PHILIPPINES

PHILIPPINE PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION AND
OUTCOME OF THE 23RD SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
CONTENTS

Acronyms

Introduction

Part I Analytical Overview of Trends in Achieving Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Part II Implementation of the Critical Areas of Concern

Women and Poverty

Education and Training of Women

Women and Health

Violence Against Women

Women and Armed Conflict

Women and the Economy

Women in Power and Decision Making

Human Rights of Women

Women and Media

Women and the Environment

The Girl Child

Part III Institutional Developments for the Advancement of Women

Part IV Philippines’ Vision in Advancing the GAD Agenda Beyond 2004

References
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACRONYMS</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Armed Forces of the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVAWAC</td>
<td>Anti-Violence Against Women and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWS</td>
<td>Battered Wife Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CES</td>
<td>Career Executive Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHR</td>
<td>Commission on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITAP</td>
<td>Comprehensive and Integrated Technical Assistance Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOA</td>
<td>Certificate of Land Ownership Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPL</td>
<td>Code of Muslim Personal Laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Compliance Monitoring System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Country Program for Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>Civil Service Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWTS</td>
<td>Civil Welfare Training Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DepEd</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENR</td>
<td>Department of Environment and Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOH</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOLE</td>
<td>Department of Labor and Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTI</td>
<td>Department of Trade and Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Emancipation Patent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPZ</td>
<td>Economic Processing Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERPAT</td>
<td>Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPW</td>
<td>Framework Plan for Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD</td>
<td>Gender and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRC</td>
<td>Gender Resource Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRN</td>
<td>Gender Resource Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST</td>
<td>Gender Sensitivity Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRR</td>
<td>Implementing Rules and Regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Institutional Strengthening Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KALAHI</td>
<td>Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Linking Arms to Fight Poverty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCW</td>
<td>Local Commission on Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGU</td>
<td>Local Government Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMMAP</td>
<td>Lady Municipal Mayors’ Association of the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFA</td>
<td>Multi-Fiber Arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBN</td>
<td>Minimum Basic Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDP</td>
<td>Multi-Donor Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILF</td>
<td>Moro Islamic Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTPDP</td>
<td>Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPC</td>
<td>National Anti-Poverty Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCRFW</td>
<td>National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPA</td>
<td>Overseas Performing Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEZA</td>
<td>Philippine Economic Zone Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFA</td>
<td>Beijing Platform for Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMA</td>
<td>Philippine Military Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNP</td>
<td>Philippine National Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POEA</td>
<td>Philippine Overseas Employment Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLO</td>
<td>Philippine Overseas Labor Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPGD</td>
<td>Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Republic Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA-K</td>
<td>Self Employment Assistance-Kaunlaran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>Social Security System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESDA</td>
<td>Technical Education and Skills Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>UN Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>United Nations Women’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAW</td>
<td>Violence Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAWC</td>
<td>Violence Against Women and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAWCC</td>
<td>VAW Coordinating Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

This report contains highlights of updates on the progress of implementation of the Platform for Action (1995) and Outcome of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly (2000).

The key policy and program interventions implemented from 2001-2003 and presented in this report address the issues and challenges identified. It also proceeds from the future actions outlined in the Philippine country report on the implementation of the PFA in 2000, entitled, “Transforming Women’s Lives, the Philippine Experience”. To accelerate the implementation of the PFA, interventions to stem the ill effects of globalization were instituted; the medium-term GAD Plan for 2000 to 2004, dubbed as the Framework Plan for Women, was formulated and implemented; and relevant legislation and policies to curb trafficking in women and violence against women and their children (VAWC) in intimate relationships were passed.

As prescribed, this report presents four main parts: Part I provides an analytical overview of the implementation of the Platform for Action and Outcome Document; Part II provides the progress achieved in the implementation of the critical areas of concern citing remaining issues and challenges; Part III presents the institutional mechanisms and structures put in place to support the promotion of gender equality; and Part IV describes the Philippines’ vision in advancing the gender and development agenda beyond 2004.


The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) endeavored to respond to the questions and comply with the guidelines set by the Commission on the Status of Women for the preparation of this report.

The NCRFW will prepare a comprehensive report in the third quarter of 2004 to report on the progress of the implementation of the PFA for the Beijing +10.
PART I:
ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW OF TRENDS IN ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY AND
WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

A. The Framework Plan for Women and GAD Budget Policy: Mechanisms to
Implement the PFA

1. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), the national
machinery for the advancement of women, remains steadfast in its commitment to implement the
international policies on women which include among others, the UN Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform
for Action (PFA). The pursuit of the commitments are in line with its vision of making
government work for gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender
mainstreaming.

2. From the general policy on gender equality articulated in the 1987 Philippine
Constitution, concrete expressions of the policy have been formulated and are being
implemented through plans of action. The plans of action included measures to carry out the
provisions in the international as well national laws and policies.

