental Laws, identifying gender-blind and discriminatory provisions. This assessment highlighted the necessity of strengthening institutional, legal, policy, and implementation frameworks to advance climate justice and ensure the meaningful participation of women and girls in climate action. Additionally, the Philippine Resilience Awards Category for Women, launched in 2014, recognizes outstanding local women champions in resilience building. This initiative aims to establish a pool of “resilience champions” who can mentor and coach local government units in promoting evidence-informed, science and technology-based local leadership and innovative solutions that contribute uniquely to disaster resilience.



1.12 The Girl Child

The issues concerning girl children are intertwined with the 11 other critical areas of concern of the BPfA. Significant progress has been made in the past five years, notably in banning child marriage and enhancing the protection of children against sexual abuse, exploitation, and discrimination, both in physical and online environments. This comprehensive approach aims to safeguard the rights and well-being of girl children, ensuring they grow up in a safe and supportive environment.

Moreover, the 4th generation NAPWPS has taken strides to address previous shortcomings, particularly in relation to children in armed conflicts and other challenging situations. This plan emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to support girls and youth, recognizing their unique vulnerabilities and the necessity for tailored protection and empowerment measures.

2. TOP FIVE PRIORITIES FOR ACCELERATING PROGRESS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM 2019 TO 2024



2.1 Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

The Philippine Constitution explicitly states that women and men have equal rights under the law. To this effect, the country has strived to address the gender biases in the legal and justice systems and institutions that bar women's access to redress, especially in cases involving issues of gender-based violence and discrimination. Gender mainstreaming is the primary vehicle for promoting gender equality in the country. Government agencies are mandated under the Magna Carta of Women to allocate at least five percent of their annual budgets for actions specifically for this purpose. This includes the continuous capacity building of duty-bearers on gender equality and its realization within their sphere of influence. The Philippine Judicial Academy, the training school of the judiciary and court personnel, regularly offers gender sensitivity training and specialized courses on gender issues and the law.

Community-based mechanisms addressing GBV are relevant to access to justice, as the quality of their interventions and services have a significant impact on women's decision to bring the case to

court. This specifically refers to the mandated *barangay* Violence Against Women (VAW) desks and the Women and Children’s Protection Desks (WCPDs) in police stations. As of the first quarter of 2024, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) reported that only 84 percent of the 42,046 *barangays* across the country have VAW desks at varying levels of functionality. Notably, even in the capital city of Manila, only 82 percent of its *barangays* have VAW desks. In comparison, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao compliance stood at only 35.56 percent.⁵ On the other hand, there are 2,026 WCPDs in the country, staffed by 6,311 police personnel with specialized training in handling cases of gender-based violence, child abuse, and trafficking. In March 2024, the PNP launched “Project Aleng Pulis (female police) Everywhere” to ensure that there is always a female police officer at WCPDs.⁶

Following the provisions of Republic Act No. 1116 or the Filipino Sign Language Act, the Supreme Court convened a Technical Working Group in May 2024 to draft the rules for Filipino sign language interpretation in the judiciary. This is a significant step towards guaranteeing equal access to justice for people with hearing impairment and their meaningful participation in court proceedings. There is no updated data on GBV and people with hearing impairment; however, based on the documentation of the Philippine Deaf Research Center, an estimated one out of three deaf women experience rape, while 65 percent to 70 percent of deaf girls are molested.⁷

The PCW has been advocating for the enactment of laws promoting gender equality in marriage and family relations, aiming to broaden women’s access to justice on issues involving parental authority over common children, administration of conjugal properties, marital disputes, and dissolution of marriage since the 16th Congress (2013-2016). Bills related to these issues are at the committee level in the 19th Congress (2022-2025).



2.2 Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls

Education is one of the hardest hit sectors by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Philippines is the last country in the world to re-open its schools for in-person classes following their closure in 2020. It piloted the school opening in November 2021, but it was not until a year after, in November 2022, that public schools were fully opened.

The pandemic’s negative impact on education is particularly severe among marginalized and disadvantaged groups. These students, who are more likely to drop out of school due to its inaccessibility, are being prioritized in the efforts to address the learning loss. The constricted incomes of households have led to more children being pulled out of school, but steps are being taken to provide support and resources for these families. Although

enrollment numbers recovered after the first year of the pandemic, the longer-term impact of learning loss is a concern. An Asian Development Bank study in 2021 showed that the learning loss score of the Philippines is the second highest in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, indicating that approximately seven months of learning-adjusted schooling was lost due to the shift to remote classes.⁸

There is also increased risk of girls being forced into early marriage or pregnancy as a response to household economic crises or as a result of sexual violence, which even lessened the likelihood of their completing formal education.⁹ Linked also to prolonged school closures and online-based classes was the rise of cases of technology-mediated gender-based violence, particularly bullying and sexual violence, and mental health issues among children. For some children, not going to school meant being cut off from a significant social support system, including access to help against child abuse in their household or communities.

Addressing the above issues requires a convergence of measures from different agencies to protect the rights of learners, including equality of access to education, and the right to be free from discrimination and violence. To its credit, the Philippines has consistently achieved the target of gender parity in literacy and education enrollment rates since the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. The State, through the Department of Education, continues to broaden access

to education for all, regardless of one's sex, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, disability, and age. Prior to the pandemic, it has already instituted the Madrasah Education Program, Indigenous People's Education, and the Alternative Learning System for out-of-school youths, learners with disabilities, and technical-vocational training, to name a few. Formal education adapted to COVID-19 restrictions to develop new delivery modes including online, modular distance learning and blended learning formats, which were not previously considered for learners in regular schools. The online, modular and blended modalities continue to be relevant post-pandemic, and have been recently utilized during the heatwave that swept across the country in March to May 2024, to ensure continuity of classes.

There are financial assistance programs offering scholarships, subsidies and sponsorships for students at all levels. As with basic education public schools, tuition in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and State-run technical-vocational schools is free since 2016, as provided by Republic Act No. 10931. Families enrolled in the national poverty alleviation program, the 4Ps, also receive a modest monthly allowance to use for education expenses of children. The amount was increased during the pandemic period, which allowed for some economic support to indigent families (the "poorest of the poor") and kept children in school.

The Department of Education issued Department Order No. 31 s.2018 on

the implementation guidelines of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education, which is mandated by the Reproductive Health Law.¹⁰ Following this, it partnered with the DOH and CPD in 2021 for Comprehensive Sexuality Education - Adolescent Reproductive Health Convergence initiative, which offers a holistic intervention to issues, such as adolescent pregnancy, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/ acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other reproductive and sexual health concerns.¹¹ In 2023, the Department of Education, in partnership with the non-governmental organization, Stairway Foundation, launched an e-learning course school-based child protection committees to build their capacities, including sensitivity to issues, such as sexual violence of learners perpetuated online or offline.¹²

The continuing concern on the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and bias against women in the curriculum and teaching and learning materials was addressed through issuances by the Department of Education notably, Department Order No. 32 s.2017 on the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy,¹³ and Department Order No. 33 s.2022 on the Child Rights Policy: Adopting the Rights-Based Education Framework in Philippine Basic Education.¹⁴ Both policies emphasized gender equality as a value that shall be promoted in schools, and provided for the review of materials, systems and practices so that these may be strengthened as necessary to become sensitive and responsive to the gendered needs and realities of learners. During

the pandemic, however, several photos of workbook texts and illustrations depicting women and men in gender stereotyped roles were posted on media, indicating gaps in policy implementation. In 2022, the Office of the Department of Education Undersecretary for Governance and Field Operations also issued Memorandum No. 2022-02-0153 reiterating the Gender-Responsive Basic Education Policy of 2017, in the light of reported incidents of gender-based harassment and violence against learners of diverse SOGIE.¹⁵

There are incremental developments as regards gender segregation in the enrollment of courses in higher education institutions and technical-vocational schools. In 2018, the gender gap in the enrollment in the STEM strand in senior high school narrowed by 2.54 percent, while women already comprise 32 percent of the enrollees in non-traditional courses under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in 2019. At the tertiary level, the percentage of females in STEM and agricultural/fisheries courses increased from 43.61 percent of the total enrollees in 2019 to 48.31 percent in 2021. One factor to this development is the increased availability of scholarships and other financial assistance for students in STEM courses, for instance, half of the scholarships from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) support STEM. Females comprise 50.40 percent and 44.86 percent of CHED STEM scholars in 2021 and 2022, respectively.



2.3 Eliminating violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls continues to be a critical gender issue in the country. The 2022 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) shows that 18 percent of females surveyed, aged 15 to 49 years old, have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. Only 48 percent of them have ever sought help, and 60 percent of them turned to their family and friends, rather than direct service providers, such as *barangays*, social workers, or the police. This is despite the high awareness of women about the reliefs provided for VAW survivors (above 80 percent are aware they can get assistance from the *barangay*, local social welfare offices, or the police). The other 42 percent of surveyed women who experienced VAW did not seek help at all.

The above statistics do not adequately reflect its magnitude, especially considering the alarming increase of cases of technology-mediated VAW. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, from March 1 to May 24, 2020, there was a 264.6 percent increase in reported incidents of online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSAEC) through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, with cases rising to 279,166 from 76,561 in the same period in 2019. The passage of the law against OSAEC in 2022 was a welcome development to facilitate

not only prosecution of such acts, but also to accelerate measures to build the capacities of children, their families and communities against technology-mediated sexual violence, including increasing digital literacy and human rights awareness.

The COVID-19 pandemic also surfaced the vulnerability of women and children to GBV in times of crises, not only because strict enforcement of community quarantines forced them to live with their abusers, but also because of the de-prioritization of GBV as a critical health and security issue. This resulted in the neglect of services for GBV survivors by government agencies mandated to provide them as these were also the very agencies at the frontline of the national and local COVID-19 response teams. In July 2020, the CHR and the DILG issued Joint Memorandum Circular 2020-01 on ensuring prompt, effective and survivor-centered response to GBV cases.¹⁶ This Joint Memorandum Circular was a follow through to the joint statement of DILG, CPD, PCW, DOH and CHR in May 2020 calling for LGUs to maintain functional *barangay* VAW desks¹⁷ amidst reports of unavailability of services of GBV survivors at the community level during the lockdowns. Also supporting this, GBV was included in the emergencies, which can be reported to the 911 National Emergency Hotline in 2021, as provided in the DILG, DSWD and Department of Justice (DOJ) Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-01.¹⁸

Strengthening of community-based GBV

responses is also the focus of policies calling for the establishment of functional local committees on anti-trafficking and VAWC (LCAT-VAWC).¹⁹ Although the LCAT-VAWCs are specific inter-agency bodies to monitor implementation of the Anti-Trafficking and Anti-VAWC laws, in practice, they have also become venues for collaborative planning and action to promote gender equality in general, at the local level. The LCAT-VAWC is composed of LGU offices involved in addressing cases of trafficking and VAWC, and three CSO representatives from the children's, women's, and migrant workers' sectors. In 2019, the CHR established the GBV Observatory, which "is envisioned as a resource hub for GBV, a repository of GBV data including domestic and international standards, and GBV researches, reports, and situationers documenting how laws are implemented and how GBV manifests in the lived experiences of women, girls, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) community," to make data work for gender equality.²⁰



2.4 Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health

The 2019 Universal Health Care Law (Republic Act No. 11223) provides for the automatic enrollment of all Filipinos to the National Health Insurance Program (also known as PhilHealth) of the country, thus enabling access to quality and affordable

health care goods and services, with reduced to zero out-of-pocket expenses. This was a significant development for women, especially those belonging to indigent and marginalized groups, who had been previously excluded for reasons of not being a PhilHealth member (whether this was linked to their formal employment, they are voluntary contributors), or a qualified dependent of a member. The PhilHealth covers in- and out-patient primary healthcare services, including women-specific procedures or treatment (e.g., maternal health services, breast and cervical cancer, surgical contraception) and HIV/AIDS treatment. Implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act gained traction after the promulgation of the Supreme Court decision on the challenges to the constitutionality of the said law in 2014. However, the delivery of services was also affected during the pandemic as budgets for health care were overly stretched to meet the demands of COVID-19 response. Community lockdowns, transport restrictions, and even fear of contracting COVID-19 in health care facilities also affected women's accessing reproductive health services and supplies. Addressing adolescent and unplanned pregnancy was a top concern, especially as these intersect with sexual violence and intimate partner abuse. Government agencies stepped up on their interventions, especially focusing on awareness raising and community and school-based information campaigns, and delivery of reproductive health supplies. The DOH and CPD, with the support of USAID, also created the Facebook

page “*Konektado Tayo!*”^{*} to help bridge communication gaps between parents and teens on topics, such as love, sexuality and relationships.²¹ New policies in support of these initiatives included Executive Order 141 s.2021,²² which declared preventing teenage pregnancy a national priority. The 2021 national budget also allocated funds for the “Special Protection Program for Adolescent Mothers and Their Children” to be implemented by the DSWD, in consultation with CPD.²³



2.5 Changing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes

The Philippines got a dismal score of 99.5 percent in the 2023 United Nations Development Programme’s Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI), indicating that almost all Filipinos, women and men alike, hold gender-biased beliefs in at least one of the dimensions of economic, political, education and physical integrity. The biases were particularly high in the political dimension (92.83%) meaning, nine out of 10 Filipinos agree that men make better political leaders. At the opposite end, only four out of 10 Filipinos (43.61%) agreed to the statement that university education is more important for men than women. The scores for economics (men have more right to work, men are better executives) and physical integrity (intimate partner violence can be justified, women’s right

to decide on abortion) were 75.50 percent and 77.81 percent, respectively.

The GSNI result for the country is parallel to the findings of other indices, such as the GGGI, where the Philippines showed least gender disparity on education outcomes, and the highest in political participation and leadership. Similarly, the latest National Demographic and Health Survey (2022), showed that nine percent of women surveyed agreed that wife beating is justifiable in certain situations (e.g., wife burns the food, neglects the children, refuses sex with partner/spouse, etc.). National statistics also showed the low participation rate of females in the labor force, with only 51.2 percent, compared to 75.4 percent for men. NEDA cited the unpaid care work of women as one of the major reasons for women’s underrepresentation in formal employment.

Social norms and belief biased against women, first inculcated from families, schools and religious institutions, and reinforced in mass media in overt and subtle ways, is still an ever-present challenge to gender equality in the country. The increasing presence of Filipinos on the internet presents another dimension to the issue, especially because virtual space is largely unregulated, and empowering messages on women’s capabilities and contributions to society could easily be overwhelmed by a gamut of counter information that is just as available and accessible on the space. The

* “This means “We are connected!”

2024 data on the internet use of Filipinos show that 73.6 percent of Filipinos have access to the internet, and 73.4 percent use social media. Majority of the users are female (52.7%).²⁴

In response, government agencies, women's human rights organizations, and other stakeholders stepped up their awareness raising campaign on gender equality in various sectors. At the national level, the country celebrates Women's Month every March, and observes the 18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women from 25 November to 12 December every year. During these periods, government agencies and instrumentalities, and local government units across the country and in embassies abroad, are enjoined to organize and participate in activities to promote women's empowerment. Initiatives often include awareness raising and education on gender issues pertinent to their mandates. Likewise, all agencies also maintain a GAD page where information on their GAD mainstreaming activities and data can be accessed.

The PCW engages State-owned communications offices and private media companies to advocate for their adoption of gender-fair standards in their programs and advertising. It also produces knowledge products and IEC materials on women's empowerment in print, audio-visual, and digital formats

that are widely distributed for general public use. For instance, recordings of the PCW webinars on gender mainstreaming and GAD Budgeting are available in the PCW website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel, and can be accessed by anyone seeking to gain basic knowledge and skills on these topics. In 2019, the PCW launched Cine Juana, a short-form video competition for senior high school and college students. The themes of the competition were positive masculinity, help-seeking behavior, and the Safe Spaces Act (anti-sexual harassment in public spaces). The PCW website also has a repository of knowledge products, including books, manuals, monographs, infographics and copies of gender equality laws and other policy issuance, available for downloading.

The past years also saw the increasing engagement of men and boys to promote gender equality, especially on the lines of family life and unpaid care work. Various government agencies also involved males in their GAD-related initiatives at the community level, such as CPD in its community-based information campaigns on sexual and reproductive health and human rights. The Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (IACVAWC) also issued Resolution No. 01-2019 encouraging government agencies and LGUs to support the chapter organizing of Men Opposed to Violence Everywhere (MOVE).

3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTE THE RIGHTS OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Magna Carta of Women, which was enacted in 2009, laid down the framework for the progressive realization of gender equality in the country, including the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming as the primary strategy for this purpose. The implementation of the Magna Carta of Women is monitored by three agencies: the PCW as the primary policy-making and coordinating agency for gender equality; the CHR as the GAD Ombud; and the Commission on Audit (COA) to examine the utilization of the GAD budget by government agencies.

The law particularly noted the promotion of the rights and empowerment of women marginalized groups and sectors (Chapter V). This covers rural women (agricultural and fisheries sector), urban poor women, women workers (in formal and informal economy), women migrant workers, Moro women, indigenous women, girl children, senior women, women with disabilities and solo parent women, among others.

From 2019 to 2024, the country has enacted the following national laws that address gender equality and development issues affecting marginalized women and girls:

- Universal Health Care Law (Republic Act No. 11223)
- Law on raising the age of sexual consent from 12 to 16 years old (Republic Act No. 11648)

- Law prohibiting the practice of child marriage (Republic Act No.11596)
- Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children Law (Republic Act No. 11930)
- Law granting benefits to octogenarians and nonagenarians (Republic Act No. 11982)
- Law providing cash assistance and other subsidies for solo parents (Republic Act No. 11861)
- Creation of the Department of Migrant Workers (Republic Act No. 11641)

The above laws are in addition to administrative policies, memorandum circulars and other issuance of the national government agencies to reiterate or to strengthen the implementation of earlier laws pertaining to gender and development.

The integration of gender concerns in national development plans also increased the leverage in advocating for measures and resources for women's participation and promotion of gender equality in spaces where women are underrepresented. This included national action plans on climate change,²⁵ and disaster risk reduction and management.²⁶ Drawing from the insights from the previous action plans, the NAPWPS 2023-2033 emphasized intersectionality and inclusivity, and the importance of gender sensitivity in all spaces and levels of governance.²⁷

Furthermore, the Local Government Code provided LGUs the power to enact ordinances that customizes national law implementation according to the context and needs of peoples living within their

jurisdiction. This is important, especially in areas that include diverse ethnic communities, such as the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

In some cases, LGUs passed ordinances promoting gender rights, which have yet to have a national policy counterpart. For instance, 69 LGUs have already passed an Anti-SOGIE Discrimination Ordinance as of 2023, while a legislative bill on the same has been pending in Congress for 23 years. On 22 December 2023, the Office of the President issued Executive Order No. 51, which provided for the creation of a Special Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) Affairs under the Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the DSWD. Among the functions of the Special Committee are data tracking, policy and programs review and recommendation, facilitation of dialogues and consultations between the government and the LGBTQIA+ community, and implementation of Committee initiatives on inclusive gender equality.

4. EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT CRISES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPFA AND MEASURES TAKEN TO PREVENT THEIR NEGATIVE IMPACT ON PROGRESS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



4.1 COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated gender disparities

As the COVID-19 pandemic led to school closures and increased support demands from family members, women found themselves shouldering greater caregiving responsibilities and accumulating more hours spent on unpaid care and domestic work, including childcare and household chores.²⁸ Additionally, the pandemic made access to essential support services uneven with many women reported limited or no access to medical and social services, sexual and reproductive health services, and Violence Against Women and Girls support.²⁹ To address the impacts of COVID-19 crisis on women and girls, the government has implemented various programs. One example is Republic Act No. 11494 or the ‘*Bayanihan** to Recover As One Act’ (*Bayanihan 2*) wherein, under Section 4.5 of this Act, sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics are required for beneficiaries or recipients of financial assistance, and this information will serve as the basis

* *The Oxford English Dictionary defines Bayanihan as “A traditional system of mutual assistance in which the members of a community work together to accomplish a difficult task”.*

for gender analytics in the post-audit of COVID-19 programs, in accordance with the mandate of the COA under Section 36 of Republic Act No. 9710, the Magna Carta of Women.³⁰ Collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for beneficiaries or recipients of financial assistance is crucial in making gender-responsive programs and initiatives in crisis management and recovery efforts.



4.2 Rising food and fuel prices have significantly impacted women in low-income households

A 2021 Social Weather Station survey revealed that 15.9 percent of women (up from 8.8% pre-pandemic) experienced hunger, and 63 percent reported worsened quality of life.³¹ Additionally, with the country's average inflation from January to September 2021 at 4.5 percent, food, rent, water, and electricity prices were significantly affected.³² Women often prioritize household needs over their own well-being, taking on back-breaking, repetitive, and lower-paying jobs. In response, the women's empowerment and gender equality initiatives in the Philippines have implemented several crucial measures that directly impact women's ability to afford basic necessities by promoting economic empowerment, education, and equitable opportunities. This includes educational empowerment through programs like the Special Training for Employment Program (STEP)

which, notably, has 57 percent of STEP graduates who are female, contributing to improved educational outcomes and skills for women and girls.³³



4.3 Gender-responsive budgeting is crucial for the continuity of gender-focused initiatives

Many countries are experiencing growing public debts that significantly impact their economies. Debt crises pose a threat to women's rights, as countries divert resources away from gender-focused programs, especially due to austerity measures that result in reduced funding for public services and regulations. For women, these budget cuts affect their access to healthcare and other essential services. In the Philippines, gender-responsive budgeting is strongly advocated in the GEWE Plan and has received vital support from the COA, which continuously provides guidance on the mandatory annual audit of GAD funds and capacity building for its auditors. For instance, improved health outcomes for women and girls have been achieved through the implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act, which provided access to various methods of contraception, as well as Executive Order 12, titled 'Attaining and Sustaining Zero Unmet Need for Modern Family Planning', allocated funds and support for sexual and reproductive health commodities and services. Despite the existing debt crisis, these initiatives

ensure continuity in addressing gender-focused issues in the country.