3. As a key Plan of Action, the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development
(PPGD) 1995-2025, the 30-year strategic plan that fleshed out the PFA, was further translated
into an operational plan. In 2001, the NCRFW, in collaboration with government agencies,
NGOs and academe formulated the Framework Plan for Women (FPW), a time-slice of the
PPGD.

4. Aside from outlining specific and results-focused programs and projects, the FPW
provides standards and mechanisms to fulfill Philippine commitments to international
agreements such as the CEDAW, PFA and Beijing +5 Outcome Document. The interventions are
grouped along 3 major areas of concern, namely: (a) promotion of economic empowerment; (b)
protection and fulfillment of women’s human rights; and (c) promotion of gender-responsive
governance.

5. As in the PPGD, the FPW is implemented through a gender mainstreaming strategy for
which agencies work on the comprehensive integration of gender principles and concepts in the
design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs. The mainstreaming
strategy is to be done in accordance with existing guidelines for the preparation of agency-
specific agenda and GAD budget. NCRFW takes the lead in coordinating the integration of the
objectives of the CEDAW, PFA, PPGD and the FPW in the policies, programs, projects as well
as systems and processes of the agencies.

6. Using the GAD Budget Policy as its handle, NCRFW tracks the actions of the agencies in
their preparation and implementation of specific programs and allocation of resources to carry
out the interventions outlined in the FPW. Further discussion on the GAD Budget Policy and
monitoring mechanisms are found in Part III of this report.
B. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as Framework for Development

7. The Philippine Government recognizes the MDGs as a guide for setting national targets. No less than the President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself articulated the significance of the MDG as the standard for governance. She also considers this as a benchmark to track the government’s performance in achieving the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) goals and targets and international commitments to the global development agenda. The MTPDP, which consists of a comprehensive set of policies and programs to address the needs of the poor has the following core strategies: (a) macroeconomic stability with equitable growth based on free enterprise; (b) agricultural and fisheries modernization with social equity; (c) comprehensive human development and protection for the vulnerable; and (d) good governance and the rule of law. NCRFW is currently advocating for the inclusion of women’s concerns and gender indicators with the rest of the MDGs.

8. Recognizing that women are among the vulnerable sectors, government paid close attention to responding to their needs and concerns in the implementation of the MDG in various areas. The areas covered are (a) education, (b) poverty eradication, (c) health and (d) gender equality.

9. The Philippine government has achieved much in terms of meeting the goal on the promotion of gender equality, specifically, in the area of elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Women and men have almost equal status in access to education and women are able to penetrate traditionally male-dominated educational territories. The positive developments are due in large part to the supportive approaches carried out such as the revision of textbooks, curricula and instructional materials as well as teaching methods to eliminate gender biases and stereotyping.

C. The Concluding Comments in the 4th Philippine CEDAW Report as Reference for Policy Formulation

10. The concluding comments of the UN Committee on CEDAW on the 3rd and 4th Philippine progress report on the CEDAW were most helpful in the development and institution of policy and program reforms for women. The Concluding Comments on the Philippine report focused on the need of the government to address the following concerns: (a.) provision of safe and protected jobs for women workers; (b.) provision of information and support services for women overseas workers; (c.) removal of gender discrimination of laws on prostitution and provision of alternative job opportunities for women; (e.) correction of deficiencies in the legal system with regard to violence against women; (f.) provision of reproductive and sexual health services for all women in all regions; (g.) participation of women in political and public life; and (h.) preparation of sex-disaggregated data in measuring effects of government policies and programs on women.

11. To address the welfare, job and livelihood security concerns of women workers, government provided more livelihood opportunities, financing and entrepreneurship training for women in the informal sector. For overseas women workers, the establishment of on-site migrant workers desks, conduct of skill- and country-specific pre-departure orientations and posting of
female social welfare officers in countries with large populations of women workers were done. Laws were passed to protect persons especially women and children who are trafficked for prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude, or removal or sale of organs, and women and children who are victims of violence.

12. Local Government Units (LGUs) underwent training and capacity-building to enable them to institute/ provide comprehensive health services. The Civil Service Commission, the oversight agency for human resource development of government personnel, issued a memorandum circular that provides for equal representation of women and men in executive and decision-making positions. Finally, milestones were reached in the development and generation of sex-disaggregated data to track government policies and programs. These include the selection of 14 core GAD indicators on monitoring women’s enjoyment of their rights which was organized according to the PFA areas of concern; the statistical framework for Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) which focuses on the methodology to generate statistics; and the framework for integrating the full range of paid and unpaid work of men and women in national income accounts.

D. Legislative and Policy-Making Achievements

13. Much progress has been achieved in the institution of policies to address violence against and exploitation of women in the last three years.

13.1 The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act – This law was passed in 2003 and defines as criminal, acts of trafficking and acts to promote trafficking in persons. It also redefines prostitution from a crime committed by women only to any act, transaction or design involving the use of a person by another for sexual intercourse or lascivious conduct in exchange for money or profit. It also stipulates penalties for various types of offenses with or without consent including “users” or customers of trafficked women in prostitution. To facilitate the implementation of the law, a set of Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) has been drafted.

13.2 The Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (AVAWCA) – Passed in the first quarter of 2004, this law aims to stem the high incidence of violence against women and criminalize perpetrators. It also protects women and children in the context of marital, dating or common law relationship. The law also recognizes the “battered woman syndrome” (BWS) as a legal defense for women who have suffered cumulative abuse and have been driven to defend themselves. The law provides for issuance of “protection orders” to stop violence and prevent recurrence of future violence.

13.3 Judicial Reforms - The Supreme Court initiated reforms in the judicial doctrines and court procedures. After the law on the reinstatement of family courts was passed, new rules to facilitate the filing of cases on domestic violence and issuance of protection orders were put in place.
Solo Parents Act

14. The rising incidence of single parents and the need to respond to their welfare concerns paved the way for the enactment of the Solo Parents Welfare Act in 2000. The statute provides for a non-discriminatory policy on employment opportunities for single parents. It also includes a comprehensive program of social development and welfare for single parents and their children such as livelihood development services, parental leave, educational and housing benefits and medical assistance. As a policy support to this law, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) amended its rule on maternity leave to allow unmarried women in government service to avail of it. The CSC is also formulating a Civil Service Code that has gender-related provisions on parental leave, including one for solo parents and flexible working hours.

Optional Protocol of CEDAW

15. At the international level, the Philippines ratified the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW in August 2003 to respond to one of the issues identified in the Beijing+5 Outcome Document. This provides opportunities for Filipino women to file complaints and seek redress for violations of their rights through the assistance of the UN Committee on CEDAW.

Ownership of Land/Property

16. On the economic front, the rights of wives to ownership of land were ensured when the Department of Agrarian Reform issued a directive for this purpose. It requires the issuance of Emancipation Patents or Certificates of Land Ownership Award (EP/ CLOA) in the name of both the husband and wife in accordance with applicable provisions of the Family Code and the Civil Code on property relations involving legally married and common-law spouses.

Briefs and Advocacy Materials for Policy and Legislative Discussions

17. NCRFW participated in policy discussions and provided the gender perspective in discourses by way of position papers and other advocacy materials. Topics include the widely debated bill on the Reproductive Health Care Agenda and other bills such as legalization of divorce, promotion of integration of women in the development process, among others.

E. Participation of Men in the Promotion of Gender Equality

Men’s Advocacy Against VAW

18. NCRFW has scored a breakthrough in enlisting the support of men in helping curb violence against women (VAW). In 2003, it conducted a forum on “Men Speak Out Against VAW” and launched a white ribbon campaign. The forum attended by officials from the executive, legislative and the judiciary had the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as keynote speaker.
19. Efforts were initiated by NGOs on organizing a men’s movement on violence against women. Some LGUs are also sporadically establishing men’s reproductive health clinics to promote increased awareness on the issue.

Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Program (ERPAT)

20. The Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Program of the social welfare department provides fathers a chance to improve their self-esteem and enrich their paternal capabilities to fulfill their roles, duties and responsibilities.

F. Progress in Specific Priority Areas

Achievements in Education for Girls and Women

21. The increased investment in female children’s education by parents, coupled by parental appreciation of educating daughters, has led to high literacy and educational achievements of women, both absolutely and relative to men.

Measures against Sexual Harassment in Ecozones

22. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) actively advocated for plant-level implementation of Republic Act (RA) 7877 through the creation of Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) in 151 locator-enterprises and five in PEZA head office/zone offices. Anti-sexual harassment policies were also included in nine enterprises while women’s desks were created in three ecozones. A study has yet to be done on the impact of the CODI in the ecozones, whether these CODIs actually functioned and their effect on management and employees.

Gainful Employment and Skills Training

23. The skills training program of the social welfare department produced positive results. From June 1995 to June 1999, some 166,293 women benefited from skills training programs. Of these, 82 percent of the trainees were eventually absorbed in the labor force. In 2001, a total of 31,827 disadvantaged women were trained, of whom 87 percent became gainfully employed through open, self-employed, subcontracted trainers and other types of jobs.
Part II:
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

A. Women and Poverty

24. Poverty is still the single biggest concern of most Filipinos. As of 2000, there were 5.1 million poor families, or 30.8 million poor Filipinos. Poor families accounted for 39.4 per cent of the entire population. These figures were up from the 1997 level of 36.8 per cent of the population.

Program Developments

*Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Linking Arms to Fight Poverty) Program*

25. To respond to this concern, government, through the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), is implementing the *Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan* (Linking Arms to Fight Poverty), or KALAHI, a national program to reduce poverty in depressed urban and rural areas. The NAPC has identified 14 basic sectors where most poor Filipinos belong and who should benefit from the KALAHI program. One of these is the women sector. The NAPC through the Women’s Sectoral Council, and in partnership with NCRFW and DSWD as the lead agencies, formulates strategies and policies to address the poverty and development concerns of women.