4.4 Armed conflict disrupted gender-focused initiatives and increased women's exposure to violence

Armed conflicts pose significant challenges to women and girls, including displacement, disruptions in accessing gender-focused services, and the threat of gender-based violence. The Women, Peace, and Security chapter of the GEWE Plan 2019-2025 aims to address these challenges by implementing several key measures in the Philippines. These include localizing the Women, Peace, and Security agenda to understand the unique needs and vulnerabilities of women in conflict-affected or vulnerable areas, emphasizing women's role in conflict resolution while addressing their vulnerabilities. Efforts are also being made to directly reduce gender-based violence in these areas through the enforcement of laws on anti-trafficking and violence against women and children, along with the establishment of local committees on VAWC in many provinces, cities, and municipalities. Additionally, the NAPWPS and regional action plans prioritize enhancing women's meaningful participation in decision-making and peace processes, and integrating Women, Peace, and Security commitments into development plans,

including the Bangsamoro Development Plan. These efforts underscore the country's commitment to addressing gender-based challenges in armed conflicts and recognize the importance of women's participation in peace and security processes.



4.5 Addressing the root causes of backlash on gender equality is essential

In the Philippines, backlash against gender equality stems from deeply embedded patriarchal sociocultural norms. These norms perpetuate traditional gender roles and create economic biases, which hinder women's full access to capital and leadership roles, exacerbating gender disparities.³⁴ Additionally, resistance from some religious groups further contributes to the backlash against women's rights initiatives, such as reproductive rights and gender-focused policies.

To counter this backlash, the Philippines prioritizes education, legal protections, and community mobilization. Challenging gender norms, promoting awareness, and fostering dialogue across religious groups are essential steps. The GEWE Plan 2019-2025 outlines strategic actions, including economic empowerment, reducing gender-based violence, and enhancing disaster resilience.³⁵ By collectively addressing these challenges, the country can move toward a more inclusive society.

5. PRIORITIES FOR ACCELERATING PROGRESS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS FOR 2025 TO 2029

In many ways, the COVID-19 pandemic is a watershed for gender equality in that it tested the resilience of existing Philippine systems and mechanisms established for women's human rights protection, in the face of an unprecedented disaster on a global scale. In 2022, after national consultations with stakeholders from the government, women's rights organizations and other civil society organizations, the academe and communities, the PCW came out with an updated version of the GEWE Plan 2019-2025 that discussed the negative impacts of the pandemic to gender equality and presented planned measures to mitigate these. The updated GEWE Plan is the last time-slice framework plan of the long-term perspective plan, the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025. It is a key reference for government agencies in developing their GPBs.

Informed by the landscape analysis of the GEWE Plan 2019-2025 and its updated version, the next five years will see the Philippines continuing to work along the lines of its previously identified priority areas to address the strategy gaps surfaced during the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthen its systems to be more resilient and responsive to needs and emerging issues in the context of disasters and climate change, and amplify its impact to accelerate progress on gender equality in all dimensions. This includes: (a) equality and non-discrimination under the law and

access to justice, (b) quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls, (c) eliminating violence against women and girls, (d) access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and services, and (e) right to work and rights at work (e.g., gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression and, job creation). The right to work has been newly added to the list of priority areas, and is aligned with the country's focus on economic recovery and revitalization post-pandemic. This is especially significant because women's economic empowerment vis-à-vis unpaid care work was one of the areas that was heavily affected during the pandemic.

At the core of the strategies is the challenge of changing social norms and practices that continue to perpetuate discrimination and violence against women. The Philippines is committed to accelerating gender mainstreaming in the government as mandated by the Magna Carta of Women, and engaging women's human rights organizations, the private sector and other non-State actors to realize a society that is gender equal, respectful of diversity and inclusive. Integral to this is improving systems and methodologies to track women's contributions to society, and along intersectional lines, so that the progress to meaningful gender equality can be fully appreciated.



5.1 Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

The PCW will continue to push for the Women's Priority Legislative Agenda in the 19th Congress (2022-2025) to address issues that have hindered women's equal access to justice in courts, and the realization of their rights in the critical areas of family relations, work, gender-based violence and discrimination, political participation, in general.



5.2 Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls

Actions to promote women's and girls' right to education will be focused on addressing the following issues:

- Gender and cultural norms influence women's choice of education resulting in their low enrollment in the STEM fields that are associated with increased income and expanded options for women.

Government agencies, such as the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Science and Technology, TESDA, the PCW, and the Council for the Welfare of Children, shall work together to mainstream women and girls in STEM through IEC campaigns and outreach programs to promote STEM courses; reviewing availability and accessibility of scholarships and other

opportunities for women to consider STEM careers; and engaging government and private sector institutions to develop on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs related to digital technology catering to women, among others.

- Continued vulnerability and heightened risk to sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based discrimination and violence in education and training institutions, alongside the low rate of disclosure despite the increasing incidence.

There is a need to review the functionality and gender-responsiveness of the following policies protecting learners from GBV in schools, or in the context of education:

Republic Act No. 11313 (Safe Spaces Act) is applicable to all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Under this law, all education and training institutions, through its heads, or people of authority, influence or moral ascendancy in schools, have the duty to prevent and address sexual harassment. In line with this provision, schools and training institutions shall have an independent mechanism to respond to cases of sexual harassment. This mechanism, its structure and procedures, shall be communicated to all constituents, teaching and non-teaching employees, and students alike, alongside raising awareness on sexual harassment and gender equality in the institutions.

For basic education, the Department of Education also mandated the creation of child protection committees in all public and private schools. The child protection committee, which

is composed of representatives from school personnel, students and the community, is responsible for developing, implementing and promoting the school's child protection policy. The child protection policy should include measures to prevent and respond to cases of child abuse, including GBV, within the school and against school children, whether these acts are committed by adults (e.g., school personnel) or a fellow learner (in the case of bullying).

- **Gender biases and stereotypes are still embedded in curricula, instructional / training materials, classroom teaching strategies, learning media, and school policies.**

Actions addressing the issue involves monitoring of the implementation of policies mandating gender mainstreaming in education, including review of instructional materials, capacity-building of school administrators and teachers, and implementation of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education.

The COVID-19 pandemic also surfaced other issues, such as the digital divide across students of different profiles (e.g., based on socio-economic class, location, ethnicity, gender), and psychological stress and mental health issues that need to be examined for its gendered impact to inform interventions, whether school-based or beyond.



5.3 Eliminating violence against women and girls

There has been significant achievement over the years with regard to national and local policies and institutional mechanisms on VAW; the continuing challenge is to monitor the full implementation of policies. At the same time, there is a need to review existing responses in the light of the gaps surfaced by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially the reported breakdown of GBV referral pathways in some areas during the critical first months. Widespread adoption of digital technologies for work, commerce, education, and socialization also emphasized a new dimension to GBV, necessitating measures to bolster current responses, and innovating strategies.

Actions in the next five years will focus on strengthening service delivery for women and girl survivors of gender-based violence and discrimination, from community-based mechanisms to the judiciary. This will entail the following:

- **Lobbying for policies at the national and local level to address inequalities of women and men before the law (see the Women's Priority Legislative Agenda in 5.1.);**
- **Prioritizing access of women from marginalized communities and groups to justice, especially women living in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, indigent women, and women from indigenous cultural communities;**

- Ensuring gender-responsiveness of institutions providing intervention and support services to VAW survivors — community-based VAW desks, child protection committees in schools, social welfare office, and actors under the criminal justice system, among others; and
- Addressing technology-mediated VAW, including sexual exploitation, trafficking, online fraud, and prostitution facilitated or committed through online means.

The GEWE Plan 2019-2025 also targets women deprived of liberty as one of the priority groups under Strategic Goal Area 3 on the Significant Reduction in Gender-Based Violence and Enhanced Gender Perspective in Justice, Security and Peace. It is estimated that over 90 percent of women in the country are incarcerated over petty and non-violent offenses, mostly stemming from poverty and lack of options for work. Their situation is one of compounded discrimination: they face social stigma as women and as “criminals”; jail and prison conditions of overcrowding, poor nutrition, lack of health and sanitation facilities, vulnerability to infectious diseases and outbreaks; lack of access to legal assistance; lack of psychosocial support, including for mental health; and higher risk for VAW.

Women left as widows of the increased killings related to drugs and fallen journalists is another priority group. The CHR, DOJ, and DSWD will work on developing an inter-agency body to deliver an integrated package of service to this particularly vulnerable group.



5.4 Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive services

The updated 2019-2025 GEWE Plan identified the following as priority issues as regards women and health and nutrition:

- Persistence of high maternal mortality ratio
- Inadequate access of women and girls to sexual and reproductive health services and information
- High prevalence of malnutrition and iron-deficiency anemia among pregnant women and girls
- Inadequate knowledge and sensitivity of health care providers to particular health-related issues and constraints of poor women and girls
- Growing prevalence of HIV and AIDS
- Poor mental health among women (associated with their multiple roles, gender discrimination and associated factors of poverty, hunger, malnutrition, overwork, domestic violence and sexual abuse)
- Gender-related barriers to Tuberculosis (TB) prevention, diagnosis, and treatment

Several of the planned responses to the above issues are related to the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act, specifically to its provisions on improving the delivery of comprehensive sexuality and reproductive health services, especially in underserved areas and marginalized sectors; making available and accessible reproductive health and family planning supplies to women and men; roll out of

the comprehensive sexuality education in schools, and conducting similar information and education initiatives for communities; capacity building of hospital-based and community-based health personnel and para-professionals, including traditional birth attendants/indigenous health providers; and raising SOGIE awareness and gender sensitivity and responsiveness in health care.

Strengthening gender data collection and research on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and mental health was also identified.



5.5 Right to work and rights at work (e.g., gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression, job creation)

Labor force participation rate of females consistently lags behind that of men: in 2023, it was 51.5 percent compared to 75.4 percent. Unpaid care work remains to be one of the major barriers to women’s full participation in the labor force.³⁶ Related to this is the overrepresentation of women in the informal sector, which reflects the social valuation of women’s work. This overrepresentation stems from two factors. First, there are gender stereotypes that define women’s primary role as caregivers for their families. Second, there is the practical need for women to engage in paid work to alleviate

financial constraints and economic pressures on their households.³⁷ This dual pressure, compounded by women’s circumstances that limit their education, skills and access to resources, as well as lack of viable formal employment (i.e., one that accommodates their gendered realities in the household), push women to take on informal labor despite its risks of low compensation; unfavorable, and sometimes dangerous; work conditions; and minimal to no social protection.

In a 2019 Philippine Institute for Development Studies study, it notes the “lack of access by women to skills training for virtual jobs and e-commerce” as one of the factors of the low number of women’s employment, especially for women looking for paid jobs compatible with their domestic work.³⁸ Female-dominated jobs, such as domestic service work, shop sales assistants, stall and market workers, and food services, also have a high risk of the “destructive digitalization” or displacement by digital technologies.³⁹

This displacement due to technology is not only relevant to women’s work in the country, but also to women’s jobs as overseas labor migrants. Women comprise more than 50 percent of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the past five years, and over 60 percent of them are in work categorized as elementary occupations and service work. These are also occupations where there is high risk for exploitation and abuse. Forging bilateral overseas labor agreements, as well as strengthening of the newly-

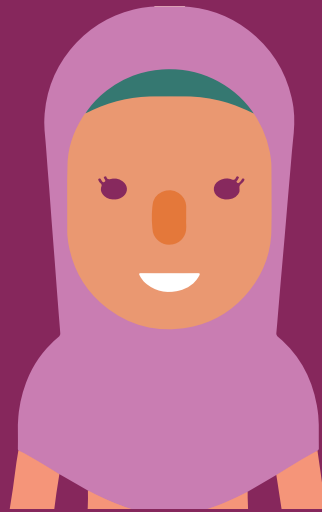
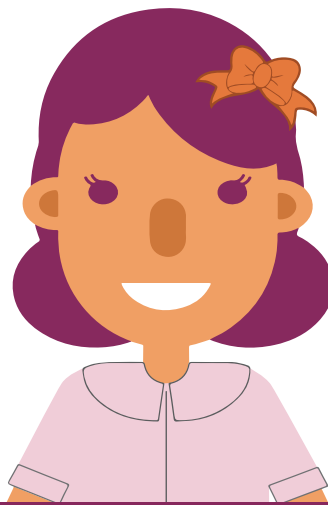
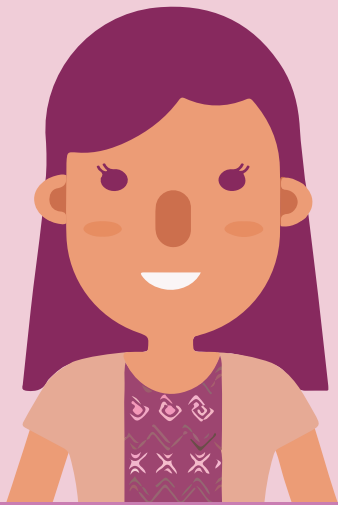
created Department of Migrant Workers (created through Republic Act No. 11641), are positive steps to protecting the rights and welfare of women OFWs in all stages of their migration journey.

Some of the priority issues along the lines of women's right to work are:

- Gender gap in labor force participation rate of women and inadequate appropriate support for care work to enable women to stay in the labor market
- Prevailing gender norms among employers and human resource personnel limit women's employment opportunities, especially in promotion and leadership
- Inadequate workplace health and safety protection of women workers, including sexual harassment and other forms of GBV in the workplace negatively impact work performance
- Policy gaps for the protection of Filipino women migrant workers
- Limited access to digital technologies and upskilling

On the issue of access to digital technologies, it is also crucial to consider the trends in the adoption of new technologies and artificial intelligence in the workplace in developing policies and programs oriented to increasing and sustaining women's employment. Aside from building their capacities to use digital technologies, digital literacy entails developing women's critical thinking in sifting through information available in the internet, particularly because the channel is also used to commit crimes, such as money scams, sexual harassment and exploitation, illegal recruitment and trafficking. There is a need to invest

in the capacity building of institutions and duty bearers and stakeholders – in terms of knowledge and skills, and upgrading structures and processes – to be more attuned and responsive to gender equality challenges in virtual space.



Section 3: Progress Across the 12 Critical Areas of Concern

**Dimension 1:
Inclusive Development, Shared
Prosperity and Decent Work**

**6. ACTIONS TAKEN TO ADVANCE
GENDER EQUALITY IN THE
WORLD OF WORK (INCLUDING
INFORMAL AND NON-STANDARD
EMPLOYMENT AS WELL AS
ENTREPRENEURSHIP)**



**6.1 Strengthened/ enforced laws
and workplace policies and practices
that prohibit discrimination in the
recruitment, retention and promotion of
women in the public and private sectors,
and equal pay legislation**

The Philippines has a strong policy base addressing forms of gender-based discrimination in the world of work. The 1987 Philippine Constitution states women's important role in nation building and advances equality between women and men. This principle is expounded in several laws, most especially in the Magna Carta of Women (2009), which institutionalized gender mainstreaming in all government agencies and instrumentalities, including the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and other agencies regulating and monitoring various aspects of labor, whether in the public or private sector, formal or informal work. Furthermore, the Philippines is the first Asian country to ratify ILO Convention No. 190 (Violence and Harassment Convention) in 2024.

Recently enacted national policies strengthening the welfare of women in marginalized sectors, such as women solo parents (Republic Act No. 11861) and women migrant workers (Republic Act No. 11641), also bolstered measures protecting their rights as workers.

The Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 also incorporates strategies to address all forms of labor market discrimination in work, education, and training toward deep economic and social transformation to reinvigorate job creation and accelerate poverty reduction. The increase in the female labor force participation rate across sectors and industries is a key results indicator.

On March 24, 2024, the Philippines joined the Global Accelerator as a pathfinder country, confirming its commitment to foster a job-rich recovery, extend social protection and facilitate just transition towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



6.2 Introduced/ strengthened gender-responsive job creation and active labour market policies (e.g., education and training, skills, subsidies)

The Philippine government is actively exploring and pursuing initiatives toward developing up-to-date and adaptable education and training programs aligned with emerging trends (e.g., skills and jobs in the digital, green, and care economies); integrating and improving employment facilitation services (e.g., career development support and sector-specific job fairs); intensifying inclusive participation in skills development and employment programs (e.g., for the youth, marginalized, disadvantaged, freelance, gig economy, and vulnerable sectors); and conducting impact evaluation of laws, policies, and institutions vis-à-vis developing policies aimed at responding to labor market issues, such as transportation constraints, security, technological capacities, and gender-based discrimination. There is an on-going process to update the Labor Code of the Philippines. One of the proposed revisions to the law is the insertion of a new book on gender equality, which shall incorporate the standards set by recent laws against gender-based violence in the workplace, the CEDAW, as well as recommendations from the CEDAW Committee on addressing the gender pay gap, among other measures.



6.3 Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace

The country enacted Republic Act No. 11313, or the Safe Spaces Act, in 2019. The law is an update of the previous law on sexual harassment, which only covered acts committed in the workplace and education and training settings to include sexual harassment in public spaces. The corresponding administrative guidelines of agencies issued thereafter provided for interventions and redress mechanisms on sexual harassment against women workers in informal economy and in micro and small businesses, which were not covered by previous policies.



6.4 Improved financial inclusion and access to credit, including for self-employed women

The concerns and issue of women in the informal sector have been incorporated in national development plans, such as Philippine Development Plan, 2017 - 2022, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Plan, 2019-2025, and in sector plans, such as the Blueprint for Decent Employment and Entrepreneurship, 2017-2022, and the Livelihood Agenda 2017-2022. There are also the proposed “Magna Carta of Workers in the Informal Economy”, and

the “Informal Economy Registration and National Database Act” being lobbied in Congress. The enactment of the latter, especially, is expected to facilitate the recognition of the informal sector and its contributions to the national economy, thus paving the way for improved support and protection for workers in the sector.

7. ACTIONS TAKEN TO RECOGNIZE, REDUCE AND/OR REDISTRIBUTE UNPAID CARE AND DOMESTIC WORK, PROMOTE WORK-LIFE AND FAMILY BALANCE AND STRENGTHEN THE RIGHTS OF PAID CARE WORKERS



7.1 Included unpaid care and domestic work in national statistics and accounting (e.g., time-use surveys, valuation exercises, satellite accounts)

The country recognizes the contributions of unpaid care and domestic work to the national economy, and has conducted studies to track such in the past years. In 2019, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (the primary socio-economic policy think-tank of the government) calculated valued unpaid domestic work at PHP 2.5 trillion (USD 43 billion) based on 2015 data. The figure was computed using available statistics from

the National Transfer Accounts and the National Time Transfer Account. Also in 2019, the PSA included a rider time-use survey to the regular LFS to measure unpaid domestic work. The general conclusion from both data collection methods was that women’s unpaid work was not only undervalued but it is also underestimated.

In line with this, the PCW works closely with key government agencies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to support measures related to the unpaid care work of women. It conducted national and regional consultations in 2023 towards developing a National Care Framework and Action Plan, which in turn, can be fed into the Philippine Development Plan. Moreover, both the DOLE and the Civil Service Commission have issued guidelines on telecommuting and flexible work arrangements that benefited women and solo parent employees.

The Philippines has also joined the Global Alliance for Care. At the local level, at least 28 LGUs have ordinances focusing on unpaid care allocating GAD budgets specifically for services related to caregiving, such as *barangay* daycare centers, market roads, and community laundry areas.*

* *The Global Alliance for Care is a “global multi-stakeholder community that facilitates and fosters spaces for dialogue, analysis, exchange of experiences and learning about care, its recognition as a need, as work, and as a right.” OXFAM, “Care Work Matters: A Participatory Approach to Advocating for the Recognition and Redistribution of Unpaid Care and Domestic Work in Local Legislation,” OXFAM, accessed June 29, 2024, <https://philippines.oxfam.org/latest/policy-paper/care-work-matters-participatory-approach>.*



7.2 Expanded support for older persons, persons with disabilities and others needing intense forms of care

Several national policies have been adopted to ensure the well-being and inclusion of older persons, people with disabilities and other groups needing intense forms of care. These included:

- Republic Act No. 11916, which increased the national monthly social pension of indigent senior citizens and provided incentives to private establishments employing older people
- Republic Act No. 11350, which established the National Commission of Senior Citizens to monitor implementation of laws on senior citizens' rights and welfare, and formulate and recommend policies on the same
- Republic Act No. 11223, or the Universal Health Care Act, which targets wider and improved access of women and girls, including those from indigent households, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and indigenous peoples, to comprehensive health services

The above is in addition to administrative policies issued by concerned government agencies promoting the rights of solo parents, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and other vulnerable groups of women with regard to access to decent work.