*Microfinance and Micro-Credit for Women*

26. During the State of the Nation Address in 2001, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo identified micro-finance as a cornerstone of her administration’s fight against poverty. She directed the Peoples’ Credit Finance Corporation (PCFC) to provide credit to 1 million borrowers by June 2004. As of June 2001, PCFC had served some 349,036 borrowers. Between June 2001 and December 2003, PCFC reported that it has already served 864,965 beneficiaries. Of these, approximately 98 percent are women.

27. Providing access to financing and credit for women continues to be a priority. The Land Bank of the Philippines released PhP6 billion for its *Puhunan Inilaan sa mga Pinay* (Credit for Filipino Women) program and rediscounting facility for women. In 2001, the Development Bank of the Philippines released PhP870.9 million and the LBP another PhP8.5 billion to provide assistance to women engaged in micro and cottage business enterprises as mandated by Republic Act 7882 or An Act Providing Assistance to Women Engaging in Micro and Cottage Business Enterprises. The DTI is developing a business incubation program to enable women entrepreneurs and family-based enterprises to run competitive, entrepreneurial and sustainable businesses.

*Lending Windows for Women*

28. On the other hand, some 56,000 women have accessed various lending windows of the Department of Agriculture to finance women’s projects in the agri-fishery sector. Out of the
PhP11.2-billion in loans released to the sector from 1996 to 2003, PhP2.7 billion has been allocated for women borrowers.

Self-Employment Assistance Associations

29. To further extend microfinance services, the NAPC, the People’s Credit and Finance Corporation, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development agreed to develop self-employment assistance kaunlaran (development) associations, a community-based capability-building program for microenterprise and microfinancing for the poor and marginalized sector to self-administer a socialized credit scheme. Components of the SEA-K include social capital assistance, savings mobilization, and access to other social services. In 2001, investment to the program has reached PhP460.6 million that benefited 115,303 individuals, 80,923 of whom are women. Among the beneficiaries are 15 SEA-K associations of mothers that each received seed capital of P100,000 for the implementation of livelihood projects.

Study on Impact of Microfinance Programs

30. The NCRFW, with funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency, is currently undertaking a study on the gender impact of micro-credit on women borrowers. From the study, recommendations will be made to government agencies on how to effectively address gender issues on micro-credit.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Prevalence of Poverty Among Women n Rural Areas

31. Despite efforts by government to alleviate the plight of the rural poor, poverty remains a major issue confronting women especially those in the rural areas.

31.1 The imbalance in the distribution of resources between urban and rural areas creates a wide disparity in the development of the two areas in favor of cities. Government should have a more realistic and more comprehensive approach to the problem, one that gives women a greater share in decision-making, and the necessary tools and resources to help them break away from destitution.

31.2 To address the imbalance in development of rural and urban areas, government must create viable agricultural industries, livelihood and job opportunities for rural women that harness the resources in the area while ensuring food security and protecting the environment.

31.3 Local government units and devolved government agencies should deliver basic/social services that respond to specific needs of women particularly those in rural areas. The programs and services to be delivered for rural women should be anchored on a comprehensive collection and analysis of socio-economic data on women’s needs and concerns in the locality.
32. Women in small and medium enterprises need safety nets, as they face stiff competition from cheap products from other countries. Like other local industries, they require reasonable protection to shield them from too cheap imported goods and services. Women entrepreneurs need technical or capital assistance, particularly if they are to go beyond micro-enterprises.

B. Education and Training of Women

33. Government guarantees equal access to education and training opportunities for every Filipino, regardless of sex, religious affiliation and economic status. Literacy in the Philippines is relatively high – 94 per cent for women and 93 per cent for men. Women outnumbered the men in terms of enrolment at both the secondary and tertiary levels.

Program Developments

Integration of Gender in Basic Education

34. The Department of Education has developed teaching exemplars to integrate gender into the basic education curricula of both elementary and secondary levels. Gender issues are included in the five learning areas of the 2002 revised educational curriculum of English, Science, Math, Filipino, and Makabayan (Social Studies, History, Arts, Technology and Home Economics). Pilot training of teachers is ongoing to apply these handbooks.

Provision of Scholarships for Women

35. The Commission on Higher Education administers scholarships, study grants and loan programs for disadvantaged and financially constrained students taking up college or postgraduate courses. As of academic year 2001-2002, beneficiaries of these student financial assistance programs totaled 22,329, of which 57% were women.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Gender Tracking

36. While women outnumbered men in enrolment in the university/tertiary level, gender tracking is still widespread at this stage. Negative results of gender tracking at the tertiary level include placement of women in lower paying jobs. Without viable employment opportunities locally, educated women end up overseas, working in domestic service. This produces a de-skilling at two levels: nationally, as the country loses its educated workers; and personally, as people hold jobs that require less skills than they are trained for. To avoid this, education needs to be attuned with global trends so that women may be employed in jobs matching their skills and knowledge.
Lack of Gainful Employment Opportunities

37. Also due to the difficulty of finding work in the country, job seekers, both women and men, tend to grab the first available job opportunity. When this happens to women who train in nontraditional professions or careers, it diminishes their opportunity to grow in their profession unless they go for retraining. As a result, there are still few female role models in non-traditional occupations like engineering, science and technology, architecture, and even in vocational-technical courses like computer technology.