7.3 Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave

Two national policies were enacted in this regard. First is Republic Act No. 11210 (2019) which increased the number of days for maternity leave to 105 days and for another 30 days (without pay). The law also extended the paternity leave benefits to the woman's partner, regardless of the partner's sexual orientation and gender identity, in the absence of the father of the child, which is a milestone in the pursuit of gender equality and inclusivity in the country.

The second major policy is Republic Act No. 11861 or the Solo Parents Welfare Act (2022). This shortened the prescribed period of employment from 1 year to 6 months to enable the solo parents to avail of the additional parental leave benefits (7 days). This parental leave benefit applies to all solo parent workers regardless of their employment status. The law also mandated concerned agencies to provide protective services for adolescent solo parents.



7.4 Time- and labour-saving infrastructure to reduce the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women

Providing electricity to rural and remote areas that lack access to energy services is a critical component of socio-economic development, improving living standards, and fostering economic opportunities in rural communities. Lack of access to energy contributes to the country's poverty challenges. As of June 2023, the household electrification level is 91.1 percent with 25.3 million households served versus the estimated potential households of 27.727 million (2020 Census on Population and Housing). For the rest of 2023, the estimated unserved households are at 2.454 million.

Water construction and installation projects continue to prioritize the needs of low-income households, and in areas affected by disasters. This included big ticket projects in Leyte, one of the hardest hit provinces by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, and Marawi City, which suffered heavy damage in 2017 during the siege of terrorist groups linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.



7.5 Decent work for paid care workers, including migrant workers

The right of care workers to a decent employment and income, and to be free from abuse and violence, is enshrined in Republic Act No. 11965 or the Caregivers Welfare Act of 2023. The law defined the scope of care work employment, and stated the right of caregivers to overtime pay if they worked beyond eight hours, a night shift differential, 13th month pay, annual service incentive leave, insurance coverage, and PAG-IBIG (savings and home financing) contributions.

The rights and welfare of OFWs has been a priority of the past and current government administrations. As of 2023, almost 60 percent of OFWs are female, with a large majority of them employed in domestic service work. The Philippine government created the Department of Migrant Workers, through Republic Act No. 11641 (2021) to facilitate overseas employment and reintegration of Filipino workers, and promote the empowerment and protection of OFWs through continuous training and knowledge development.

The Philippines, through DOLE, supported the National Action Plan for Fair and Ethical Recruitment and Sustainable Gender Responsive Return and Reintegration developed through the IOM's project Aligning Lenses through

Ethical Recruitment (ALTER), both launched in 2021 in response to the Global Compact Migration.



8. ACTIONS TAKEN TO REDUCE THE GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE



8.1 Integrated gender perspectives in national policies on digital technologies and related programs

The Philippine government continues to strengthen its capacities to harness digital technologies for national development, and ensure that the benefits are accessible to all members of society, including women and girls. A major step in this direction is the implementation of two national surveys: the Women and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Development Index (WIDI) Survey in 2022, and the National ICT Household Survey (NICTS) in 2023. The WIDI Survey aimed to generate baseline data on access, use and skills of women on information and communications technologies – data that will provide a comprehensive evidence base for developing gender responsive ICT policies, plans and programs. The survey included the experience of “cyber-related incidents” including GBV.⁴⁰

The NICTS, on the other hand, will provide data to support policies and plans towards improved ICT services in the country. The survey data is sex-disaggregated.

8.2 Taken measures to support the creation and expansion of safe, affordable, accessible, relevant and inclusive public and private digital tools and services

The Tech4ED (Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development) project is a flagship initiative of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) in the Philippines. It aims to bridge the digital divide and promote inclusive growth by providing access to technology, digital skills training, and online opportunities to underserved communities across the country. This is done through the establishment of eCenters that provide critical e-government and ICT-enabled services in communities with minimal or no access to information and government services.

Tech4ED aims to establish sustainable Centers nationwide to serve as delivery channels for relevant ICT-enabled services and content for the socio-economic development of unserved and underserved communities in order to provide connectivity, access to ICT equipment, and e-government services.



8.3 Introduced or strengthened programs to increase the digital literacy and skills of women and girls

The Philippine government, through its line agencies, is mainstreaming gender in its capacity building programs to address the gender issues that could be addressed by increased digital literacy. These include improving women's productivity and income, increasing opportunities for public participation, and strengthening protection against violence and exploitation. Apart from the DICT, other government agencies, such as on education, labor, trade and industry, tourism, social welfare and law enforcement, also conduct in-person and online seminars and trainings on different topics related to the use of digital tools and platforms along the lines of their respective mandates, and with various participants including children, grassroots women, women entrepreneurs and policy makers.

In 2022, the DICT launched the "Digital Innovation for Women Advancement (DIWA)". The program aims to increase the involvement of Filipino women for young women and girls aged 12 to 24 in ICT through scholarships and mentorship, skills training in basic computer, programming, cybersecurity, and digital communications. The program also facilitates dialogues across the country and the Southeast Asian region to highlight

the underrepresentation of women and girls in ICT, and identify strategies to leverage digital tools and platforms to overcome this.

On a broader scale, the Department of Education launched the "DigiEd (Digital Education) 2028" in January 2024. This flagship program aims to facilitate access to needed digital infrastructure and equipment, including electronic and mobile platforms for teaching and learning. Similarly, the TESDA also has modules on digital literacy. The TESDA Women's Center also partners with the private sector to identify employment opportunities for women in the digital economy, and develop courses to train women for such.

9. EFFECTS OF MACROECONOMIC AND FISCAL POLICY ENVIRONMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPFA AND MACROECONOMIC POLICIES IMPLEMENTED IN SUPPORT OF A MORE GENDER-EQUAL ECONOMY

The primary resources for the implementation of the BPfA are the GAD Budget sourced from government funds and a portion of ODA funds, following the provisions of the Women in Nation Building Act (Republic Act No. 7192). Since 1995, the General Appropriations Act (the annual law that outlines the allotment and allowed expenses under the national budget) has included the allocation of a portion of the annual

budget appropriations of all government agencies and instrumentalities, including the share in the internal revenue allotment of all LGUs, for their gender mainstreaming measures. The passage of the Magna Carta of Women in 2009 further strengthened the implementation of the GAD Budget by establishing institutional mechanisms for monitoring compliance to the law. These include the CHR as GAD Ombud and the COA as oversight for determining the judicious and effective utilization of the GAD Budget.

The mandatory GAD Budget allocation has generally buffered implementation of government measures related to the BPfA from the impact of changes in the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment. Moreover, the country's national budget in the past years has consistently focused on prioritizing human capital development, infrastructure projects, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, among other equally important sectors. For fiscal year 2024, the government has allotted PHP 5.768 trillion (USD 98.384 billion) as its national budget with the majority being allocated for social and economic services.

The Philippines has also introduced inclusive financial policies, which has led to higher financial inclusion of women compared to men. The Passive Income and Financial Intermediary Taxation Act is being discussed in the Congress, and this act aims to achieve a fair and competitive tax system for passive income and financial intermediaries to support capital market development. The goal is to harmonize tax

combinations to make tax structure more efficient, with this benefitting the broader economy including women entrepreneurs and investors.

Dimension 2: Poverty Eradication, Social Protection and Social Services

10. ACTIONS TAKEN TO REDUCE/ ERADICATE POVERTY AMONG WOMEN AND GIRLS

Introduced or strengthened social protection programs for women and girls (e.g., cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for older women)

There are several government pro-poor programs that integrated measures to facilitate women's wider access to resources and promoted gender equality in the country. Three examples are below:

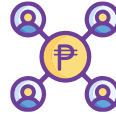
- The 4Ps is a national conditional cash transfer program targeting poor sectors of the population. It was institutionalized in 2019, by virtue of Republic Act No. 11310. As a poverty alleviation measure, it seeks to increase household investment in education, nutrition and health of children and mothers through monthly cash transfers to be used for this purpose. Its conditionalities include attendance of children from three to 18 years old in kindergarten, elementary or high school; full vaccination of children

0-5 years old; regular pre- and post-natal health checkups for pregnant women, and delivery should be facilitated by a professional healthcare provider; and monthly attendance to Family Development Sessions, which includes discussions on gender equality.

The cash grant is usually given to the mother or a responsible female adult in the household, which ensures women's participation in decision-making over its use, if not full control of the amount. To date, the program covers 4.4 million households nationwide.

- The Sustainable Livelihood Program is a capacity-building program for poor, vulnerable, and marginalized families and individuals to acquire the necessary assets to engage in and maintain thriving livelihoods that help improve their socio-economic conditions. This program is linked with the 4Ps as a livelihood complement to its interventions, thus its wide reach of women for economic empowerment. For 2021 and 2022, the program served 262,037 and 32,729 women respectively. From January to December 2023, a total of 149,884 program participants were served through modality. Of the total served, 35,221 were male, 114,303 were female and 360 were people of diverse SOGIE.
- The Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino is a national housing program, which builds affordable housing units targeting informal settlers. The design of the units considered the need for protection and privacy of women and children. Gender concerns have also been considered in site development, with the location of community facilities made accessible and safe for women, children and the elderly like open space, schools, daycare and health centers. Around 40 percent of its housing units were awarded to female-headed households between 2019 to 2023.

11. ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



11.1 Extended social protection to women in informal employment (e.g., subsidies for participation in contributory schemes; inclusion in non-contributory schemes)

To expand the coverage of social insurance, the Philippines reached out to the large, uninsured population of workers particularly the workers in the informal economy/sector – majority of whom are women – by implementing innovative strategies to encourage enrollment, such as the following:⁴¹

- The KaltaSSS Collect Program, a “tie-up with either government entity or a private entity that engages self-employed workers to collect Social Security System (SSS) contributions from such workers.
- The Accreditation Program for Cooperatives, a “tie-up program with cooperatives for SSS coverage of their members.” Accrediting cooperatives as partner agents of SSS enables them to provide transactions to their members in terms of registration, contributions, benefits or loans. As of the end of 2020, SSS has 81 cooperative partners, with 466,023 registered members.
- The AlkanSSSyas for Informal Sector Groups is “characterized by the installation of an actual thrift box, or alkansya, in which workers drop daily amounts in their designated slots. As of the end of 2020, SSS

- has 1,305 partners under the AlkanSSSy program, with 78,834 registered members.
- In 2020, PhilHealth registered 96 million Filipinos,⁴² out of an estimated population of 110 million projected from the August 2015 Population Census by the PSA. As of December 2021, registration was at 98,030,269, or around 89 percent of the projected population of 110,198,654. The direct contributors and their dependents comprised 63 percent of the beneficiaries in 2021. Workers in private establishments (28%) and the self-employed (18%) and their dependents were the main direct contributors. PhilHealth noted the increase in the registration among informal self-employed, which was around 8.4 million in 2019, 9.1 million in 2020 and 9.8 million in 2021. OFWs slightly decreased from 3.6 million in 2020 to 3.4 million 2021. Registered kasambahays (domestic workers) in 2021 were close to 75,000.



11.2 Introduced or strengthened social protection for older women (e.g., expansion of social pensions, moratoriums, inflation adjustment, introduction of pension credits for caregivers)

Other vulnerable groups of women, such as elderly women and adolescent mothers, were also targeted by social pension and protection programs:

- The Social Pension Program for indigent senior citizens is a monthly stipend amounting to PHP 1,000 (USD 17.25) to augment the daily subsistence and other medical needs of indigent senior citizens. Local government units may also opt to

give additional cash or material subsidies and benefits to senior citizens registered in their jurisdictions. In 2024, 59 percent of the recipients under this social pension are female.

- Adolescent mothers and their children are the target beneficiaries of the Social Protection Program for Adolescent Mothers and Their Children. This social protection program was initiated in 2021, and is currently being piloted in 22 cities and municipalities. It aims to provide access to health services like nutrition and mental health support, opportunity to return to school, and a social amelioration program for those belonging to the lowest socioeconomic bracket until they are able to find gainful work or livelihood.

12. ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



12.1 Promoted women's access to health services through expansion of universal health coverage or public health services

The passage of the Universal Health Care Act (Republic Act No. 11223) in 2019 facilitated access of all Filipino citizens to health care without suffering financial hardship. Following this, the DOH issued and implemented specific policies and initiatives targeting vulnerable populations (e.g., those living in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA), indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities) are provided with appropriate health and gender-responsive services:

- Administrative Order No. 2020-0023 titled “Guidelines on Identifying Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas and Strengthening their Health Systems to prioritize GIDAs” with the provision of assistance and support — through health human resources, infrastructure, and medical equipment and supplies towards the equitable distribution of health services and benefits. To address the need to fast-track the establishment of health facilities in GIDA, Administrative Order No. 2021-0029 was issued, which provides for the guidelines on the prioritization of processing applications for DOH authorizations of health facilities in GIDAs;
- Administrative Order No. 2022-0018 “Development and Utilization of the Omnibus Health Guidelines by Life Stage”. It is an overarching policy issuance integrating key policy provisions governing various health programs and various standards of care, including all essential services for women, such as maternal care. The Omnibus Health Guidelines will serve as a guide for an efficient linking of health services across different levels of care and different settings with primary care as the foundation. This includes the “Omnibus Health Guidelines for Adolescents.”
- Health and Wellness Program for persons with disabilities to address the barriers and improve access and reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities to health care services and programs, ensure the accessibility, availability, appropriateness and affordability of habilitation and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, and enhance capacity of health providers and stakeholders in improving their health status. This program as well as the development of the registry of Persons with Disabilities (<https://pwd.doh.gov.ph>) were part of the DOH’s mandate under the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability.⁴³



12.2 Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, maternal health and HIV services

Addressing adolescent pregnancy was declared a matter of urgent national priority under Executive Order No. 141 issued in 2021. The Executive Order emphasized strengthening education of leaders, parents, and other community members about evidence-based strategies to reduce, if not eliminate entirely, adolescent pregnancy, and improve adolescent reproductive health. In the same year, the DOH, together with the Department of Education and the CPD, launched the Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Adolescent Reproductive Health Convergence. Vital components to this convergence are (1) Endorsement and Partnership, (2) Tools and Materials Development, (3) Training and Capacity-Building, (4) Delivery of Quality Adolescent Reproductive Health Services, and (5) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning. The government also engages various stakeholders including health providers, schools, women and youth-focused CSOs in developing IEC materials and conduct community discussions on reproductive and sexual health and rights, family planning, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, as well as gender-based violence.



12.3 Taken measures to support women's mental health, including access to specialized services and counselling

The government accelerated measures to meet demands for mental health services in recent years, bolstered by the passage of the Mental Health Act (Republic Act No. 11036) in 2018. The DOH issued Administrative Order No. 2021-0012, which provided guidelines for the implementation of the Medicine Access Program for Mental Health (MAP-MH). This national program aims not only to increase access to medicines, but also to improve primary health care in underserved communities to prevent mental, neurological and substance use disorders. It also provides for the establishment of an electronic information management system for the MAP-MH. As of 2022, the Philippines has 362 access sites nationwide dispensing 30 mental health medicines for 124,246 service users. Complementing the MAP-MH is the continuous capacity building of health care providers of local government units to respond to mental health issues, under the Mental Health Gap Action Programme, which is an initiative of the World Health Organization to which the DOH is an active partner.

The importance of mental health is also being mainstreamed in various sectors, notably in the workplace and in schools. In 2023, it was reported that 78,449 private establishments have already adopted

mental health workplace policies; 54 hospitals are providing 'behavioral nudges' to help health workers cope with stress; and 273 last-mile elementary schools are serving as implementing sites of a comprehensive range of mental health measures under the Healthy Learning Institutions Framework. The Department of Education is also currently crafting guidelines for the establishment of mental health programs in all elementary and secondary schools in the country. Earlier, the Department of Education issued Department Order No. 14 s.2020, which covered the facilitation of mental health and psychological support services of public and private schools for its students and personnel, especially at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OUTCOMES AND SKILLS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, INCLUDING IN SECTORS WHERE THEY ARE UNDERREPRESENTED



13.1 Taken measures to increase girls' access to, retention in and completion of primary and secondary education

The Philippines has made significant strides in bridging the gender gap in education, successfully closing it in recent years. As of 2020, the cohort survival rate of elementary and secondary students, by sex, provides that girls are more likely to stay and finish school than boys.

Table 1: School completion rate, by sex and school level ⁴⁴

School Level	Completion Rate	
	Male	Female
Elementary	95.5%	90.8%
Junior High School	85.6%	76.2%
Senior High School	84.8%	77.2%

Across intersectional issues and concerns, the Philippines has instituted programs and education modalities that, in effect, broadened the access to education of girls from marginalized communities and groups:

- The Madrasah Education Program aims to provide Muslim learners with appropriate and relevant educational opportunities within the context of their cultures, customs, traditions, and interests.
- The Indigenous People’s Education Program recognizes the right of Indigenous People to basic education that is responsive to their context, respects their identities, and promotes their indigenous knowledge, skills, and other aspects of their cultural heritage. The Indigenous People’s Education Program also supports the realization of the K-12 Basic Education Curriculum, which subscribes to standards and principles that are: inclusive, culture- sensitive, and flexible enough to enable and allow schools to localize, indigenize, and enhance based on the community’s educational and social context.
- Alternative Learning System seeks to provide an alternative path of learning for the out-of-school youth and adults (OSYA) who are basically literate but have not completed 10 years of basic education. It helps school dropouts to complete elementary and secondary education

outside the formal system and supports OSYAs in developing basic and functional literacy skills and access equivalent pathways in completing basic education.

- The Alternative Learning System Integrated Education and Skills Training Program integrates Technical-Vocational Training to the regular Alternative Learning System program. It aims to produce completers that are able to catch up with basic academic education and have technical competencies suitable for immediate employment.
- Alternative Delivery Mode is within the confines of the formal system but allows schools flexibility in terms of duration, place, delivery mode, and time of instruction in order to reach marginalized students and those at risk of dropping out in order to help them overcome personal, social, and economic constraints in their schooling.
- Senior High School Voucher Program provides financial assistance to qualified senior high school learners to enable them to enroll in participating private or non-Department of Education public senior high schools in the form of vouchers.
- Last Mile Schools was launched in 2019 to provide geographically isolated and disadvantaged and conflict-affected (GIDCA) areas with unhampered and equitable access to quality basic education.
- School-based feeding program was implemented to address hunger and encourage learners to enroll; contribute to the improvement of the students’ nutritional status; provide nourishment for their growth and development; help boost their immune system; and enhance and improve their health and nutrition values.
- Alternative Educational Program provides for learners with disabilities who are not able to attend school due to the severity of their disabilities or other circumstances or both. The range of alternative educational programs or placements may include, but not limited to, home-based, hospital-based, or community-based instruction.



13.2 Financial assistance and scholarships for tertiary education

The CHED offers several scholarships and financial assistance for college education. These mostly target indigent students, but data from recent years have seen more female students accessing assistance than their male counterparts. For instance, the beneficiaries of the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education (UAQTEA) program has been a significant initiative of the Philippine government to ensure equitable access to tertiary education. This program provides Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) and Free Higher Education (FHE) to eligible students, aiming to remove financial barriers to education and promote social equality.

As of the academic year 2020-2021, the program provided TES grants to 437,153 students, with 177,867 or 41 percent male and 259,286 or 59 percent female beneficiaries. In the academic year 2021-2022, TES grants were given to 364,742 students, with 142,362 or 39 percent male and 222,380 or 61 percent female beneficiaries. The UAQTEA program aims to provide TES grants to 386,326 students in the academic year 2022-2023, with 148,518 or 38 percent male and 237,808 or 62 percent female beneficiaries. Similarly, female FHE beneficiaries outnumber the males: in the academic year 2020-2021, the program has provided FHE to 1,609,802 students, with 677,783 or 42 percent male and 932,019 or 58 percent

female beneficiaries. In the academic year 2021-2022, FHE were given to 2,023,388 students, with 810,149 or 40 percent male and 1,213,239 or 60 percent female beneficiaries.



13.3 Promoted women and girls' participation in STEAM courses and non-traditional fields of education and skills training

The CHED data also showed modest increase in the numbers of females enrolling in Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, and Mathematics (STEAM) programs. From 2020 to 2023, there was an increase of 37.11 percent of female enrollees in STEAM programs. The number of women enrollees in Non-Traditional Trade programs, such as Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery, Automotive and Land Transportation, Construction, Electrical and Electronics, ICT; and Metals and Engineering also increased by 8.7 percent in 2023.

From 2020 to 2023, the TESDA partnered with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to implement the latter's Skills for Prosperity Programme in the Philippines (SfP - Philippines). The SfP Philippines has four areas of achievement: (1) Enhanced Equity, (2) Improved Quality of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), (3) Enhanced Relevance of Skills Delivery to the Labour Markets, and (4) Improved Cost Effectiveness of TVET Systems. Under the equity

pillar, the program widened access to skills development and TVET among marginalized groups, such as youth, women, indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities by mainstreaming gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) in national and sub-national TVET policies and programs. Key initiatives included addressing challenges in TVET access for persons with disabilities, capacity-building programs, fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, developing a disability inclusion action plan, and integrating GESI recommendations into policy frameworks (ILO, 2023).