Literacy and Employment Problems in Rural Areas

38. Lower literacy and education in rural areas predispose rural women (and men) to lower level jobs, such as domestic service and unpaid family work, or worse, easy prey to prostitution. Although not all college graduates find jobs, post-secondary education has been directly related to better paying jobs, better family health, higher use of contraception and lower number of children. There is, thus, a need to provide more resources and expand government education programs to rural and indigenous women.

Data on Education and Job Matching

39. There is inadequate data to monitor women’s education and training and job matching.

40. Need for further review of materials and programs

40.1 There is a need to expand the review of curricula, schoolbooks and gender instructional materials up to the tertiary level in both private and public schools to eliminate stereotypes and include gender-sensitive ideas such as joint parenting, reproductive rights and non-violent forms of conflict resolution, among others. At the same time, teachers and school administrators in all levels need further training for a more gender-sensitive approach to education.

40.2 Gender-sensitive ideas (such as joint parenting, reproductive health and rights and non-violent forms of handling conflict) should be included in textbooks, materials and curricula. At the same time, teachers and school administrators in all levels need more training for a more gender-sensitive approach to education so they can act as change agents in modifying socio-cultural patterns that are friendly to women and girl-children.

C. Women and Health

41. The Philippine Country Report on the Implementation of the PFA in 2000 noted positive measures and results to promote women’s health. Recent statistics also show improving health conditions of women as indicated by the longer life expectancy and decreasing maternal mortality rates. However, fertility rates remain high (3.0 in urban areas and 4.7 in rural areas in 2000) among women in the Philippines compared to their counterparts in Southeast Asian Countries (2.7 for Malaysia, 2.4 for Indonesia, 1.9 in Thailand and 1.4 in Singapore). Moreover, promoting contraceptive practice among women remains a challenge.
Program Developments

Health Reform Plan

42. The Department of Health is implementing a 10-year Health Sector Reform Agenda and Investment Plan, 1996-2005. About 30 per cent of the investment package of this plan have been set aside for programs and projects to improve women’s health.

Awareness-Raising and Initiatives on Women’s Health Concerns

43. Aside from maternal health, the NCRFW continues to push for comprehensive gender-aware women’s health programs on the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases, occupational health and safety, mental health and the impact of gender inequality, poverty, food scarcity, and environmental degradation on women’s general health status. In response to this, the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute has conducted genetic testing for breast and ovarian cancers to screen women’s susceptibility to these dreaded diseases. It is also working on setting up a breast cancer genetic registry to make women more aware of the issues and risks posed by breast cancer.

Reproductive Health Measures

44. To address increasing population, the DOH’s efforts have been guided by the principles of responsible parenthood, birth spacing, and respect for life and informed choice. Government has adopted a policy of shared responsibility between women and men to decide on the number of their children and the spacing and timing of their birth. At the national level, there is a strong push to promote natural family planning more than the other modern methods of planning and spacing of children. Men’s education and participation are especially encouraged since they exert much influence on decisions regarding health and fertility choices. Local governments, because they are autonomous units, have the leeway to promote and provide the whole range of family planning services to their constituents. Emergency contraceptives for rape survivors were availed in Women and Children Protection Units in the Department of Health-managed hospitals from 2000 to 2002.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Reproductive Health Bill Controversy

45. Government needs to pursue the passage of a law to address the reproductive health care needs of women. Current efforts to pass legislation on reproductive health were stalled as it provoked discussions and debates. The explanatory note of the bill filed cited the need to remove legal barriers to abortion. This issue was raised in view of the necessity to prevent and manage the complications of abortion. The health department stressed that government does not promote abortion as a family planning method. It does not agree with the inclusion of emergency contraceptives among the family planning methods.
Meeting Women’s Needs Across the Life Cycle

46. The government has made efforts to meet the comprehensive health needs of women. However, the needs of adolescents, menopausal and older women have to be addressed. There is a need to intensify implementation of current programs and services in a holistic manner for them to adequately respond to the needs of women across the life cycle. More resources have to be provided so that health programs could expand their area coverage. There is also a need to document the specific effects of government programs and services on the health and well-being of women.

Issues on Devolution of Health Services

47. Issues arising from the devolution of health service delivery must be promptly addressed, and the financial and technical capability of local governments to implement programs taken into account when devolving service delivery. Government must provide necessary resources to further strengthen the implementation of comprehensive women’s health services and programs. Health statistics must be routinely disaggregated by sex and other attributes, most especially at the local level.

Gender Concerns in National Health Insurance Act

48. The revision of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the National Health Insurance Act must also be closely monitored to ensure that women-friendly provisions are considered and integrated into the program.

Impact of Work and Environment on Women’s Health

49. Attention should be paid to mental health, occupational health and safety, and the impact of the environment on women’s health.

Men’s Participation in Family Planning and Responsible Parenthood Programs

50. The national machinery has yet to cover substantial ground in the area of joint and responsible parenthood. Trained health officials need to intensify their efforts in increasing the participation of men in the areas of family planning and child rearing to ensure the well-being and health of their children and spouses.

51. As regards family planning approaches, women and men must be given adequate education and information so that they can make informed reproductive health choices.

D. Violence Against Women

52. Despite legal measures, violence against women persists. In 2002, VAW cases reported to the police totaled 7,792. Of these, 36 percent were victims of rape, while 27 percent involved physical abuse, 16 percent is on acts of lasciviousness.
Program Developments

VAW Coordinating Committee

53. In 2001, NCRFW formed a 15-member inter-agency VAW Coordinating Committee (VAWCC) to formulate an integrated, systematic, and synergized approach to eliminate gender-based violence, and review protocols and training designs for frontline workers. It drafted a national action plan and developed performance standards for VAW interventions.

Establishment of Rape Crisis Centers

54. The implementing rules and regulations of Republic Act 8505 or the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998 were adopted in 2002. It directs the setting up of rape crisis center in every province and municipality in the country. The center will provide counseling and free legal assistance, ensure the privacy and safety of rape survivors, and develop and undertake a training program for law enforcement officers, public prosecutors, lawyers, medico-legal officers, social workers and barangay (village) officials on human rights and responsibilities, gender sensitivity, and legal management of rape cases. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has convened an inter-agency committee to implement the law.

Laws on VAW

55. As cited in Part I of the report, two laws to address VAW were passed in 2003 and 2004, The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act, respectively.

Gender Justice Awards

56. To recognize judges who have rendered outstanding decisions on VAW, a Gender Justice Award was launched in December 2003 with support from UNFEM, CIDA, UNDP and civic groups.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Data Gaps

57. First among the issues are the gaps in data and information. Other than implementing the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) research design to generate primary data on the national incidence of VAWC, government should coordinate with NGOs and other research institutions towards the development of a more comprehensive and in-depth database on VAWC.

Capacity Building for Government Personnel Assisting VAW Survivors

58. There is also a need to conduct a more sustained gender sensitizing and training of police investigators, social workers, police and health officials, and barangay officials involved in
assisting survivors. Aside from the training, resources need to be committed to government agencies to set up the necessary facilities and support mechanisms/institutions such as family courts and gender-sensitive judges to attend to victims of violence and abuse.

Strengthening VAW Coordinating Committee

59. The VAWCC needs to be strengthened to further implement the comprehensive, coordinated and multi-agency approach to VAW to ensure timely, responsive environment for women victims.

Rehabilitation for VAW perpetrators

60. The approach should likewise address the cyclical nature of violence and focus on reforming and rehabilitating the perpetrator. Preventive measures should also be part of the solution. This could include a more aggressive education campaign to inform women of their rights, and how and where they can get support, including legal recourse, and gender sensitivity training for women victims and the perpetrators of VAW crimes.

E. Women and Armed Conflict

61. Encounters among armed groups have resulted in more women and children becoming victims of violence, with a number of them forced to leave their homes and villages to live in evacuation centers. Based on the records of evacuation centers managed by the social welfare department and NGOs, about 135,000 to 150,000 persons were displaced by conflict-related incidents from January to November 2001 in Mindanao, majority of whom are women. The Human Rights Commission also recorded cases of violence against women in armed conflict. From 1980 to 1999, about 100 cases were documented to have occurred in Regions 2, 6 and 9.

Program Developments

Reforms for Victims and Initiatives for Peace

62. In a bid to respond to the needs of persons affected by armed conflict, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process is implementing short- and long-term strategies to secure lasting peace. These include pursuing social, economic and political reforms to address the root causes of internal armed conflicts and unrest; sustaining and enhancing the viability of peace zones through negotiated settlement with different rebel groups; and programs for reconciliation, reintegration into mainstream society, and rehabilitation of former combatants and their families, among others. The NCRFW has been involved in pushing for more lasting socio-economic reforms and protecting women and children from rape and other forms of violence perpetrated by both parties.

Participation in Peace Building

63. Government’s peace panels include two women in the negotiating team with the MILF and one woman in the panel negotiating with the Communist Party/National Democratic Front.
In 2002, a Mindanao Women’s Peace Conference was convened. The Mindanao Commission on Women conducted consultations to formulate a Mindanao women position paper on the government-MILF peace agreement. Dialogues were also initiated on the role of Christian and Muslim women in conflict resolution.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Measures to Address Impact of Armed Conflict

64. The impact on civilians of the government’s war against rebel forces and terrorist organizations must be given immediate and serious attention. More women should be enabled to systematically participate in peace building and in the rehabilitation of their communities, even as their livelihood and basic services should be assured.