14. ACTIONS TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT ECONOMIC RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CLOSES GENDER GAPS IN POVERTY, EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL PROTECTION, EDUCATION, AND HEALTH

The government implemented cash subsidy programs benefiting the most disadvantaged sectors and households to buffer them from the worst impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This included populations considered “poorest of the poor” (already identified through the 4Ps), senior citizens, solo parents, transport and other displaced workers, and repatriated and distressed OFWs. These subsidies ranged from PHP 5,000 to PHP 8,000 (USD 100 -150), and more than half of the recipients were females. The World Bank estimated that had it not been for the infusion of emergency cash subsidies, the poverty rate in the country

would have been two percent higher in 2021. Apart from the cash grants through the national social amelioration program, were other interventions, such as cash-for-work programs, small business loans, and LGU-initiated distribution of food packs and basic medical supplies. All in all, PHP 1.49 trillion (USD 29.3 billion) or about eight percent of the country’s **gross domestic** product was expended for social protection and economic-related responses in 2020.

The pandemic also facilitated the shift to hybrid modalities for services delivery, education and training, business, and livelihood, and with it increased public investment in digital infrastructure and systems. The spaces opened by this shift were quickly harnessed by the government, the private sector and civil society to build the digital literacy and capacities of women and girls – and its positive results are evident in the present times. This is particularly relevant in the critical areas of education (minimized school disruptions, such as climate-induced disasters like heat waves, because classes could be conducted online), health (access to telehealth services that cut down travel costs to health facilities and other incidental expenses), and livelihood (women’s increased participation in e-commerce as sellers and consumers).

**Dimension 3:
Freedom from violence, stigma and
stereotypes**

**15. TARGETED ACTIONS TO ADDRESS
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:
PRIORITIES AND CONTEXTS**



**15.1 Intimate partner violence, including
sexual violence and marital rape**

The 2022 NDHS also showed a lower percentage of women respondents saying they experienced physical, sexual and emotional abuse from their partners: from 24 percent in 2017 to only 18 percent in 2022. Similarly, the reported cases of intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women have generally declined in the past years. From the data of the Philippine National Police, there was a 30 percent decrease in the cases they received in 2018 (18,947) compared to 2023 (13,213). This does not necessarily mean that fewer women are experiencing intimate partner violence and sexual violence, especially in the light of the 2022 NDHS finding that very few women seek help or disclose their experience: of the women who experienced VAW, only 34 percent sought help for physical and sexual violence, with less than 10 percent of them reporting to authorities (village, police) opting instead to go to their family (60%) and friends (11%).

Apart from this, there is still an urgent need to look into this issue, especially with the emerging forms of technology-mediated violence, which can be more insidious and challenging to address because of its potential long-term impact on the survivor's mental health. Intimate partner abuse involving people with diverse SOGIE is also largely invisible given the stigma attached to members of the LGBTQIA+ community and the lack of protection for them against discrimination and violence.

Two legal victories were won in the recent years: the passage of Republic Act No. 11648 in 2022 that changed the age for statutory rape from below 12 years old to 16 years old and below; and the Supreme Court decision on infidelity as a form of intimate partner violence [also called Violence against Women and their Children in the Philippines], specifically psychological violence. Of the latter, the Supreme Court stated the elements: 1) the offended party is a woman and/or her child or children; 2) the woman is either the wife or former wife of the offender; 3) the offender causes on the woman and/or child mental or emotional anguish; and 4) the anguish is caused through acts of public ridicule or humiliation, repeated verbal and emotional abuse, denial of financial support or custody of minor children or access to the children or similar to such acts or omissions.



15.2 Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and workplaces

The passage of Republic Act No. 11313, otherwise known as the “Safe Spaces Act”, expanded the coverage of the current anti-sexual law (which only penalizes its commission by a person with higher rank or moral ascendancy over the complainant, and in work and education settings) to include acts against one’s peers or subordinate and in public spaces, such as transport terminals, parks and streets, and online platforms, among others. Prior to this, a survey commissioned by the UN Women Safe Cities Program found that three out of five women in Metro Manila experienced sexual harassment at least once in their lifetime in a public space. Half of the respondents did not report the incident, with 20 percent of them saying they were overcome with fear. In 70 percent of the cases, the perpetrator was a stranger.



15.3 Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology

The Philippines remains a prime target for online sexual abuse and exploitation of children, owing to factors, such as poverty, fluency in English, and widespread internet access. At the height

of the COVID-19 pandemic, data shows a 264.6 percent surge in reports related to OSAEC, which placed the country as one of the global hotspots for this form of violence. In 2022, an International Justice Mission study said that 1 in 100 children in the country have been trafficked to produce sexual exploitation materials.

The passage of Republic Act No. 11930 in 2022 strengthens the protection measures to match the technological and digital advancements since the passage of Republic Act No. 9775 or the Anti-Child Pornography Act in 2009. It presents a comprehensive definition of OSAEC, and mandates key government agencies — from the law enforcement to local government units to schools — to adopt measures to address this issue, and factors fueling its practice and prevalence.

The expanded Anti-Trafficking law, Republic Act No. 11862, was also enacted in 2022, in response to the similar issue. This law amended Republic Act Nos. 9208 and 10364 to update the list of qualified trafficking to include:

- when the crime committed during a crisis, disaster, public health concerns, pandemic, a humanitarian conflict, or emergency situation, or when the trafficked person is a survivor of a disaster or a human-induced conflict;
- when the trafficked person belongs to an indigenous community or religious minority;
- when the trafficked person is a person with disability;
- when the crime has resulted in pregnancy;

- when the trafficked person suffered mental or emotional disorder as a result of being victim of trafficking; and
- when the act is committed by or through the use of ICT or any computer system.

Internet and financial intermediates will also be held liable if they knowingly or by gross negligence allow the use of their infrastructure to promote TIP.



15.4 Child, early and forced marriages

Under the Family Code, the legal age of marriage is 18 years old. However, in some religions and cultures, child marriage is practiced. With the enactment of Republic Act No. 11596, the practice of child marriage is recognized as a crime across the Philippines. It addresses the legal gaps that allow this practice that threatens the health, well-being, and development of children. It also protects girls from being trapped in unwanted marriage, early pregnancy, violence, and other violations to their human rights and dignity.

16. PRIORITY ACTIONS TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



16.1 Strengthening of VAW laws, including their implementation and monitoring

The following national laws on specific VAW concerns were enacted in the past five years:

- Republic Act No. 11313 recognizes that sexual harassment can be committed between peers or by a subordinate to a superior, by a student to a teacher or by a trainee to a trainer. It also penalizes sexual harassment that occurs in public spaces and online platforms.
- Republic Act No. 11648 raises the age for determining the commission of statutory rape from 12 years old to 16 years old, thereby casting a wider net to protect more children from abuse and exploitation.
- Republic Act No. 11862 updates the list of qualified trafficking and makes internet intermediaries accountable if they knowingly or by gross negligence allow their infrastructure to be used for the purpose of promoting trafficking in persons (TIP).
- Republic Act No. 11930 penalizing online sexual abuse and exploitation of children, and the use of children in producing sexually exploitative materials.

To guide actions towards ending VAW in the Philippines, the following national action plans were adopted and/or being developed:

- The 4th National Strategic Action Plan

Against TIP 2023-2027 (Strat Plan 4) provides framework for members and partners of the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (IACAT) to effectively design, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate anti-trafficking interventions that make a positive difference in four end of strategy outcomes: prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership.

- The National Action Plan to End VAW, which will be informed by the results of the comprehensive assessment of Republic Act No. 9262 implementation and outcomes 20 years after its passage.

To further support the implementation and monitoring of VAW laws, the following policies were issued:

- PCW - Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (PCW-IACAT) Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-001, which provides specific guidelines for identifying gender issues and mandates within the context of TIP and designing corresponding GAD plans and programs to implement the Strat Plan 4.
- DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2023-181, which provides LGUs with further guidelines on the operationalization of their Local Council Against Trafficking and Violence Against Women and their Children (LCAT-VAWC).
- DILG-PCW Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-001 provides guidelines on the localization of the Safe Spaces Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, particularly the provisions on gender based sexual harassment in streets and public spaces.⁴⁵

In addition, the IACVAWC has initiated a VAW Data Harmonization Project to address the apparent lack of a unified data collection system and ensure

proper documentation, response, and management of reported VAW cases. Under this project, a Standard VAW Intake Form was developed along with a Service Referral Form and Consent Form, which contain common data fields on the details of the incident, including the information of the victim-survivor and the perpetrator.



16.2 Strengthening of services for victim-survivors of VAW

In 2021, the PCW partnered with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and the CHR in establishing a Joint VAW Referral Service Mechanism through IBP Chapters nationwide. The partnership aims to improve victim-survivors' access to free and accessible legal assistance, psychosocial counseling, and other referral services. The IBP National GAD Office also developed the guidelines of the referral system to be implemented through its Chapters, in coordination with PCW and CHR Regional Offices.

The CHR's E-Lawyering aims to provide legal assistance to clients, especially those who belong to the disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable sectors in order to respond to their legal concerns and to provide immediate and convenient access to justice. From January to July 2021, 21 cases involving women and girls were received through the platform. Most of these cases pertain to violations of

Republic Act No. 9262, (intimate partner violence) followed by cases of violence committed in online spaces. The CHR also launched the e-Report as Gender Ombud during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an online portal that provided digital legal assistance and other support to victim-survivors of GBV, especially during the periods of lockdown. Sectors are specified per report to ensure that the specific experiences of marginalized and vulnerable groups, including girl-children, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women human rights defenders, women in informal sector, rural and urban poor, the elderly, and migrant women, are captured.

To further encourage help-seeking behaviors among victim-survivors and the general public, the following reporting mechanisms were made available: integration of the eReport – Women Abuse Module in the mobile eGovPH Super Application; inclusion VAWC and other GBV emergencies and distressed calls in the Enhanced 911 National Emergency Hotline; and the institutionalization of the Makabata Helpline 1383 for reporting incidents related to child abuse including OSAEC. The IACVAWC Secretariat is also developing a National Service Directory, which shall contain information on services and facilities that can be accessed by victim-survivors and their families.



16.3 Strengthening of measures for improving the understanding of the extent, causes and consequences of VAW

The PCW actively engages government agencies, local government units, the private sector and civil society organizations to implement continuous capacity building on addressing GBV and gender mainstreaming. This includes forging partnerships for collaborative work and technical assistance in conducting seminars and training on VAW related topics, developing standards and protocols in handling VAW cases and gender mainstreaming, among others. The PCW GAD webinar sessions, which have modules covering gender issues in the country, including VAW, are also uploaded and publicly available in YouTube.

The country also observes Women's Month (March), and the 18 Days of Activism against VAW (25 November to 12 December), which serve as platforms to amplify messages against gender-based violence. During this period, government offices are enjoined to organize activities to promote gender equality and provide sufficient time and opportunities for their employees to participate in the same.

17. STRATEGIES TO PREVENT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



17.1 Create safe environments including schools, workplaces, and public spaces

Creating safe spaces for women and girls is a collective effort by all sectors of society — government, the private sector, civil society.

- As a response to the gaps and challenges in addressing GBV at the community level, especially during emergencies and disasters, the *Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan** (PKKK) implemented a program on community mobilization in addressing violence called Gender-Based Violence Watch Group. The group is composed of women-leader volunteers who keep track of the needs, issues, and actions of women and girls in their communities and also serve as their peer counselors. PKKK has organized GBV Watch Groups in 131 *barangays* in the following provinces: Luzon (Batangas, Bulacan, Pampanga, Camarines Sur); Visayas (Negros Occidental, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Bukidnon, and South Cotabato).
- Having recognized that the program is an effective approach in addressing GBV/VAW at the community-level, the IACVAWC agreed to adopt the GBV Watch Group as a strategy to strengthen community-based approaches in the prevention of GBV/VAW and the provision of assistance

to victim-survivors. In relation, IACVAWC will issue a resolution to officially adopt the GBV Watch Group as a strategy, including the operational guidelines for its implementation.

- Localization of national policies to contextualize responses to GBV through a more direct participation of community women in the process. The DILG encourages LGUs to pass a GAD Code in consultation with their women constituents and based on the women's empowerment and gender equality agenda of the national government.
- In some instances, local ordinances also present a more progressive stance in its response to gender issues than national laws. For instance, there are LGU ordinances protecting people with diverse SOGIE against violence and discrimination, despite the absence of a national law on this, to date. This is largely due to the strong lobby of the LGBTQIA+ community, together with other civil society groups working on gender equality and gender equality champions. These ordinances contain some of the essential provisions from the Anti-Discrimination bill being lobbied in Congress. This, however, does not diminish the need to have a national law passed, which would set minimum standards in defining acts of discrimination and violence, as well as mandated responses to eliminate these. As of 2023, there are 69 local government units — from the *barangay* to the provincial level — that have an Anti-SOGIE Discrimination Ordinance.⁴⁶
- The Department of Tourism involves the communities and the private sector to ensure that the protection of women and children's rights are integrated in their sustainable tourism plans and operations. This is done mainly through the Tourism Integrates, Supports and Minds Women's

* The name of this women's organization may be translated into English as the 'National Coalition of Women in Rural Areas.'

Respect and Child Safety (TourISM WoRCS) Program, which is a series of capacity building sessions with tourism frontliners, such as hotel and recreation personnel, and transport service workers on GBV issues in tourism, as well as their role in the local reporting and response mechanisms addressing cases of such. Moreover, the Department of Tourism issued Department Order No. 54 in 2019. This administrative policy establishes the guidelines for the creation of Gender and Development, Women and Child Safe (WoCS) Tourism Desks. The WoCS Tourism Desks serves as the focal point of the Department of Tourism's gender mainstreaming efforts in tourism programs and projects at the local level. It is also charged to collect and create a database on information related to women and children's cases, including GBV, in the tourism industry.

The PCW has formalized an agreement with the SM Supermalls, one of the biggest mall chains in the country, to jointly conduct advocacy and information dissemination activities on laws protecting and affecting women and girls for the latter's mall managers, operations and customer relations services teams, and janitorial and security personnel.



17.2 Raising public awareness to change attitudes and behaviours

The PCW launched several initiatives focused on raising public awareness on GBV and gender equality, utilizing both traditional and digital channels to reach audiences across ages and income classes around the country.

TNK is a weekly radio program that aims to increase public awareness on government efforts to promote gender equality and address women's concerns. It is a joint effort of the PCW and the Presidential Broadcast Service – Bureau of Broadcast Services. It currently airs every Friday, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Radyo Pilipinas 1 738kHz AM radio and its affiliate provincial stations nationwide, and live-streamed on the official Facebook page of the PCW (@PCWgovPH) and Radyo Pilipinas 1 (@radyopilipinas1). The program is also simulcast on digital TV through Channel 3 (TVPlus) and Channel 45-49 (Affordabox).

In 2022, PCW launched the “VAW Survivor Stories,” a series of documentaries with interviews of victim-survivors of violence. The stories highlighted how survivors dealt with the impact of VAW in their lives, and how they were able to overcome the challenges through the protection and reliefs provided by anti-GBV laws.

A first of its kind for PCW, the “VAW Social Experiment project” aimed to go

to the communities and see the citizens' perception of and action toward VAW. Striving to be an eye-opener and a wake-up call to survivors, their friends and families, community, and duty-bearers, this involved staging scenarios of VAW and documenting the reactions of onlookers. The Philippine Educational Theater Association Plus was tapped in the production of the social experiment, which aims to gather insights regarding VAW that can be useful in gauging the public's knowledge of VAW and anti-VAW laws.

The PCW, in partnership with DDB Group Philippines, developed three radio plugs entitled "Macho Choir", featuring three 30-second nursery melodies with lyrics emphasizing that catcalling is a form of sexual harassment. With "Do the Macho Choir Video Challenge", participants were encouraged to sing, dance, act, and give their own creative spin to the Macho Choir and post their take on one or all of the plugs under the hashtag, #DoTheMachoChoir.

The PCW Cine Juana Digital Shorts Competition tapped on the power of video films to generate conversations, raise awareness and inspire actions on GBV. The competition had three categories: #JuanParaKayJuana (men supporting women), #LabanJuana (women against GBV), and #LigtasJuana (promoting safe spaces).

Attended by over 500 Millennials and Generation Z members, including junior and senior high school students, Sangguniang Kabataan officials, boy

and girl scouts, and other regional participants, the 2019 Youth Forum on VAW served as a venue to promote the concept on non-violence and positive masculinities, and to raise awareness on VAW and other laws protecting women and girls through age-appropriate core messages.

18. ACTIONS TAKEN TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



18.1 Collected data to better understand the magnitude of technology-facilitated violence, drivers and consequences

The government strives to improve its documentation and data management systems to better capture and generate comprehensive information on GBV and child abuse and exploitation, including those occurring online. The Republic Act No. 11930 (Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Law), which was enacted in 2022, provided for the creation of the National Coordination Center against OSAEC and Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (NCC-OSAEC-CSAEM) under the direction of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT). The IACAT is composed of 10 key government departments directly engaged in actions

against trafficking, including agencies with critical functions related to OSAEC and Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM): Department of Foreign Affairs, DOJ, DICT, DSWD, National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police, and the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

Under Section 30(d) of the law, the NCC-OSAEC-CSAEM is tasked with the following:

Development of a monitoring and data collection system or database, for purposes of ensuring efficient collection and storage of data on all OSAEC and CSAEM cases, including:

1. the number of cases being investigated, submitted for prosecution, dropped, filed or are pending before the courts, as well as the number of convictions and acquittals;
2. the profile/information on each case;
3. the number of victims of OSAEC and CSAEM referred to the agency by countries/area and by area of origin; and
4. disaggregated data on OSAEC and CSAEM victims and the accused/defendants as to gender, age and nationality.” (Section 30)

At present, statistical data on OSAEC cases could be drawn from government law enforcement and social welfare agencies that provide direct support to rescued children (administrative data). Researches conducted and published by the academe and civil society organizations, including international organizations, such as UNICEF and the International Justice Mission, are also sources of data on the dynamics and impact of

OSAEC and CSAEM impact useful for programming interventions.



18.2 Strengthened legislation and provision of support services

Apart from the already enacted law on OSAEC and CSAEM (Republic Act No.11930), there are bills filed in Congress to update Republic Act No. 9262 (on intimate partner violence) to include specific provisions on violence committed through digital means and platforms.

The Philippine National Police has an existing Memorandum of Agreement with (G-Xchange, PayMaya, CoinsPH) purposely to cooperate and coordinate in the effective prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution of cybercrime and cyber related offenses that utilize their applications, documents, as a means for the commission or as a facility for the transfer or receipt of the proceeds of any crime or unlawful activity. The Philippine Internet Crimes Against Children Center (PICACC), which was established on February 27, 2019, is a model for an enhanced global response against online sexual exploitation of children, in cooperation with the local and international law enforcement, such as the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center (PNP-WCPC), the National Bureau of Investigation’s Anti-Human Trafficking Division, the Australian Federal Police, the United Kingdom

National Crime Agency, and the National Police of the Netherlands; in partnership with non-government organization, International Justice Mission. From 2019 to April 8, 2024, the PNP-WCPC through PICACC received 199 referrals from foreign counterparts, of which 99 were operated, 384 victims were rescued, 83 facilitators/perpetrators were arrested and 35 were convicted.



18.3 Implemented awareness raising initiatives

The PNP Anti-Cybercrime Group annually conducts its AngelNet Summit as part of its initiative in combatting gender-based online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse and exploitation of children. In 2023, the Aleng Pulis and the Cybersquad was launched during the AngelNet Summit. This is a virtual helpline featuring an online caricature of a female police officer to address issues related to women and children's safety, protection, and empowerment. Although mainly a portal for reporting cybercrimes, including OSAEC and CSAEM, its website also features toolkits and other resources to increase knowledge and skills to address technology-mediated violence.

The DOJ NCC-OSAEC-CSAEM leads the observance of the Safer Internet Day every second Tuesday of February, pursuant to Proclamation No. 417, series of 2018.

19. RESOURCING WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS TO COMBAT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Government agencies and local government units partner with women's organizations on various initiatives to eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination in the country. In collaborative work, government resources extended to the latter could be financial or material in form, as well as non-tangible, such as endorsement and assistance in reaching target communities and groups. There is no data available documenting how much public funds were given to women's organizations to implement programs, projects or activities against GBV.

20. ACTIONS TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AND GIRLS, AND TO COMBAT DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER BIAS IN THE MEDIA, INCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA



20.1 Promoted the participation and leadership of women in the media

In 2022, the Media and Gender Equality Committee organized the Reel Revolution: Young Filipino Filmmakers Film Labs and Festival, a program where young filmmakers made short films that promote gender sensitivity and equality after undergoing a series of workshops and laboratories. The workshops included the gender-fair media guidebook, basic GAD concepts, women in the media, and other relevant topics.

21. ACTIONS TAKEN SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST MARGINALIZED GROUPS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS



21.1 Women migrant workers / Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)

The Department of Migrant Workers, the primary agency of the country tasked to protect the rights and promote the welfare of OFWs, was established in 2022, to consolidate and merge the then various government agencies working on labor migration concerns. In doing so, it became the central hub for interventions and services for distressed OFWs in all stages of migration cycle, i.e., pre-deployment, during deployment, and post-migration (return and reintegration), that, in effect, streamlined the process for migrant women accessing assistance.

Alongside this development, the country also actively engages the international community to create a safer environment for migration. The Philippines is one of the 15 champion countries for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which is an international agreement on a common approach to managing international migration and includes objectives aimed at addressing migrants' vulnerability to violence and discrimination, especially by women and girls. The Philippines participates in the International Dialogue

on Migration, the Global Forum on Migration and Development, and the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime.