F. Women and the Economy

65. Filipino women have been entering the labor force in increasing numbers. In 2003, they reached 13.4 million. Female labor force participation rate (LFPR) has likewise been rising and the gender gap across age groups has been narrowing. However, they continue to have limited work/ career choices. Women also accounted for majority of unpaid family workers. In addition, women who were displaced as a result of the collapse of heavily protected industries, were pushed into the informal economy. A large portion of the growth of the informal sector employment came from women self-employed workers whose number has increased by approximately 22% since 1996.

Program Developments

Task Force on Economic Empowerment (TFEE)-NCRFW Board

66. A task force on economic empowerment has been created in the NCRFW Board of Commissioners to carry out commitments on this major area of concern of the FPW, including education and technical assistance for partner agencies in implementing these commitments.

66.1 Among the initiatives of the TFEE was the conduct of a policy dialogue with women workers, government and NGOs to look into housing/living conditions and needs of women workers in Cavite ecozones. In addition to the dialogue, NCRFW in collaboration with the National Statistics Office is conducting a special survey on the demographic and living conditions of women workers in one of the EPZs. Its results would validate the need for a more holistic development of the EPZs to include housing schemes, day care centers, and health and educational facilities that would benefit women workers and their children.

Safety Nets for Women Workers in the Garments Industry

66.2 To respond to the labor concerns of women workers on the garments industry who will be adversely affected by the phaseout/termination of the Multi-Fiber
Arrangement (MFA), NCRFW initiated the conduct of series of dialogues with women workers, government and employers to determine the labor problems attendant to the phaseout of the MFA and draw policy and program recommendations. As an introduction to the consultation workshops, NCRFW developed a situationer on the garments industry, the women workers, the MFA and government policy and programs on safety nets for workers. The situationer was used as an advocacy material which generated awareness among the women workers on the implications of the MFA phaseout on labor. The results of the consultation workshops were used by labor groups in drafting their labor agenda for consideration in the finalization of the Transformation Plan/Package for Industry and Labor. The Plan was drafted by the Garments and Textile Export Board (GTEB) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). NCRFW is currently participating in tripartite meetings with GOs, labor groups and employers for the inclusion of gender concerns in said plan.

**Overseas Filipino Women Workers**

67. The Filipino women migrant worker is considered a significant group whose need for humane working conditions and protection needs to be addressed. In 2001, major reforms were undertaken to streamline the system of training, testing and certification of overseas performing artists (OPAs). This was intended to stop the malpractices of unscrupulous persons in what had become a complex testing and accreditation process that was rife with exploitation and corruption and had contributed to illegal recruitment and trafficking of OPAs. Female Philippine Overseas Labor Officers (POLOs) who are labor attaches, welfare officers and welfare center coordinators are posted in countries where there are large numbers of women workers. The POLOs are under the administrative jurisdiction of the Philippine diplomatic mission and implement a one-country team approach in protecting Filipino migrant workers and promoting their welfare. To help ensure safe working conditions in the host country, government has been initiating bilateral agreements and conducting diplomatic negotiations for social security coverage for Filipino workers. A woman migrant worker also sits in the governing board of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA).

68. Women in the Informal Sector

68.1 For displaced women workers and workers in the informal sector, the Department of Labor and Employment’s Technical Education and Skills Development Authority has set up *Kasanayan-Kabuhayan* (Training-Employment) One-Stop Shop, a referral facility that provides information to expand employment opportunities. It offers skills assessment, career counseling, information on support services in overseas and local employment, skills training and retraining, scholarship grants on information communication technology and entrepreneurship development training, and capital and credit availment and networking.

68.2 Measures have also been initiated to address the concerns of the informal sector on social protection. Guidelines have been formulated by the Social Security System to tap cooperatives and associations as collection agents for contributions and payments by members from the informal sector. The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation
(PhilHealth) has allotted funds to expand the enrolment of the informal sector in its health insurance program. Social enterprise models have been developed and are being implemented by informal sector groups in their livelihood activities.

Program Developments

Need for Social Protection

69. To minimize the negative impacts of globalization on women workers, government must institute social protection measures for them. Increasing access to social insurance benefits and legal protection to women in various types of informal activities should be prioritized. To bring this about may involve considering alternative social insurance schemes, and supporting social groups that are able to provide the necessary framework of social solidarity and mutual insurance and protection. Group-based strategies for mobilizing internal savings and credit services should also be considered.

70. Government agencies providing social protection must disaggregate data by sex to determine the number of women and men who avail of and have access to social benefits. This is particularly important in light of the fact that women have higher life expectancy than men and depend on their pension as support in their old age.

Measures to Address Overseas Labor Migration

71. Overseas labor migration continues to pose dangers, particularly to women workers. Initiatives to forge bilateral and multilateral agreements with receiving countries should be treated as short or medium-term measures, since the long-term solution to labor migration problems lies in the creation of sustainable local employment for its female and male citizens. Dollar remittances of overseas migrant workers should be invested in the development of viable and globally competitive industrial and agricultural enterprises that will generate jobs in the country, ensure food security and boost the country’s financial capacity to provide adequate social services.