21.2 Efforts have been made to align the indigenous judicial system with CEDAW and enhance the representation of indigenous women

To address violence against indigenous women and girls and promote their rights, the Philippines has taken significant steps, including aligning customary and indigenous judicial systems with the CEDAW, and establishing mechanisms to handle complaints against government officials, considering evidence rules and customary law of indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples under the Indigenous People's Rights Act. Specifically, the Inter-Agency Coordinating Indigenous Peoples Rights Violations Quick Response Mechanism was created to address violations of indigenous peoples' rights. While it is not yet fully operational, its goal is to ensure that government bodies, including the DOJ, file appropriate cases against alleged perpetrators of violations affecting indigenous cultural communities and indigenous peoples.⁴⁷

Furthermore, the government ensures that indigenous cultural communities/

indigenous peoples have mandatory representation in policymaking bodies and local legislative councils (as stipulated in Section 16 of the Indigenous People's Rights Act). Indigenous People Mandatory Representatives actively participate in decision-making processes, advocating for indigenous peoples' issues and concerns. Currently, 824 indigenous women serve as mandatory representatives across regional, provincial, municipal, and *barangay* levels, comprising nearly 21 percent of all seated Indigenous People Mandatory Representatives. Notably, consultations with indigenous women in the BARMM have yielded positive gains. During consultations for the Bangsamoro Organic Law, one of the two seats allotted for women under the Bangsamoro Transition Authority was given to an indigenous woman.



21.3 Established more inclusive and supportive environment for women with disabilities

Regional offices of the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) have improved accessibility to legal services for persons with disabilities, including women. Specifically, a policy was implemented to provide sign language interpretation for deaf women seeking justice and legal remedies. The National Council on Disability Affairs supports this initiative through an augmentation fund.

Moreover, public attorneys and prosecutors have actively participated in orientation sessions. These sessions covered disability laws, basic courtesies toward persons with disabilities, and the appropriate language when referring to persons with disabilities, including women. Additionally, disability sensitivity training has been conducted for various stakeholders and frontliners, spanning government agencies, private entities, and hospitals.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), as part of the Sub-Committee on Access to Justice and Anti-Discrimination, ensures equal treatment for women and girls with disabilities at its Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC). These combined efforts contribute to addressing violence against women with disabilities and promoting their rights.



21.4 Provided wider and improved non-discriminatory access to comprehensive health services for women living with HIV/AIDS

The Philippine HIV and AIDS Policy Act addresses issues of violence against women living with HIV/AIDS by ensuring access to HIV and AIDS-related services without discrimination. By eliminating stigma, promoting testing, and providing comprehensive

care, the law contributes to preventing violence against women living with HIV/AIDS. Additionally, it prohibits discriminatory acts in various contexts, safeguarding the rights and well-being of affected individuals.

Moreover, the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act guarantees comprehensive reproductive health care, such as contraception, sexuality education, and maternal care, while also addressing GBV and preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. The Philippines provides free antiretrovirals to people living with HIV funded by the government. Additionally, the Universal Health Care Law prioritizes equitable access to health services. This includes a provision that women living with HIV/AIDS can access preventive, curative, and rehabilitative methods without financial hardship. Partnerships between the DOH and LGUs help establish social hygiene clinics for HIV/AIDS care. Meanwhile, the Department of Education also conducts training to strengthen health literacy and awareness related to HIV and AIDS. These initiatives are vital in preventing issues of violence by providing quality health care, reducing vulnerabilities, and promoting the rights and dignity of women living with HIV/AIDS.



21.5 Increased awareness-building initiatives aim to prevent violence against Muslim women and girls

The relaunch of the gender-responsive legislator handbook in 2021 by the PCW addresses gaps in legal protection of marginalized groups, including Muslim women. In addition, the Department of Education's support for Muslim Filipino women's right to wear the hijab in schools is essential in promoting understanding and respect for diverse religious practices and helps reduce stereotypes and misconceptions, and prevent any form of violence. For example, in Physical Education classes, Muslim girls can wear appropriate clothing based on their religious beliefs, and they are not required to participate in non-Muslim religious rites.

Furthermore, efforts have been made to align Presidential Decree No. 1083 or the Code of Muslim Personal Laws, which recognizes the legal system of Filipino Muslims, with the CEDAW in order to address gender-related issues, including child marriage. If the law gets amended, clear guidance would help prevent misunderstandings and ensure that religious practices do not harm vulnerable groups. These efforts combine legal reforms, religious guidance, and awareness-building to protect minority religious communities, particularly women and children, from violence associated with child marriage.



21.6 Implemented safeguarding measures for refugees and internally displaced women and girls

In the Philippines, armed conflict and natural disasters are the primary factors causing internal displacement for women and girls. Policies ensuring the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly during armed conflicts, are in effect. These policies include the NAPWPS 2017–2022 and the BARMM Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (RAPWPS). Aligned with the BARMM RAPWPS, the Bangsamoro Women Commission has implemented measures to prevent violence against women in BARMM. Additionally, the National Plan of Action for Children 2017–2022 aligns with the Strategic Action Plan on VAWC and the NAPWPS, focusing on girl child issues in conflict-affected areas. Furthermore, the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act offers specific safeguards against abuse, violence, neglect, cruelty, and discrimination for children in conflict situations.

During natural disasters, laws, such as the Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act, safeguard the rights of girls and boys. Protection is given to vulnerable populations during emergencies and armed conflicts. Additionally, the expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act is embodied in the third National Strategic

Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons 2017–2022, which also addresses trafficking that occurs in the context of disasters and conflicts. These efforts ensure that violence against refugees and internally displaced women and children is addressed, preventing harm and contributing to improved safety and support during crises.



21.7 Promoted rural women’s economic empowerment and awareness to reduce vulnerability to violence

Women’s economic empowerment plays a crucial role in reducing their vulnerability to violence, including women living in remote and rural areas. Poverty incidence among women is higher in rural areas compared to urban settings. Recognizing this, government agencies, e.g., DSWD, DOLE, DA, NAPC, Cooperative Development Authority, and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), implemented various livelihood and entrepreneurship programs. These programs aim to increase women’s income and build their confidence, and have resulted in the subsistence incidence among individuals residing in rural areas decreased by 6 percent, with women experiencing a 4 percent decrease. Additionally, the magnitude of food poverty decreased by 44 percent among rural residents and 41 percent among women. The government also implemented rural microenterprise

programs, primarily benefiting women micro-entrepreneurs, such as the ‘One Town, One Product’ program.⁴⁸

Furthermore, leveraging digital technology provides a platform to reach more women and girls, including parents, increasing awareness and reducing vulnerability to violence against women and online sexual abuse. The government has also created and distributed knowledge products in various mediums to raise awareness about the rights of rural women, further reducing their vulnerability to violence.



21.8 Enhanced protection of people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities

Efforts are made to address the vulnerability of women and girls, including those with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE). Specifically, the GEWE Plan recognizes the varying health needs of the LGBTQIA+ community and has modified the Results Matrix to specifically highlight the needs of these individuals, especially within the context of the following gender issue statements. This includes ensuring access to sensitive and inclusive healthcare services, promoting awareness, and advocating for their rights. Additionally, LGUs have implemented the Anti-Discrimination Law and Safe Spaces Act within schools, ensuring protection of LGBTQIA+ community. These efforts contribute

to reducing violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



21.9 Empowering older women to reduce their vulnerability to violence

The Civil Service Commission has issued resolutions encouraging the participation of Muslim women and women from marginalized groups, including those with disabilities, pregnant women, and senior citizens, in the civil service. In 2019, the State released the Omnibus Guidelines for various scholarship programs, including the Training for Work Scholarship Program, Special Training for Employment (STEM) Program, Private Education Student Financial Assistance, and UAQTE Act. Among the special target beneficiaries are senior citizens, ensuring their empowerment through education and training. Additionally, indigent senior citizens are entitled to a monthly cash stipend of PHP 500 (USD 10). As of June

2019, a total of 210,959 beneficiaries, the majority of whom are women, received this stipend.

Dimension 4: Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

22. ACTIONS AND MEASURES TAKEN TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE AND DECISION-MAKING

Comparative data from the 2019 and 2022 national and local elections show that the number of female registered voters in the Philippines are slightly higher than male registered voters, constituting 51 percent of the voting population for both election periods. In 2022, a significant increase in voter turnout was observed for both sexes, with an eight percent increase among female voters and seven percent increase among male voters.

Table 2: Number of Registered Voters, Actual Voters, and Voters' Turnout for 2019 and 2022 Elections

Election year	Number of registered Voters			Number of Actual Voters			Voters Turnout (%)		
	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
2019	31,816,812 (51%)	30,026,959 (49%)	61,843,771	24,230,160	22,706,979	46,937,139	76.16	75.62	75.9
2022	33,658,304 (51%)	32,087,222 (49%)	65,745,526	28,302,287	26,988,534	55,290,821	84.09	84.11	84.1

The steady number of registered voters and the increment in voter turnout can be attributed to the country's continuous efforts on voter education and registration.



22.1 Continuous Campaign to Promote Women's Political Participation

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippines, through the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), conducted special voter education and registration activities for women and girls in March and June 2021. This was part of the advocacy to promote women's political participation, underscoring the significance of exercising the right to suffrage. This initiative facilitated the registration of 53,219 female voters in the country and abroad.

In the same year, the CHR launched "Lila Ang Kulay ng Boto Ko (Purple is the Color of My Vote)", an education campaign on women's right to suffrage. In collaboration with non-government and civil society organizations, the campaign focused on seven groups of disadvantaged and marginalized women sectors namely, indigenous women, rural women, women with disabilities, young women, urban poor women, older women, and migrant women. The sessions highlighted the civic rights, duties, and responsibilities of women in the electoral process, specifically raising awareness on the status of women and

gender equality in Philippines, and the need to participate in governance and public decision-making through voting.

Approximately 300 women participated in the series of online sessions held from June to July 2021. These sessions resulted in the identification of major issues faced by women during the pandemic, and a multi-sectoral agenda addressing the specific needs and priorities of women in the represented sectors. The results were then packaged into infographic and audio-visual materials and disseminated across social media platforms before the 2022 national and local elections.

The UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies (UP CWGS) and the Center for Women's Studies Foundation, Inc. (UP CWSFI) also conduct capacity-building sessions and training courses for local leaders through the Angat Bayi Program. Initiated in 2018, the Angat Bayi Program aims to eliminate barriers to women's entry into politics and facilitate the full and meaningful participation of women politicians already in office. The program supports current women leaders at the city and municipal levels, helping them promote a people-centered, rights-based, gender-responsive, participatory, empowering, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development agenda.

As part of the program, Angat Bayi fellows take up short courses on various topics, including feminist leadership, rights-based democratic governance, building and protecting democratic institutions and processes, and promoting active citizenship. Additionally, they are afforded

the opportunity to learn from the good practices of other local government units. Through site visits, orientations, and discussions with local officials, the fellows gain insights into best practices and effective programs, initiatives, and services that promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

In terms of policy, the COMELEC issued Resolution No. 10488 prohibiting election campaign or propaganda materials that violates provisions of the Magna Carta of Women;⁴⁹ and Resolution No. 10514 on providing incentives to political parties with women's agenda and encouraging the integration of women in their leadership hierarchy, internal policy-making structures, appointive, and electoral nominating process.



22.2 Introduction of temporary special measures, such as quotas, reserved seats, benchmarks and targets that promote women's participation in politics, especially at the decision-making level

Similarly, the COMELEC deliberated and approved Resolution No. 22-0256 in March 2022. This resolution reaffirms the provision of incentives to political parties with women's agenda, with the highest number of women candidates from positions in the municipal to the national level, and which has implemented a gender-sensitive campaign with no reported violation of any campaign rules and regulations. The

resolution further laid down the criteria for incentives to political parties including the forty-sixty (40-60) gender quota and the requirement for 50 percent of legally allowable expenditures allocated to women candidates and/or programs, activities, and projects addressing women's concerns. Furthermore, women independent candidates were given incentives, regardless of the result of the election.

In March 2023, the COMELEC *en banc* approved Resolution No. 23-0188 which recognized 87 women national and local independent candidates who did not win in the 2022 election, 27 unopposed candidates, and the lone independent local candidate who won the election as member of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

Still pending enactment, the House Committee on Women and Gender Equality approved the substitute bill to House Bill 7179, or the "Women Participation and Representation in Political Parties Act", which was introduced in 2021. The substitute bill mandates political parties to craft and implement a clear women and GAD agenda and program consistent with their party philosophy and ideals. It also forwards a gender quota provision for women's representation in political party leadership and candidacy.

23. ACTIONS TAKEN TO INCREASE WOMEN'S ACCESS TO EXPRESSION AND PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING IN THE MEDIA, INCLUDING THROUGH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)



23.1 Mechanisms to Address Women's Portrayal in Media

The Media Gender Equality Committee, led by the PCO and the PCW published the Revised Gender-Fair Media Guidebook in 2017. This guidebook serves as a practical reference for media practitioners, assisting them in recalibrating their practices to promote gender sensitivity across all stages of media production, including conceptualization, creation, presentation, and distribution of media products.

Since its publication, the country, through the Philippine Information Agency, has conducted a series of extensive dissemination campaigns and related activities to popularize the Guidebook among media practitioners. From 2021 to 2023, the Philippine Information Agency facilitated a total of 69 dissemination campaigns, complemented by capacity-development sessions held for media practitioners at both national and local levels. These initiatives aimed to promote gender-sensitive reporting in the media landscape.

In addition to these capacity development efforts, the PCO facilitated an orientation on Gender-Fair Language for a diverse array of professionals including writers, editors, photographers, videographers, and media relations officers. Another capacity-development session focused on Gender-Responsive Strategic Communications, drawing participants from various media practitioners, national government agencies, civil society organizations, and selected individuals.

There is also an effort to regularize contents in television and film to ensure that the materials do not perpetuate stereotyping or the usage of derogatory terms. In 2023 alone, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board received and responded to a total of 168 complaints concerning gender-based violence in TV shows and film materials.



23.2 Established Policies, Laws, and Mechanisms Protecting Women in the Digital Space

The Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 11313, or the Safe Spaces Act, was published in the latter part of 2019. This law expanded the protection against sexual harassment, including in the digital sphere, which was not covered by the earlier version of the law. The Safe Spaces Act additionally established channels for the reporting and resolution of grievances

related to online sexual harassment, guaranteeing that individuals affected have access to justice and assistance.

Moreover, in 2022, the Philippines enacted Republic Act No. 11930 or the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Act. This legislation serves to enhance protection for children against any form of online trafficking, specifically targeting the proliferation of online sexual abuse and exploitation of children, as well as the production, distribution, and possession of child sexual abuse materials.

The passage of these laws not only help increase the protective mechanisms for women and girls in the digital sphere but have also fostered the general public's awareness about digital rights and responsibilities.



23.3 Use of ICT to Popularize GAD Core Messages in Media Platforms

The PCW regularly conducts a range of initiatives to promote and uphold the human rights of Filipino women on digital platforms. In 2020, the Commission launched the MusikJuana Songwriting Contest with the objective of popularizing the 12 BPfA areas of concern through music. This initiative proved successful, receiving 200 entries from across the country and bringing forth original songs that echoed the call for gender equality

and women's empowerment. These songs are available on PCW's various social media platforms. It can be downloaded for free, thus allowing for broader dissemination and engagement with its intended messages.

In 2023, the PCW, in collaboration with the Presidential Broadcast Service - Bureau of Broadcast Services, relaunched the TNK Radio Program. Its primary objective is to raise public awareness regarding government initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and addressing women's concerns. The program serves as a platform for sharing inspirational narratives about women, showcasing various government endeavors and services, and advocating for the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women at the national and local levels.

Apart from traditional radio broadcasting, the TNK radio program is digitally simulcasted through the official social media accounts of the PCW and Radyo Pilipinas and digital TV channels.



23.4 Women's Access to TVET Program

ICT remains to be one of the priority sectors indicated in the Philippines' National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan for the period of 2018-2022, and in the newly launched Plan for

2023-2028. The TESDA aligns its efforts to strengthen skills training in the ICT sector based on the needs of the industry.

The TESDA currently has established 19 Training Regulations in the ICT sector. It also develops competency standards for middle-level skilled workers, comprising units of competency that describe acceptable work performance. These are organized into qualifications corresponding to critical jobs and occupations in priority industry sectors. The TESDA Women's Center also offers a program on Virtual Assistant Services Level II, which recorded 231 female enrollees and 19 male enrollees based on TESDA Women's Center Data as of December 2023.

For 2020 to 2023, the TESDA has produced a total of 4,532,355 graduates of which 152,117 are from the ICT sector. Notably, the ICT sector has produced more female graduates as compared to male graduates.

24. STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COMMISSION ON WOMEN, THE COUNTRY'S NATIONAL WOMEN'S MACHINERY

The PCW serves as the national machinery for gender equality and women's empowerment in the Philippines. Formerly known as the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, the PCW was established by virtue of Executive Order No. 208 as an attached agency to the Office of the President. However, in 2018, through the issuance of Executive Order No. 67, entitled "Rationalizing the Office of the President through the Consolidation of its Core Mandates and Strengthening the Democratic and Institutional Framework of the Executive Department," the supervision of the PCW was transferred to the DILG. This transfer expanded the PCW's opportunities and channels to cascade its interventions nationwide and influence the work of over 120 primary local government units all over the country.

Amid this administrative change, the PCW remains robust as the primary policy-making and coordinating body on women and gender equality concerns. It also serves as the overall monitoring and oversight body to ensure the effective implementation of the Magna Carta of Women. The Chairperson of the Commission is responsible for reporting to the President on the progress of the implementation of the law.

The PCW acts as a catalyst for gender mainstreaming, an authority on women’s issues, and a leading advocate for gender equality, women’s empowerment, and women’s human rights. To fulfill its mandate, the Commission implements the following programs:

1. Conduct of gender-based analysis of women-related laws and policies (Women’s Priority Legislative Agenda)
2. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of laws, policies, and international commitments on women, particularly the Magna Carta of Women and CEDAW (Beijing Platform for Action Report, GAD Plan and Budget Review, and GEWE Monitoring and Evaluation)
3. Development of implementation of a rewards and incentives systems on GAD (GADtimpala, and GAD Local Learning Hubs)
4. Conduct of public information and advocacy campaign on PCW’s priority issues (National Women’s Month and

18-Day Campaign to End Violence Against Women)

In 2021, the PCW established a pilot regional field office in North Mindanao. The North Mindanao field office has been since then a focal point for the localization of the Magna Carta of Women through the provision of GAD-related technical assistance to regional line agencies and LGUs in Regions 9 (Zamboanga), 10 (Northern Mindanao), and 13 (Caraga).

Over the past five years (2020-2024), the PCW’s allocated budget has remained relatively stable, accounting for 0.002 to 0.004 percent of the overall national budget for government spending.

Table 3: PCW Annual Budget for 2020-2024⁵⁰

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Budget under the General Appropriations Act (GAA)	PHP 2.4 Trillion (USD 41.02 Billion)	PHP 7.1 Trillion (USD 121.34 Billion)	PHP 3.2 Trillion (USD 54.67 Billion)	PHP 5.2 Trillion (USD 88.79 Billion)	PHP 5.7 Trillion (USD 97.38 Billion)
PCW’s Budget	PHP 106 Million (USD 1.8 Million) (0.004%)	PHP 137 Million (USD 2.3 Million) (0.002%)	PHP 124 Million (USD 2.1 Million) (0.004%)	PHP 140 Million (USD 2.4 Million) (0.003%)	PHP 170 Million (USD 2.9 Million) (0.003%)

It is also important to mention, however, that the Philippines has a GAD Budget Policy, introduced in 1995 as the “Women’s Budget”. This policy mandates national government agencies and instrumentalities to allocate at least five percent of

their annual budget appropriations to implement programs and projects focused on advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment.

To ensure the agencies’ compliance

with the GAD Budget Policy, the PCW issues an annual GAD Budget Call, which outlines the guideline in the preparation and submission of annual GPBs and GAD ARs. In 2022, PCW, NEDA and DBM issued Joint Memorandum Circular 2022-01 or the Revised Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual GPBs and GAD ARs, which supersedes the 2012 Joint Memorandum Circular on the same. The updated guidelines detail a more

comprehensive guide on the formulation, submission, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, including accounting of results of annual GPBs and GAD ARs of national government agencies and instrumentalities and the BARMM-line agencies and SUCs. Data in Table 46 shows that more than half of the agencies in the Philippines are compliant with the requirement to submit annual GPBs and GAD ARs.

Table 4: Summary of GPB and GAD AR Submissions for 2019-2022⁵¹

	GAD Plan and Budget Submission	Percentage	GAD Annual Report Submission	Percentage	Total No. of Agencies
2019	477	49%	440	45%	974
2020	333	67%	292	59%	497
2021	320	64%	298	60%	497
2022	331	62%	325	61%	533

The escalating trend in the submission of the GPB and GAD AR is a visible and verifiable indicator of success in GEWE policy implementation. This is because the PCW is able to calibrate the quality of initiatives funded by the GAD budget, and more importantly, direct the GAD budget expenditures toward the most strategic GEWE interventions that produce wide and enduring results. It also

operationalizes the whole-of-government approach to gender equality and women's empowerment, as major oversight agencies, such as the DBM, CHR, COA, DILG, and NEDA, work together with PCW to make GAD Planning and Budgeting work for gender equality.

Nevertheless, this success is fast bringing the human resource capacity of the

PCW down to a breaking point, as other agencies, including the COA, continue to demand that PCW cover the review of more and more agencies of government, including SUCs, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), and local governments. Currently, this function is only an add-on to the numerous regular functions of around seven staff members of the PCW, and has been the reason for resignation and sickness of some of them. While negotiation to create a unit within PCW that is dedicated solely to this function is in the PCW’s agenda, this negotiation is likely to take a lengthy and arduous process. The PCW needs immediate, urgent external support to help set up a transitional, dedicated unit for GPB and GAD Budget Review of PCW. This will enable the PCW to leapfrog to the

realization of its ambition of raising the coverage of the review from 61 percent to at least 80 percent in the next five years. Implementation has been a major challenge to GEWE plans and policies the world over. The Philippines has been hurdling this challenge through the PCW’s review of GPBs of government entities. This function of the PCW serves as the primary engine of GAD mainstreaming, demonstrating how a GAD budget policy drives GEWE policy implementation toward results. This is a good practice that could potentially benefit other countries.

As shown in Table 5, the overall allocation of the GAD Budget by national government agencies and instrumentalities from 2020 to 2022, ranged from four percent to 21 percent of the total national budget.

Table 5: GAD Budget Allocation by National Government Agencies and Instrumentalities from 2020-2022⁵²

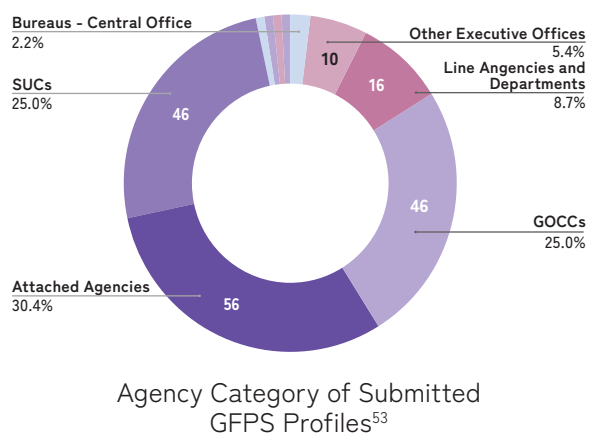
	2020	2021	2022
Total Budget under the GAA	PHP 2.4 Trillion (USD 41.02 Billion)	PHP 7.1 Trillion (USD 121.34 Billion)	PHP 3.2 Trillion (USD 54.69 Billion)
Total GAD Budget Allocation	PHP 148.4 Billion (USD 2.54 Billion) (6.15%)	PHP 250.8 Billion (USD 4.29 Billion) (3.53%)	PHP 671.3 Billion (USD 11.47 Billion) (21%)

25. MECHANISMS AND TOOLS FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY ACROSS SECTORS



25.1 The GAD Focal Point System (GFPS)

The GFPS serves as a catalyst for championing gender equality and women’s empowerment within their respective agencies. It draws its mandate from the Magna Carta of Women, which provided for its creation as part of the institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. The PCW conducts a profiling of the GFPS to monitor compliance with PCW Memorandum Circular No. 2011-01 and the provisions of the Magna Carta of Women. This profiling aims to ensure that national government agencies adhere to established guidelines and effectively implement gender-responsive initiatives. In 2022, 184 national government agencies submitted their GFPS profile.



The result of the profiling was instrumental for the PCW in determining and designing capacity-development interventions to assist the GFPS in fulfilling their functions effectively.

Aside from the profiling of the GFPS, the PCW also developed and launched the GFAsT for national government agencies and local government units in 2022. The GFAsT aims to ensure that agencies/units have a functional mechanism to mainstream GAD perspective in their policy-making, planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation process.



25.2 Continuous Conduct of Technical Assistance

To further guide agencies in mainstreaming gender perspectives in their regular programs and in implementing GAD-related activities, and to cope with the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PCW launched the GAD Webinar Series in 2020. The annual PCW GAD Webinar Series provides an accessible, flexible, innovative, and informative platform to educate agencies’ GAD Focal Persons and technical officers on GAD. Specifically, the webinar sessions aim to create awareness on gender sensitivity and enhance the knowledge and skills of stakeholders on GAD concepts, tools, and their application to gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, development of GAD Agenda, and GAD planning and budgeting.

Table 6: Number of participants to PCW GAD Webinar sessions, by year and sex⁵⁴

YEAR	Female	Male	total
2020	1,878	489	2,367
2021	3,500	889	4,407
2022	4,521	1,341	5,861
2023	3,329	960	4,289

From 2020 to 2023, the PCW successfully reached a total of 16,925 participants for the combined GAD Webinar sessions, with 13,228 (78%) being females and 3,679 (22%) males. In addition to the annual GAD Webinar Series, the National and Regional GAD Resource Pools (NGRP and RGRP, respectively) play a crucial role in building the capacity of agencies to mainstream GAD perspective. The NGRP and RPGRP are composed of resource persons with sectoral expertise from across the Philippines, providing specialized knowledge and support to ensure agencies can effectively integrate GAD considerations into their policies and programs. By leveraging the expertise of these resource persons, agencies receive tailored guidance that comprehensively and systematically enhance their ability to address gender issues.



25.3 Updated National Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

In 2022, the Philippines, through the PCW, launched the Updated Gender

Equality and Women’s Empowerment Plan (GEWE) 2019-2025. The Updated GEWE Plan is an enhanced version of the GEWE Plan 2019-2025. It was launched in 2019, and serves as the national guiding document and key reference in prioritizing and monitoring efforts to promote women’s empowerment and gender equality. The Plan was formulated through a consultative and participatory process engaging government agencies at the national, regional, and local levels, CSOs, private sector, and the academe. The Updated GEWE Plan includes a compendium of sectoral indicators focused on women’s social development rights, gender in security, justice and peace, gender-responsive governance, gender in environment and climate change, and women’s economic empowerment. The plan also aimed to guide agencies in mainstreaming GAD perspectives as part of their recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

26. THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (CHR) AS THE GENDER OMBUD: ADDRESSING VIOLATIONS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

As part of its Constitutional mandate, the investigates all forms of human rights violations and abuses, including gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination. In 2020, the CHR launched e-Report sa Gender Ombud, a platform for monitoring and responding to gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reporting is not limited to victim-survivors of violence, but may also be used by anyone who witnessed or knew incidents of GBV and wished the same to be responded to and documented.

Since its launch, the platform has been sustained and expanded as a reporting portal for all cases of GBV, including intimate partner violence and specific experiences of marginalized and vulnerable groups, including girl-children, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women human rights defenders, and persons with diverse SOGIESC, among others. The platform also maintains a *Bawal Bastos* Reporting Portal (Anti-Sexual Harassment Reporting Portal), which serves to document cases of sexual harassment, in view of Republic Act No. 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act.

Furthermore, as part of its role as GAD Ombud under the Magna Carta of Women, the CHR monitors, documents, and reports the human rights situation of women, particularly that of the most

marginalized, towards strengthening accountability of duty bearers. In the past five years, the CHR has developed the following national inquiry and situation reports, which have been shared with government agencies, and partners; these have also; informed CHR submissions to international reports:

- Annual Gender Ombud Situationers, which consolidate national and sub-national issues and accomplishments; In 2020, the Gender Ombud Situationer focused on the gendered impact of the pandemic and the need for gendered and intersectional responses.
- “Telling Our Own Stories”: Report on the CHR National Inquiry on the Reproductive Health and Rights of Women with Disabilities, which focused on the barriers experienced by women with disabilities in accessing sexual and reproductive health services.
- Inside Stories: Situation of Women Deprived of Liberty, which surfaced lived experiences of lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women; older women; and women of reproductive age who are deprived of liberty.
- Situation of Urban Poor Women, which focused on three areas: state violence, social protection, and housing
- Situation of Older women, which highlighted issues of violence, health, and social protection
- LAYAG: Narratives of women living with HIV
- When a House is Not A Home: Research on Housing
- GBV Case Book, presents GBV cases handled by the CHR, highlighting challenges and gaps
- Community-based peer monitoring of access to services by women with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Situation of Women Fisherfolk During the Pandemic
- Narratives of Women Human Rights Defenders

- Gender and Informality: A situation report on women in the informal sector
- Situationer on Women and Girls Survivors of Trafficking
- Situation of IP Women and Girls during COVID-19 Pandemic
- Sectoral Monitoring on the Situation of Indigenous Women and Girls during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Situation of Women Medical Frontline Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- On the Interplay of Gender Inequality and Adolescent Pregnancy: A Situation Report

These reports are publicly available through the CHR’s GBV Observatory, which was established in 2019. The Observatory is an online repository of data on GBV, not only of treaties, laws and jurisprudence, but also of women’s lived experiences. It aims to make GBV visible by facilitating access to resources on GBV, and “make data work for women, girls, and LGBTQIs.”

The CHR also supported the passage of national laws promoting the rights of women and girls, including Republic Act No. 11596, prohibiting Child Marriage, and Republic Act No. 11648, which provided for stronger protection against rape, sexual exploitation, and abuse and increased the age for statutory rape. Additionally, it has expressed support and published position papers on pending bills, including the following:

- On bills seeking to eliminate gender bias on marital and familial matters in the Revised Penal Code
- On the Divorce Bills
- On the Anti-Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression Bill and the Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Bill

- On Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Pandemic Management

With regard to the non-compliance of concerned parties with provisions related to Institutional Mechanisms under the MCW, such as non-submission of the GAD plan and budget, non-allocation/misuse of GAD Budget, and non-establishment of the GAD database, the CHR Gender Ombud Guidelines identify possible sanctions under the Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in Civil Service and those existing under the Local Government Code.

Dimension 5: Peaceful and inclusive societies

27. ACTIONS TAKEN TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN PEACE, PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND IMPLEMENT THE WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY AGENDA



27.1 Adopted and/or implemented a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

The country has recognized that sustainable peace and security requires inclusive and gender considerations, with the formulation of national and regional action plans as key milestones in advancing the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

These plans are comprehensive roadmaps that address the multifaceted challenges faced by women within the context of peace and security, which underscores the government's commitment in integrating gender perspectives into broader peace and development initiatives across the country.

The localized integration of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda for tailored gender-responsive and inclusive action plans is evident in the implementation of the 2017-2022 NAPWPS.⁵⁵ With the explicit aim to be mainstreamed into the regular programs of national agencies and LGUs, the 2017-2022 NAPWPS ensured that the initiatives are tailored to the specific concerns at the grassroots level.⁵⁶

For example, the Women, Peace, and Security agenda was localized in the BARMM through the RAPWPS 2020-2022. It featured four key pillars, i.e., (a) protection and prevention, (b) empowerment and participation, (c) promotion and mainstreaming, and (d) monitoring and evaluation. The Plan aimed at ensuring women's safety, political involvement, program integration; and knowledge sharing, particularly in conflict and post-conflict settings. The BARMM RAPWPS has since been launched in various provinces, such as Maguindanao Del Norte, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, and Basilan. The Women, Peace, and Security agenda has also been integrated into various efforts to promote women's human rights at the local level. The new BARMM RAPWPS 2023-2028 emphasized the continuation and enhancement of previous efforts in the region. Both the RAPWPS 2020-2022

and 2023-2028 were developed through extensive consultations with stakeholders. They are also aligned with the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace, and Security to ensure regional coherence and support.

The integration of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda within the national defense and security sectors has been a critical component of the Philippines' strategy in creating a more inclusive and secure environment. Under the guidance of the National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security, all units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), including the Army, Navy, and Air Force, have been directed to incorporate Women, Peace, and Security programs, activities, and projects in their GPBs. This directive ensures that the principles of Women, Peace and Security are reflected across all levels of the defense sector, promoting a more inclusive and secure environment for all citizens.



27.2 Integrated women, peace and security commitments into key national and inter-ministerial policy, planning and monitoring frameworks

The Philippines has proactively embedded the Women, Peace, and Security agenda into key national and inter-ministerial policies, planning, and monitoring frameworks. For instance, the 2017-2022 NAPWPS was effectively integrated into the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan to ensure that gender considerations are included in disaster response and resilience strategies.⁵⁷ Likewise, the country developed a gender-responsive handbook for the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP PCVE), serving as a vital tool for integrating gender perspectives into counter-terrorism efforts.⁵⁸ The NAP PCVE is a critical framework in addressing security threats and serves as a practical guide in ensuring that gender considerations are taken into account in policies, programs; and other interventions.

Strengthened regional and sectoral adaptations of protection of women and children in conflict situations is evident when the MIMAROPA Regional Gender and Development Committee adopted resolutions in 2024 to integrate the NAPWPS 2023-2033 into its strategic plan and development framework.⁵⁹ This regional adaptation ensures that national commitments are contextualized and

effectively implemented within its unique socio-cultural regional landscape. It bridges the gap between national policies and local realities by conducting targeted actions that specifically address gender-related challenges in the region. Other notable regions that have integrated the NAPWPS in their development plans are the Bicol region and BARMM.



27.3 Used communication strategies, including social media, to increase awareness of the women, peace and security agenda

Social media is a powerful tool for reaching diverse audiences, and the Philippine government has leveraged Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms to share Women, Peace, and Security-related content. For example, the AFP, through the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Reservists and Retiree Affairs, uses social media to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and enhance peace and security efforts, through engaging visuals, infographics, and short videos.⁶⁰

A significant initiative was the launch of the Conflict Sensitivity and Peace Promotion (CSPP) guidebook by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity (OPAPRU) in 2022.⁶¹ This guidebook was designed to enhance communicators' skills in promoting

a culture of peace and ensuring conflict sensitivity in communication strategies. Its key components include conflict analysis, peace messaging, and contextual awareness. The CSPP guidebook has since then been implemented nationwide.

As part of its initiatives in supporting gender mainstreaming, the Department of National Defense actively recognizes and encourages outstanding contributions to gender mainstreaming and the Women, Peace, and Security agenda through the conduct of annual Department of National Defense - Wide GAD Awards.⁶² These awards honor bureaus and individuals demonstrating exceptional commitment to GAD. Furthermore, collaboration with international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and CSOs has been instrumental in achieving meaningful progress towards an inclusive environment. For instance, the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy hosted the Regional Consultation on the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda Implementation in Southeast Asia that facilitated dialogue, knowledge sharing, and joint strategies among regional stakeholders. Additionally, Women Engaged in Action on 1325 played a pivotal role in facilitating local consultations and focus group discussions, and fostering collaboration at the grassroots level.⁶³

28. ACTIONS TAKEN TO ENHANCE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP, REPRESENTATION, AND PARTICIPATION IN CONFLICT PREVENTION, RESOLUTION, AND PEACEBUILDING AT DECISION-MAKING LEVELS, INCLUDING IN HUMANITARIAN AND CRISIS RESPONSE IN CONFLICT AND FRAGILE SETTINGS



28.1 Promoted and supported women's meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements at all levels

The Philippine's proactive promotion and support of the women's meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements at all levels had led to an increase in the participation of women in governance and peacebuilding initiatives. For instance, women play a crucial role in implementing closure agreements and peace negotiations, either as panel members or as part of the panel secretariat.⁶⁴ Support for women participation is further advocated by collaborative efforts with CSOs that were integral to the development of the 2023-2033 NAPWPS. The Plan includes an 11-point CSO agenda on Women, Peace, and Security. Consultations were conducted with key stakeholders, including the Moro Islamic Liberation Front-Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade, the Social Welfare Committee, and the wives

of decommissioned combatants.

Another significant achievement was the formation of the National Government-Bangsamoro Government Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) in 2019, a national mechanism to coordinate and resolve intergovernmental relations issues between the national government and BARMM through regular consultation and negotiation. The Body is co-chaired by a woman who advocated the need for collaborative efforts for a truly inclusive route to peace that ensures not just the present and future of the Bangsamoro, but also the entire nation.



28.2 Promoted equal participation of women in humanitarian and crisis response activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level

There was also a significant increase in women's representation in law enforcement and the military in the past five years. As of 2024, 592 police officers in key positions are women, with 64 serving as third-level officers and 292 as second-level officers, holding positions, such as camp commanders, chiefs of police, and station commanders. Moreover, female officers and enlisted personnel have been assigned to support both traditional and non-traditional operations, particularly in Civil-Military Operations. Out of the 232,000 strong-PNP, 30 percent are women. All women police teams are also being established, such as the all-women

police station in Siquijor and an all-female weapon and tactics team in Basilan.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the Philippine Navy is implementing the “Philippine Navy Women Against Violence Everywhere Program,” aimed at increasing the participation of female military personnel and civilian staff in fulfilling the Navy's mandate.⁶⁶

Since 2019, the Philippine international peacekeeping and humanitarian mission teams have been composed of 40 to 60 percent female officers.



28.3 Adopted gender-responsive approaches to humanitarian action and crisis response

Gender sensitivity is increasingly being mainstreamed in institutional capacity-building initiatives. The PNP, for example, has integrated gender sensitivity into its regular training programs to support women's roles in humanitarian and crisis response.⁶⁷ The Operations Officers Management Course now includes subjects on Gender Sensitivity, human rights, and crisis response. The PNP also issued a Human Rights Advisory on Advancing Gender Equality in February 2024, underscoring its commitment to empowering women within the police force. Furthermore, the PNP's continued integration of gender sensitivity in its capacity-building initiatives is evident in collaborating with PCW in conducting online training on gender analysis.⁶⁸

The Philippine Army and Navy have also adopted policies to support women's involvement in security operations. The Army's Gender, Peace, and Security Protocols guide military units in conducting various operations with a gender-sensitive approach.⁶⁹ The Navy's Active Archipelagic Defense Strategy integrates the perspectives of both female and male military personnel, ensuring equal participation in the country's maritime defense.⁷⁰ These policies reflect a broader organizational commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women in all facets of national security and crisis response.

Furthermore, the Philippine Army has established Gender, Peace, and Security Protocols to guide military units in conducting combat operations, intelligence operations, checkpoints, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations. Additionally, GAD 101 has been integrated into the basic training for both enlisted personnel and officers in the Philippine Army, while the Operation Peace Course provides cultural, social norms, and gender sensitivity training for uniformed personnel in Mindanao.⁷¹

The Philippines has also focused on adopting gender-responsive approaches in humanitarian action and crisis response. The NAPWPS Pillar II emphasizes the protection of women's human rights, particularly those from diverse and intersecting identities in conflict-affected and vulnerable situations. This pillar highlights the need for prevention and intervention measures to address various forms of conflict, including those arising

from natural disasters, and underscores a rights-based approach prioritizing access to justice for victims and survivors. In line with this, the PNP has developed Critical Incident Management Operational Procedures, revised in 2020, to outline guidelines for handling critical incidents.⁷² This ensures preparedness at all levels of PNP offices and units, with the Incident Management Committee supporting the National Police Operations Center.⁷³

29. ACTIONS TAKEN TO ENHANCE JUDICIAL AND NON-JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VIOLATIONS OF HUMANITARIAN LAW AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN CONFLICT AND CRISIS SITUATIONS



29.1 Implemented legal and policy reform to redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls

In a joint effort, the Bangsamoro Women Commission and the PNP Regional Office Bangsamoro Autonomous Region worked closely on implementing relevant policies. Specifically, they focused on cascading the PNP Guidance Note and the Bangsamoro Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security with a targeted approach to addressing GBV and TIP.

The PNP's Human Rights Affairs Office was instituted to serve as a complaints mechanism where victims, witnesses, or concerned parties could submit complaints involving PNP personnel. The creation of the Human Rights Affairs Office is part of creating a culture of transparency and responsibility in law enforcement.

Similarly, the AFP has its Human Rights Office, also known as the Center for Law of Armed Conflict. This office is responsible for implementing and monitoring relevant national and internal mandates related to fundamental human rights. In addition, the Philippine Army's GBV Referral System provides support services for victim-survivors and alleged perpetrators. These services vary from psychological support, medical aid, legal assistance, spiritual, and security services. In 2023, the Philippine Army established the agency's Special General Court Martial for Sexual Harassment and Other GBV, specifically for handling and resolving cases related to sexual harassment and other forms of GBV involving its personnel. This court ensures accountability, justice, and prevention of recurrence within the ranks.



29.2 Strengthened institutional capacity building for justice and transitional justice mechanisms

The 2023-2033 NAPWPS underscores the importance of the institutionalization of gender-transformative transitional justice through its Pillar I, Action Point 7.⁷⁴ This was adopted in the BARMM RAPWPS which aims to identify and address gender issues in transitional justice.⁷⁵ The inclusion of specific action points on transitional justice ensures the harmonized implementation of social healing and reconciliation interventions after conflict, and that initiatives are gender-responsive to the needs of women and girls.

The institutional reforms towards access to justice and transitional justice in the peace and security sector have been strengthened through various initiatives. The OPAPRU's Transformation Program for former rebels and their families and communities in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas is composed of four major components: Security, Socio-Economic, Confidence-Building Measure, and Healing and Reconciliation. All components integrated the gender perspective that simultaneously contributes to the Women, Peace, and Security agenda of the Philippines.⁷⁶ In 2023, the Independent Decommissioning Body, along with the Government of the Philippines, the Moro Islamic

Liberation Front, and the Task Force for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities (TFDCC), collaborated to establish a specialized team focused on implementing programs related to the decommissioning process for women combatants specifically for Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade and Social Welfare Committee. By March 2024, a total of 1,071 women had undergone decommissioning by the Government of the Philippines, and had participated in the general intake process led by the TFDCC.



29.3 Integrated gender sensitivity in institutional capacity building of the defense and security sector on the protection of human rights and prevention of GBV

The AFP has integrated gender sensitivity training activities into its in-house and in-service capacity development plan, as well as a gender perspective in the agency's Program of Instruction of Provost Marshal Investigation Course and training curricula.⁷⁷ Additionally, the OPAPRU rolled out the CSPP principles to enhance gender and conflict sensitivity in the infantry divisions of the AFP and local units of the PNP. In August 2023, PCO, the Philippine Information Agency, and the OPAPRU signed a Memorandum of Agreement to further reach the grassroots level in conducting CSPP workshops.⁷⁸

The PCW developed a Sectoral Proactive Technical Assistance (ProTA) Plan, which outlined strategic approaches that address sectoral gender issues in four priority sectors that includes Peace and Security, including capacity development activities related to GAD for peace and security agencies such as the Department of National Defense, OPAPRU, AFP, Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force, Philippine Navy, and PNP.⁷⁹



29.4 Enhanced access to violence prevention and protection services for conflict affected women (refugee or displaced)

The 2023-2033 NAPWPS included the protection and welfare of displaced women in all their diverse and intersecting identities. The DSWD, in accordance with the action points in the 2017-2022 NAPWPS, provides psychological services to women and children in emergency camps through the Women and Children Friendly Spaces; gender sensitivity is part of the training received by Women and Child Friendly Spaces facilitators. Moreover, the DSWD, together with the departments of interior, health and education, issued the Guidelines on Camp Coordination and Camp Management and Internally Displaced Persons Protection (Memorandum Circular No. 6.) in 2021. The primary objective of the guidelines was to ensure that women and children in camps are free from all forms of violence and exploitation.⁸⁰



29.5 Regulating firearms and combating illicit arms trafficking

The Philippine National Police Firearms and Explosive Office (FEO) plays a crucial role in ensuring responsible gun ownership and safety. To achieve this, the FEO conducts Gun Safety and Responsible Gun Ownership orientations for individual applicants seeking firearms licenses.⁸¹ These orientations educate applicants on safe handling, storage, and legal responsibilities associated with firearm ownership.

The PNP FEO is also tasked with the critical responsibility of handling the final disposition and destruction of small and light weapons, which are segregated into four categories: (a) captured, (b) confiscated, (c) surrendered, and (d) forfeited firearms. The effective strategies implemented by the PNP has led to the confiscation of over 10,000 loose firearms from January 1 to May 7 in 2023.⁸² Overall, the PNP's efforts in regulating firearms and addressing illicit arms trafficking contribute significantly to public safety and security.



29.6 Institutionalizing strategies in combating the production, use of, and trafficking in illicit drugs

The PNP's Project Resistance Education Against Drugs for the Youth (READY) was launched as an anti-illegal drugs advocacy and education program for the youth in 2022.⁸³ The project institutionalized a standard for preventive information to protect the youth from the effects of dangerous drugs.

In 2022, PNP launched Project Anti-Illegal Drugs Operation thru Reinforcement and Education (ADORE), which aims to improve and institutionalize strategies, guidelines, procedures; and tasks of PNP offices or units in the conduct of anti-illegal drug operations.⁸⁴ This initiative recognizes the urgency of addressing drug-related issues, underscoring the PNP's commitment to safeguard public health, safety, and well-being.

30. ACTIONS TAKEN TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AND VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHTS OF THE GIRL CHILD, INCLUDING ADOLESCENT GIRLS



30.1 Enhancing awareness on the needs and potential of girl children

During the past five years, the faculty and students of the Miriam College continuously received GAD training on various topics, such as gender-responsive education and peace education through its Women and Gender Institute (WAGI). In addition, WAGI conducted their Annual Young Women Leaders' Conference every March of the year. The conference serves as a channel to discuss issues and concerns that affect young women and girls. Child leaders and LGUs were oriented on children's right to participation, survival, protection, and development by the Balay Mindanaw Foundation Inc. The capacity development sessions focused on child-centered social accountability for LGUs and leadership training for ages 12 to 17 years old. By empowering these young leaders and promoting children's rights, these sessions help foster a more inclusive society.

In 2021, the PNP introduced the PNP Child Protection Policy through the issuance of Memorandum Circular No. 2021-081. The policy outlined clear procedures and guidelines on the special protection and safety of children who are under

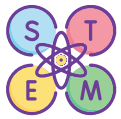
the custody of the PNP. The policy aims to prevent all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and exposure to dangerous conditions against children while interacting with law enforcers, including during the conduct of police or rescue operations, investigations, and/or surveillance during situations of conflict and disasters.⁸⁵



30.2 Implemented policies and programs to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

The Philippines enacted Republic Act No. 11596, or the Act Prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage and Imposing Penalties, law on December 10, 2021. The passage of the law aims to address the prevalence of early and forced child marriages to members of armed groups in their area and eliminate acts resulting in the sexual exploitation or violence of young girls. It penalizes perpetrators and those who facilitate and solemnization of child marriage and cohabitation of an adult with a child outside of wedlock.

Additionally, the law recognized the crucial role of education in the empowerment of girls, and enjoined stakeholders to undertake measures to remove barriers to girls' school completion.⁸⁶



30.3 Incorporated STEM education / closure of gender digital divide in access to digital tools and competencies for girls

The gender disparity in the field of STEM, as well as in terms of access to digital technologies and digital literacy is being addressed by various stakeholders, including the academe and the development sector. For instance, WAGI of Miriam College has partnered with the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes (SIBOL), to co-organized the Career Opportunities for Girls in Conservation Science in 2023. The event primarily focuses on the insights and experiences of women in the field of conservation science, and is significant in advancing women's participation in conservation science.

Dimension 6: Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

31. ACTIONS TAKEN TO INTEGRATE GENDER PERSPECTIVES AND CONCERNS INTO ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES, INCLUDING CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION, BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, AND LAND DEGRADATION



31.1 Strengthened evidence and raised awareness of the interconnections between Gender, Environment, and Climate Change

From 2021 to 2023, key implementing agencies in the environment and climate change sector conducted approximately 244 trainings and workshops to enhance understanding of the impacts of climate change on men, women, and people with diverse SOGIE. These sessions were attended by an estimated 4,597 women and 2,147 men, including both internal and external clients of these agencies. The training activities and workshops covered topics, such as women's role in coastal and marine ecosystems, forest protection, eco-tourism, and protection and area management.

All forms of media are also being utilized to raise awareness of the intersectionality of gender, environment, and climate change. For instance, a bi-annual newsletter is published by the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau of the DENR titled “GADRich”. It features articles related to the implementation of the agency’s GAD programs, activities, and projects. This newsletter can be easily accessed through the agency’s website. Further, the radio program “Ang Tinig Klima” (Climate Voice) has been airing since 2017, and delivers relevant information related to climate change and disasters and their relationships to various sectors, including gender and development.

Additionally, in 2022, nearly seven years after the filing of a petition to examine the impacts of climate change on the human rights of the Filipino people, the CHR issued a landmark report on its investigation into the role of 47 of the world’s largest investor-owned fossil fuel and cement producers, known as “carbon majors”. Section 5 of this report detailed how climate change adversely affects the country, and especially the already socially, economically, or otherwise marginalized. The vulnerable sectors include women, children, indigenous peoples, older adults, people living in poverty, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. They are most likely to bear the brunt of climate change due to their high dependence on natural resources, heightened exposure to climate change effects, and lack of resources to adapt. The case is novel in its attempt

to hold carbon majors accountable in a “global petition”. It also promotes the notion that businesses have an obligation to respect human rights.

In 2023, the International Development Law Organization, in partnership with the Climate Change Commission, DENR, and PCW, conducted a Gender Assessment of Climate and Environmental Laws in the Philippines. This assessment underscores the country’s commitment to gender responsiveness by identifying gender-blind and discriminatory provisions against women and girls. The findings and recommendations forwarded are critical for strengthening institutional, legal, policy, and implementation frameworks to advance climate justice for women and girls and ensure their meaningful participation in climate action.



31.2 Supported and recognized women’s participation and leadership in climate action, environmental and natural resource management, and governance from the local to international level

To address and mitigate the challenges experienced by both men and women during climate hazards, the country is committed to supporting and recognizing women’s crucial role in tackling the climate emergency facing the country. For instance, the country ensures gender balance and promotes women’s leadership and

participation in international negotiations. In recent years, the Philippine Delegation to UNFCCC sessions (i.e., Conference of Parties) has been composed of at least 40 percent women, with the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources as the head of the delegation, supported by women negotiators, experts, and technical staff.

Several efforts have also been made to enhance women's adaptive capacity by providing training and livelihood opportunities to full-time homemakers, thereby developing their income-generating capacity and helping sustain their families' financial needs. In the first part of 2024, the DENR and UN Women signed a memorandum of understanding on the "EmPower: Women for Climate Resilient Societies Programme", a joint initiative by UN Women and the UN Environment Programme. This program aims to strengthen gender equality and human rights in climate change and disaster risk actions in Asia and the Pacific region. The program seeks to increase the involvement of women and other marginalized groups in gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation. It aims to ensure that women and other marginalized groups are represented as key environmental actors in climate and disaster risk reduction decision-making and are engaged in climate-resilient livelihoods.



31.3 Increased women's access to and control over land and other natural resources

One of the gender issues identified in the DENR's GPBs from 2020 to 2022 is the women's limited access to natural resources, which is largely due to their lack of awareness of government procedures, programs, and technical services related to land ownership. Further, consultations and fora were conducted to promote Alternative Dispute Resolution as land disputes often discourage women from applying for land titles.

Moreover, the DENR conducts lectures, seminars, and meetings on the requirements and procedures for land titling. Comparative data from 2020 to 2022 show females comprise more than 50 percent of participants in capacity building activities related to land titling and ownership (percentages ranging from 50.97 to 80.49 percent). The same period saw the increase of women receiving agricultural and residential free patents. This progress reflects the country's advancements in promoting gender equity in land ownership.

32. ACTIONS TAKEN TO INTEGRATE GENDER PERSPECTIVES INTO POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND BUILDING ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE



32.1 Introduced or strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction and building climate and environmental resilience (e.g., disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)

Numerous policies and strategies have been put in place in the past five years to improve climate action and strengthen resilience against disasters. For instance, the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 prioritizes sustainable finance and climate resilience through frameworks, such as the Sustainable Finance Framework and Roadmap, as well as the Securities and Exchange Commission Guidelines on Green and Sustainability Bonds. Key strategies include the National Climate Risk Management Framework, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2020–2030, and guidelines for integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into the comprehensive development plans. LGUs have also incorporated climate and disaster risk measures into local plans through initiatives like Local Climate Change Action Plans and Local Disaster Risk

Reduction and Management Plans, but require updates and additional support for implementation. The NDRRMP 2020–2030 highlights the need for standardized local flood early warning systems to prevent confusion at sub-national levels.

The Office of Civil Defense also uses a portion of its GAD budget for trainings on gender-inclusive guidelines and community-based disaster risk reduction and management. Multi-stakeholder collaboration in disaster risk reduction and management ensures the representation of marginalized groups, with women’s interests represented by the Philippines Commission on Women and local civil society organizations involved in disaster risk reduction and management.



32.2 Supported women’s participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate and environmental resilience policies, programmes and projects

The Philippines launched the Philippine Resilience Awards Category for Women in 2023 to recognize ten outstanding local women champions in resilience building across various sectors and communities. One of the objectives of this award system is to establish a pool of “resilience champions” who can act as mentors and coaches for local government units. It aims

to promote evidence-informed, science and technology-based local leadership, as well as innovative solutions that uniquely contribute to disaster resilience. The initiative also highlights the importance of strategic collaboration and partnerships that foster innovations.

The “Women Leading Resilience” webinar series was a platform that featured prominent women leaders from the Asia-Pacific region. These leaders shared their invaluable best practices, experiences, and insights in spearheading various disaster risk reduction programs and initiatives. The series aimed to highlight the pivotal role of women in building resilience and managing disasters. It attracted a diverse audience from different regions of the Philippines, fostering a rich exchange of knowledge and experiences.

The PCW is represented in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Full Council. The NDRRMC actively seeks the agency’s participation in reviewing and providing feedback on its various documents, including resolutions, guidelines, and operations manuals, to ensure that they are gender-responsive. This collaboration aims to integrate gender perspectives and considerations into the NDRRMC’s policies and operational frameworks. The GAD Focal Persons actively participated in the Local Disaster Risk Reduction Management (LDRRM) planning. The LDRRM guidebook incorporates the use of sex disaggregated data to not only identify individuals at risk but also to comprehensively profile people’s gendered needs and issues. This includes an intersectional focus on women’s realities in times of emergencies.



Section 4:

National Institutions and Processes

33. NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY: PRIORITIES AND ALIGNMENT WITH THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Philippines has a national strategy called the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment's (GEWE) Plan, which covers the period from 2019 to 2025. The GEWE Plan is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and prioritizes various goals, including poverty reduction, economic empowerment, and prevention of gender-based violence. It emphasizes multi-sectoral partnerships, international cooperation, and gender mainstreaming; and aims to ensure that no one is left behind, especially women and marginalized groups. Here are key progress made upon the implementation of GEWE Plan:



33.1 Under Strategic Goal Area 1 Expanded Economic Opportunities for Women

The enactment of laws, such as the Expanded Maternity Leave law, increased maternity leave days to 105, and allocated leave benefits of how many days? to the child's father. Efforts were also intensified in implementing labor-related laws, including provisions related to maternity leave, solo parent leave, leave for victims of violence against women,

and anti-sexual harassment measures. Additionally, programs like “Balik Pinay” and “Balik Hanapbuhay” aim to improve access to decent work for poor women. Furthermore, initiatives focused on enhancing agricultural productivity for women small-holder farmers and food producers.



33.2 Under Strategic Goal Area 2 Accelerated Human Capital Development through Investing in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act has led to improved health outcomes for women and girls, while efforts to enhance educational outcomes and skills development empower women and girls, and foster an inclusive environment.



33.3 Strategic Goal Area 3 Significant Reduction in Gender-Based Violence and Enhanced Gender Perspective in Justice, Security and Peace

At the local level, there is a strong commitment to enforce anti-trafficking and violence against women and children laws. Additionally, efforts are focused on

increasing women's participation in the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.



33.4 Strategic Goal Area 4 Expanded Opportunities for Women's Participation, Leadership and Benefits in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

Gender analysis is integrated into climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. There is also the establishment of women-friendly spaces in evacuation centers and services for GBV victim-survivors during disasters.



33.5 Strategic Goal Area 5 Expanded opportunities for Women's Participation, Leadership and Benefits in Science, Technology and Innovation, ICT, Infrastructure, and Energy

Women in micro, small, and medium enterprises have received support through technological innovations to enhance their products, services, and operations, ultimately boosting productivity and competitiveness. Additionally, there has been heightened awareness among women and girls regarding cyberbullying and online sexual abuse, an issue that has significantly escalated during

the pandemic, disproportionately affecting them.



33.6 Strategic Goal Area 6 Enhanced Women's Participation, Leadership and Benefits in Politics and Government Service

Various resolutions encouraging political parties to promote women's participation and leadership were implemented with reforms to expedite the appointment of qualified women to leadership positions in government. They emphasize the importance of women's involvement in public life and enhance gender representation and diversity in decision-making roles. Moreover, the Civil Service Commission has issued policies that specifically address challenges faced by women in marginalized groups, and the Civil Service Institute provides capacity development programs that focus on a gender-responsive approach to governance, aiming to enhance the skills and competencies of government employees, including women, for more effective public service. Furthermore, the COA actively supports gender-responsive budgeting by providing guidance on the mandatory annual audit of GAD funds, ensuring transparency and accountability in the utilization of GAD funds, ultimately contributing to the effective implementation of gender-related programs and initiatives. Another progress is the establishment of the Inter-

agency Committee on Gender, Children, and Youth Statistics that ensures efficient coordination among various agencies for the production, dissemination, and archiving of gender-related statistics.

Despite challenges, the Philippines has made significant strides in promoting gender equality through legislative measures, capacity building, and data-driven approaches, and has shown the country's unwavering commitment to achieving gender equality.



33.7 Under Strategic Goal Area 7: Transformed Social Norms and Culture Promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The government recognizes that gender-biased sociocultural norms are deeply entrenched in Philippine society, posing challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. It is important to identify the institutions that play a vital role in shaping norms in the country, including traditional and digital mass media. On the other hand, institution also offer a huge opportunity in transforming norms and cultures, especially regarding how women are portrayed. These transformations have been evident in recent years. Filipino women have made significant strides in sports and journalism, resulting in increased positive media coverage. Although both women and men's participation in competitive

sports increased, the share of women rose by four percent - from the baseline of 38 percent to 42 percent. Notable achievements include the first-ever Olympic gold medal and the first-ever Nobel Peace Prize for the Philippines, which were both won by women. Additionally, the outpouring of support for a woman presidential candidate during the May 2022 national and local elections further broke stereotypes and highlighted women's ability to excel in non-traditional fields. These accomplishments serve as inspiring models for young girls.

The Philippine government continues the implementation of its action plans in transforming traditional norms and cultures through institutional mechanisms and tools developed under GAD initiatives by media-related government agencies, including the gender-fair media guidebook and the Gender Equality Committee for Media. Additionally, the PCW provides ongoing technical assistance on GAD mainstreaming tools and procedures to address uneven understanding of gender equality laws among government officials and staff. The PCW also conducts awareness campaigns about new laws and policies related to gender equality and women's empowerment. It also leads government-wide observance of the annual women's month and the 18-day campaign to end violence against women, promoting women's participation and leadership across various sectors of development.

34. GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

In the Philippines, gender-responsive budgeting is mandated through the Magna Carta of Women, which requires that at least five percent of the total agency or LGU budget appropriations support GAD plans and programs.⁸⁸

This policy is reinforced in the annual General Appropriations Act, ensuring that the minimum 5 percent GAD budget is integrated into agency appropriations. The GAD budget policy serves as a foundation for agencies in developing their annual GPBs.

Table 7: GAD Budget Allocation by National Government Agencies and Instrumentalities from 2020-2022⁸⁹

	2020	2021	2022
Total Budget under the GAA	PHP 2.4 Trillion (USD 41.02 Billion)	PHP 7.1 Trillion (USD 121.34 Billion)	PHP 3.2 Trillion (USD 54.69 Billion)
Total GAD Budget Allocation	PHP 148.4 Billion (USD 2.54 Billion) (6.15%)	PHP 250.8 Billion (USD 4.29 Billion) (3.53%)	PHP 671.3 Billion (USD 11.47 Billion) (21%)

The country’s gender-responsive budgeting initiatives, however, also face challenges, including limited awareness on the measure, budget constraints, data unavailability, and poor coordination across government levels, and sustainability. Efforts have been made to address these challenges. For instance, there are ongoing improvements in aligning the GEWE Plan with the GAD Agenda as well as strengthening coordination between national government agencies and LGUs for GAD planning and budgeting, considering the new Mandanas-Garcia Ruling.⁹⁰

35. MECHANISMS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE BPFA AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Apart from the PCW, the CHR – Gender Equality and Women’s Human Rights Center, actively engages government, civil society organizations, academe and the private sector in consultations on issues and actions to track progress on gender equality (not exclusively the BPfA). There are also the IACVAWC and the IACAT, which have reserved seats for accredited CSO representatives in its composition. The IACVAWC and IACAT are special bodies created to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the laws against intimate partner violence (Republic Act No. 9262) and trafficking in persons (Republic

Act No. 9208 and its amendments), respectively. Moreover, their mandates include policy formulation, standards setting and program development, as needed, to improve service delivery to victim-survivors of abuse. The IACVAWC and IACAT also have LGU counterparts, which also have community-based CSOs in their composition.

Another formal mechanism where women's representation is mandated is the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), which acts as the national coordinating and advisory body for the implementation of the social reform and poverty alleviation agenda. It is composed of government agencies, heads of LGU leagues, and CSO representatives from 14 basic sectors, including the women's sector. The PCW is represented, both in the *en banc* body, composed of heads of key agencies, and the technical working group.

Representation of the women's sector in local development councils is mandated at all levels, as provided in the Local Government Code.⁸⁷ The local development councils assist LGUs in setting the direction of their economic and social development, and coordinate efforts on the same, within their jurisdictions. Women's representation in local councils have facilitated the institutionalization of gender equality measures congruent with the goals of the BPfA and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through their advocacy and lobbying for local GAD Codes and related ordinances.

36. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATION OF THE BPfA REPORT

The preparation of the BPfA+30 Philippine Progress Report was a comprehensive process that actively involved various stakeholders, ensuring a wide representation of voices and perspectives.

The national review process for the BPfA+30 was officially launched on March 1, 2024, during the 2024 Women’s Rights Forum: Ugnayang Bayan (public relations) Series. This event marked the beginning of a series of national and sub-national consultations and workshops organized to gather inputs from diverse groups of women and girls, as well as other relevant stakeholders. The Sub-National Consultation Workshops for the Visayas and Mindanao, held on April 16 and 25, 2024, respectively, and the National Validation Workshop conducted on May 6, 2024, were critical in collecting comprehensive feedback and insights from stakeholders, both at the national and local levels.

To ensure a comprehensive and inclusive review process, a TWG was established for each of the six dimensions of the BPfA+30 report. Each TWG was co-led by a national government agency and a CSO, reflecting a balanced representation from both sectors. The TWGs convened regularly to assess the progress in their respective dimensions and incorporate the insights gathered from the consultations. The composition of the TWGs and the list of participants to the national and sub-

national consultations are provided in the annex.

37. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

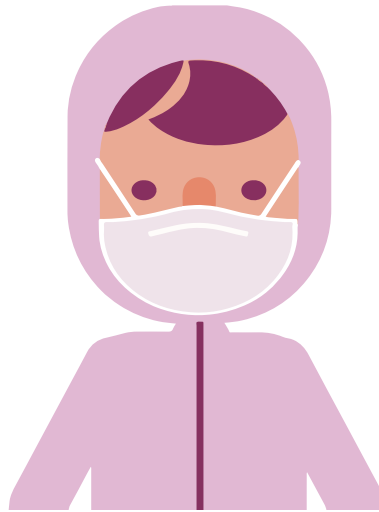
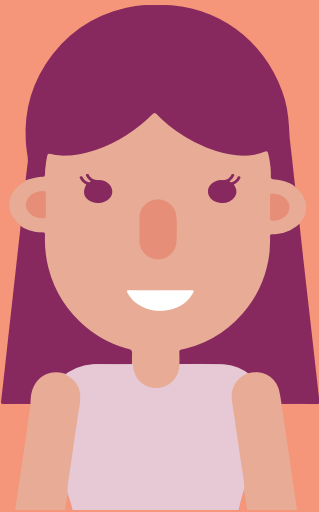
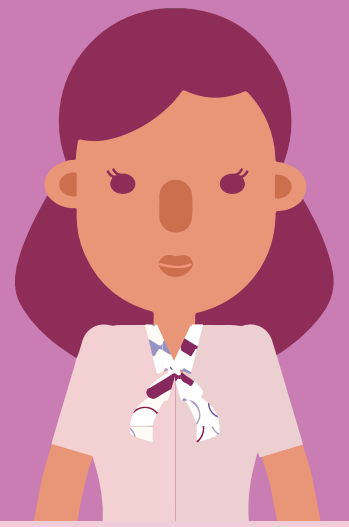
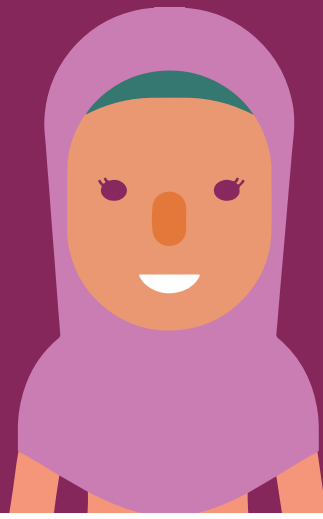
The Philippines submitted its Ninth Periodic Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee) on 02 July 2, 2021, and received the Concluding Observations and recommendations from the CEDAW Committee on 23 November 23, 2023. Between the two dates, the Philippines has already addressed fully or to a certain extent, some of the CEDAW Committee’s recommendations, notably on raising awareness on human rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality using various platforms; online and offline; capacity building of government stakeholders to better respond to gender-based discrimination and violence along the lines of their mandates; and enactment of critical policies, such as on the prohibition of child and forced marriage (Republic Act No. 11596), increasing the age for statutory rape (Republic Act No. 11648) and defining and criminalizing online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (Republic Act No. 11930).

The 2019-2025 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) Plan outlines the strategies and steps, which the Philippine government will take to realize women’s human rights in the

country. Specifically, it forwards seven strategic goal areas, which are informed by both the goals and priorities of the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) 1995-2025 and the Philippine Development Plan: (1) expanded economic opportunities for women; (2) accelerated human capital development through investing in gender equality and women's empowerment; (3) significant reduction in gender-based violence and enhanced gender perspective in justice, security and peace; (4) expanded opportunities for women's participation, leadership and benefit in disaster resilience and humanitarian action; (5) expanded opportunities for women's participation, leadership, and benefit from science, technology, innovation, ICT, infrastructure, and energy; (6) enhanced women's participation, leadership and

benefit in politics and government service; and (7) transformed social norms and culture to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The concrete targets per strategic goal area is found in Part III of the GEWE. Among others, it includes increase in the representation of women in all sectors, but especially in economy and leadership; increase in women's ownership of resources (e.g., land), and access to welfare, capacity-building opportunities, and services and goods; wage equality; decrease in the number of women and female-headed households in poverty; and establishment of functioning institutional mechanisms on GBV and GAD mainstreaming across the country by the end of 2025.⁹¹



Section 5:

Data and Statistics

38. KEY AREAS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER STATISTICS



38.1 Established an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)

Republic Act No. 10625, enacted in 2013, provided the basis for the creation of the Inter-agency Committee on Gender, Children, and Youth Statistics, a statistical coordination mechanism under the PSA. The Inter-agency Committee functions to “coordinate and resolve agency and sectoral concerns on statistical matters... [and] shall serve as a forum for discussion of the issues raised by concerned producers, users and other stakeholders of sectoral and agency-specific statistics.”⁹² It is composed of the PCW as Chair, the NEDA as Vice Chair, and the Council for the Welfare of Children, DSWD, DTI, National Youth Commission, and the Philippine National Police as members.

The PSA also passed the following resolutions on gender statistics:

- Resolution No. 8 Series of 2021, which is on the “Updated Philippine Core GAD Indicators” in May 2021. The development of the Core GAD Indicators considered various international, regional and national GAD

indicator systems to provide a framework for generating and analyzing GAD data in the country.

- PSA Board Resolution No. 12, Series of 2023, which reiterates PSA Board Resolution No. 1, Series of 2017-031 on “Enjoining Different Agencies to Promote Gender Concerns in the Generation of Statistics”



38.2 Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, and disability)

In the last five years, the Philippines has taken measures to ensure the inclusion of gender and gender-related concerns in surveys and statistics generated by key government agencies. Some of these are the following:

- The Labor Force Survey in 2019 and 2023, which included questions on “unpaid domestic services for household and family members” (Domain 3) and “unpaid caregiving services for household and family members” (Domain 4).
- Census of Agriculture and Fisheries that includes questions on SDG 5a(1) on women’s ownership of agricultural land.
- NEDA, in partnership with the UNFPA, is conducting the “Longitudinal Cohort Study on the Filipino Child”, a 15-year study, which will collect data from a nationally-representative sample of children on various key concerns regarding their development and transition from childhood to young adulthood. The research started in 2016.

The PCW, in partnership with UN Women and Oxfam, also conducted the National Household Care Survey in 2021. The study included the time-use surveys to measure the time spent of women and men on care work in the household and for family members, and generate information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the same.

The DICT conducted the Women in ICT Development Index (WIDI) Survey in 2022, which featured statistics on women's use of ICT for social, economic and livelihood opportunities.



38.3 Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)

The PSA publishes the annual “Fact Sheet on Women and Men in the Philippines”, which is a compilation of gender statistics on 20 areas or concerns, gathered from various government agencies. Specifically, This includes sex-disaggregated data on the following: (1) Population, (2) Education, (3) Health and Nutrition, (4) Work and Economic Participation, (5) Economic Status, (6) Agriculture, (7) Public Life, (8), Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5, (9) Tourism, (10) Social Welfare, (11) Trade and Industry, (12) Violence Against Women, (13) Child Abuse, (14) The Filipino Youth, (15) Women Empowerment, (16) ASEAN, (17) Media, (18) Environment, (19) Social Protection, and (20) Institutional

Mechanisms.

In 2019, the PCW published Monitoring and Evaluation of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Philippines: A Compendium of Indicators Vols. 1 and 2. The Compendium was developed to be a reference document on the outcome-based planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, programs and projects towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

39. PRIORITY AREAS FOR STRENGTHENING NATIONAL GENDER STATISTICS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



39.1 Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)

Disaggregation of data by sex is required of all government agencies and instrumentalities, including the PSA, under the Magna Carta of Women. Thus, the challenge in making women and girls more visible in statistics include (1) utilizing available data to guide planning of programs and interventions from a gendered perspective, and publishing findings; (2) developing new questions and methodologies to capture women and girls' experiences in emerging issues, such as unpaid care work, climate change, and digital technologies. In relation to the latter,

periodic time use surveys will be helpful in surfacing data relevant to gauging the contribution of women and girls' unpaid work to national development, as well as the changes in the gendered division of labor over time. Models for collecting data and computing gendered time use on a national scale are currently being developed by the PSA; pilot studies based on time use surveys have been conducted in the past five years, notably the 2021 National Household Care Survey by the PCW, Oxfam Pilipinas, and UN Women. Apart from unpaid work and formal labor, women in the informal economy is another area that is underexplored by gender statistics and research, yet crucial in understanding women's contribution to society.



39.2 Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)

To date, Philippine gender statistics are publicly available online, primarily through the PSA website (e.g., its annual “Fact Sheet on Women and Men in the Philippines”), as well as on the websites of individual government agencies that also publish GAD data along the lines of its mandate. The country also has the “Freedom of Information” law (Executive Order No. 2 s.2016), which enables citizens to request data from the government, including gender statistics, pertaining to a function or mandate of a particular government agency.

This said, the country aims to strengthen not only the generation of gender data and its use in traditional formats, such as research and government briefing papers, but also improve its utilization and popularization for various audiences. An example of this are the short information videos, such as those produced for PCW's Cine Juana. These short videos on VAW can be easily uploaded and viewed in social media platforms, or used in presentations as teaching or discussion aids.

The PCW also continues to publish thematic gender data in print and multimedia formats, which can be circulated in populations with limited to no access to digital technologies (e.g., materials distribution, briefing papers for use in traditional broadcast media).

40. GENDER-SPECIFIC INDICATORS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Philippines monitors its SDG progress using 155 indicators: 102 are global indicators (indicator present in the Philippines that have the same definition and method of computation likewise at the international level), 28 are proxy indicators (alternative indicator to the global indicators due to lack of country context on the indicator as described at the international level), and 25 are supplemental indicators (an additional indicator relevant in achieving the target in a specific goal).

Specific to gender, the country tracks and publishes its progress under all SDG

5 indicators except 5.4 on unpaid care and domestic work, and its sub-indicator (i.e., proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location); and 5b on the use of ICT to promote the empowerment of women, and its sub-indicator (i.e., proportion of

individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex).

The table below shows the supplemental and proxy indicators under other SDG 5 indicators where they were identified by the Philippines:⁹³

SDG 5 Indicator	Supplemental (s) or Proxy (p) Indicator
5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.	5.2. (s1) Number of reported gender-based violence cases (includes e-VAW) 5.2. (s2) Number of reported abuse cases for women and children 5.2. (s3) Number of cases served by DSWD on violence against women and child abuse
5.5: Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.	5.5. (s1) Percentage of firms owned by women (through business permits and licenses system)
5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	5.a.1(p1) Number of agricultural and residential land free patents issued to women and men 5.a.1 (p2) Number of holders of emancipation patents and certificates of land ownership, certificate of ancestral land titles (CALTs), certificate of ancestral domain titles (CADTs) by sex, stewardship 5.a.1 (p3) Number of women beneficiaries with secured land tenure in Residential areas

Table 8: Supplemental and Proxy Indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 5

Although not focused on the SDGs per se, the PCW also led the development of the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) indicators. These indicators align with the desired impact of an improved quality of life for both women and men. Achieving gender equality across social, economic, political, and cultural aspects is essential for

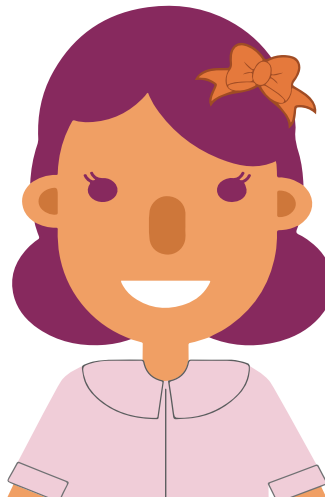
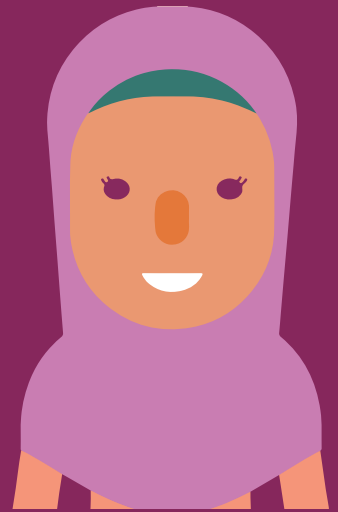
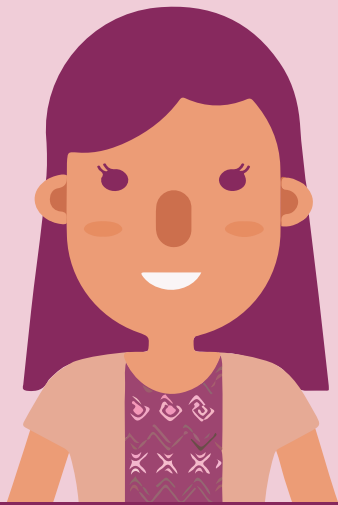
sustainable development. The GEWE Plan classifies these indicators into five strategic areas, namely: (1) Women’s Social Development Rights, (2) Women’s Economic Empowerment, (3) Gender in Security, Justice, and Peace, (4) Gender-Responsive Governance, and (5) Gender in Environment and Climate Change.⁹⁴

41. DATA DISAGGREGATIONS ROUTINELY PROVIDED BY MAJOR SURVEYS

Major national surveys, such as the National Census on Population and Household (NCPH, every five years) and the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS, every five years) disaggregate data according to geographic location, income bracket, sex, age bracket, education, civil status, ethnicity and religion.

Disability data was included in the NCPH in the last census in 2020, thus, it is possible to access data disaggregated by disability since then. Moreover, the PSA also released a special report on disability prevalence in 2019,⁹⁵ while the quarterly Survey on Labor and Employment also has information on disability and gender.⁹⁶

Similarly, the NCPH includes data on the OFWs, and there is also the annual Survey of Overseas Filipinos. In 2018, the PSA published the National Migration Survey, which is a more comprehensive report on the intra-country and overseas migration of Filipinos.⁹⁷



Section 6:

Conclusion and Next Steps

PRIORITY ACTIONS TO ACCELERATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPFA AND THE 2030 AGENDA, NOTABLY AS PART OF THE DECADE OF ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic has not just been a pressing crisis, but a pivotal moment for gender equality in the Philippines. It has starkly revealed both the strengths and the weaknesses of existing policies, programs, and systems designed to protect women's human rights. It has underscored the necessity of regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure that hard-fought gains are not lost and that measures are in place to address emerging risks. Furthermore, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of addressing the intersectionality of women's identities. Multiple forms of inequality, such as those based on gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and disability, often compound each other, exacerbating vulnerabilities. Therefore, targeted interventions are crucial to effectively mitigate these compounded inequalities. This approach is not just about adding layers to existing interventions but rethinking them to ensure that they address the unique challenges faced by women who belong to multiple marginalized groups.

Analyzing the 12 critical areas of concern for women through the six dimensions provided by the UN has revealed the need for a more comprehensive, whole-of-society approach. This collaboration must extend beyond government duty-bearers to include both formal and informal institutions, public and private organizations, and, importantly, the

partnership between duty-bearers and rights holders. Such an inclusive approach is vital for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges women and girls face.

Thus, over the next five years, the Philippines will focus on the following priority areas to address remaining gaps and strengthen its policies, programs, and systems to be more resilient and responsive to emerging challenges and needs, particularly in the context of disasters and climate change.

1. Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice;
2. Quality education, training, and life-long learning for women and girls;
3. Eliminating violence against women and girls;
4. Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health; and
5. Right to work and rights at work (e.g., gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression, job creation).

Achieving the targets and goals in the areas mentioned above requires the active and meaningful participation of women and girls. Women's participation is not only a means to an end but also an essential component of achieving gender equality. Women's participation enriches the discourse, introduces diverse perspectives, and drives forward the agenda of equality.

To this end, the Philippines will prioritize global targets for women's leadership and participation in politics, governance, and decision-making. Actions will be

directed towards building the capacity of young women to lead political parties, participate in elections, and engage in government bodies, corporate entities, and civil society networks. Additionally, efforts will be strengthened to bridge the gender digital divide, particularly for women in remote rural areas, senior citizens, women with disabilities, small-scale female entrepreneurs, and indigenous women. The government will also employ a convergence strategy for eradicating poverty, focusing on women and girls facing intersectional disadvantages, especially those in extreme poverty. Greater attention will be given to addressing the concerns of the care economy, beginning with the development of the National Care Framework and Action Plan. These steps aim to contribute to reducing the gender pay gap, tackling occupational segregation, and fostering a more inclusive and equitable work environment for all.

Another crucial aspect is improving systems to track women's contributions to society and addressing intersectional inequalities to ensure that progress toward gender equality is comprehensively understood and achieved. Introducing a results-based gender mainstreaming approach will direct GAD budget expenses towards achieving targeted impacts across the 12 areas of concern outlined in the BPfA. This includes prioritizing women in disaster risk reduction, science and technology, peace and security, and addressing the needs of women with intersectional disadvantages. Strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment will also be crucial. This

will involve developing viable models for subnational institutional mechanisms, such as GAD offices in local government units, and conceptualizing a Gender Mainstreaming Institute for Asia and the Pacific. Other proposed measures include:

- Creating a dedicated Technical Division for GAD Plan and Budget Review within the PCW,
- Linking junior government executives to international GAD training and scholarships, and
- Engaging the academic community to generate new knowledge to enhance gender mainstreaming.

Central to these strategies is the need to challenge and change entrenched social norms and practices that perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls. This involves engaging a broad range of stakeholders, including women's human rights organizations, the private sector, and other non-state actors. Expanding the engagement of men and boys as active agents of change is essential in this area. This involves promoting their role in ending all forms of violence, transforming domestic gender roles, and respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of women and girls.

These comprehensive actions and strategies are designed to build a more resilient and equitable system for gender equality, address pandemic-related challenges, ensure progress across all critical areas of concern of the BPfA, and create a society that is gender-equal, respectful of diversity, and inclusive.

ACRONYMS

4Ps	<i>Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino</i> Program
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
ALTER	Aligning Lenses through Ethical Recruitment
ARs	Annual Reports
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindano
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CMPL	Code of Muslim Personal Laws
COA	Commission on Audit
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPD	Commission on Population and Development
CSAEM	Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSPP	Conflict Sensitivity and Peace Promotion
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DigiED	Digital Education
DICT	Department of Information and Communications Technology
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DIWA	Digital Innovation for Women Advancement
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
FEO	Firearms and Explosive Office
FHE	Free Higher Education
GAA	General Appropriations Act
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GFAst	GAD Focal Point System Functionality Assessment Tool
GFPS	GAD Focal Point System
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index

GIDA	Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas
GIDCA	Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged and Conflict-Affected Areas
GOCCs	Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations
GPBs	GAD Plans and Budgets
GSNI	Gender Social Norms Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IACAT	Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking
IACVAWC	Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children
IBP	Integrated Bar of the Philippines
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
ILO	International Labour Organization
LCAT-CP-VAWC	Local Committees on Anti-Trafficking, Child Pornography, and Violence Against Women and Their Children
LCAT-VAWC	Local Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Their Children
LDRRM	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
LFS	Labor Force Survey
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and More
LGUs	Local Government Units
MAP-MH	Medicine Access Program for Mental Health
MOVE	Men Opposed to Violence Everywhere
NAP PCVE	National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
NAPC	National Anti-Poverty Commission
NAPWPS	National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security
NCC-OSAEC- CSAEM	National Coordination Center against OSAEC and CSAEM
NCPH	National Census on Population and Household
NDHS	National Demographic and Health Survey
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NDRRMP	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NGRP	National GAD Resource Pool
NICTS	National ICT Household Survey
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OFWs	Overseas Filipino Workers
OPAPRU	Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unit
OSAEC	Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children

OSYA	Out-of-School Youth and Adults
PAO	Public Attorney's Office
PCO	Presidential Communications Office
PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
PHP	Philippine Peso
PICACC	Philippine Internet Crimes Against Children Center
PKKK	<i>Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan</i>
PNP	Philippine National Police
PNP-WCPC	Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center
PopCen	Population Census
PPGD	Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development
ProTA	Sectoral Proactive Technical Assistance
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
RAPWPS	Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security
READY	Resistance Education Against Drugs for the Youth
RGRP	Regional GAD Resource Pools
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SfP-Philippines	Skills for Prosperity Programme in the Philippines
SIBOL	Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes
SOGIE	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics
SSS	Social Security System
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, and Mathematics
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
STEP	Special Training for Employment Program
SUCs	State Universities and Colleges
Tech4ED	Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development
TES	Tertiary Education Subsidy
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TFDCC	Task Force for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TNK	<i>Tinig ng Kababaihan</i>
TourISM - WoRCS	Tourism Integrates, Supports and Minds Women's Respect and Child Safety Program
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
UAQTEA	Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UP CWGS	UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies

UP CWSFI	Center for Women’s Studies Foundation, Inc.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWC	Violence Against Women and Their Children
WAGI	Women and Gender Institute
WIDI	Women and ICT Development Index
WoCS	Gender and Development, Women and Child Safe

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