Monitoring Anti-Sexual Harassment Law in Private Sector

72. The Anti-Sexual Harassment Law has to be reviewed, particularly its enforcement in the private sector where majority of women workers are found. Presently, the law is not clear as to which agency, Department of Labor and Employment-Bureau of Working Conditions or Department of Trade and Industry, should monitor private sector observance of the law. Data on its implementation in this sector are also not available.

Monitoring Compliance with Labor Legislation

73. Enforcement of or compliance to labor legislation on gender-based discrimination need to be monitored regularly and sanctions imposed on violators. One may assume that if compliance rates to general labor standards, such as the minimum wage, and payment of SSS premiums by employers are low, compliance rate to gender equality standards would also be low, if not lower.
Information on Occupational Safety and Health

74. There is a need to disseminate a wide range of information to raise the awareness on the risks and dangers and the needed precautions for those in hazardous occupations. This can be reinforced with continuous seminars for small and medium enterprises in hazardous industries to enlighten both the workers and the owners about the dangers inherent in their jobs.

Assistance for Women Domestic Helpers

75. There is also a need to review the situation of domestic helpers in the Philippines and abroad towards giving them appropriate training to elevate their position as professional workers who can demand more reasonable wages. The implementation of the law for domestic workers is not being adequately monitored particularly in terms of minimum salaries, educational benefits and membership in the SSS.

G. Women in Power and Decision Making

76. While the Philippines can boast of having a woman head of state and 10 women in the cabinet, women’s participation in electoral politics and governance remains low compared with men’s. There are only three women senators out of the 24 and 33 women representatives out of the 200 congresspersons. At the local level, women occupy from 13 to 17 percent of elective posts as governors, vice-governors, mayors and vice mayors.

Program Developments

77. NCRFW, the national machinery for women’s advancement, pursues activities and advocacy programs to enable women to participate in and hold key positions as political leaders and/or decision making functions in government.

Summit for Women Local Chief Executives

78. The NCRFW co-organized two major events in 2003 that highlighted the participation of women local leaders in gender-responsive governance. The first event was the National Summit of Women Local Chief Executives and Legislators that was convened together with the Department of Interior and Local Government, representatives from the four leagues of local officials, and the academe. It is a follow-through of the ESCAP-sponsored Phitsanulok Summit of Women Local Chief Executives and legislators. Over 200 women leaders from all over the country attended the summit to identify and strategize on issues relating to gender mainstreaming, local legislation, and women’s participation and representation in local governance. They adopted the Manila Declaration on Gender-responsive Local Governance that embodies priority issues, principles and affirmative actions pertaining to women in governance, politics and decision making. The Declaration was presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo. Post-summit activities conducted include formulating a women’s agenda to be advocated to candidates in the coming national election in May 2004 and a workshop with Bangsamoro
women of Mindanao to develop their capability in building transformative communities by preventing conflict and promoting peace.

_Lady Municipal Mayors’ Association of the Philippines_

79. The NCRFW and the NAPC provided technical assistance to revitalize the Lady Municipal Mayors’ Association of the Philippines (LMMAP). Its first general assembly produced the following outputs: (a) an LMMAP resolution adopting a gender-responsive governance agenda for poverty reduction and sustainable development; and (b) a range of projects and activities addressing issues of gender-responsive governance, women’s economic empowerment, reproductive health, and human rights of women and children.

_Women in Career Executive Positions in the Public Service_

80. The CSC reports that in 2002, 1,148 women held Career Executive Service (CES) positions, including those designated as acting or office in charge, in constitutional agencies and national government agencies. This accounted for about 36 percent of the total filled-up CES positions. In government-owned and controlled corporations, women occupied 963 or 43% of total filled-up CES positions.

_Women in Law Enforcement_

81. Since the adoption of RA 8551 in 1998, the annual recruitment of women police officers has been above the prescribed 10-percent quota. Although it initially dropped from 15 percent in 1999 to 11 percent in 2000, it has since been rising. By 2002, women recruits accounted for 17 percent of total, mostly for junior officer positions. The adoption in 1999 of an affirmative action program in the Police Academy made possible the lateral entry of women police officers into the command. From 1999 to 2002, a total of 1,781 women police officers, or 14 percent of total police officers, were hired (PNP, 2002). The affirmative action opened doors for women to rise from the ranks in law enforcement.

_Remaining Issues and Challenges_

_Breaking the Glass Ceiling_

82. Government must intensify actions to help women break the glass ceiling in the bureaucracy. Initiatives must be strengthened to enable more women to handle key positions in the bureaucracy through training on leadership, communication, negotiation and assertiveness, among others. Likewise, more vigorous advocacy for temporary special measures is needed, especially in the judiciary, police, and military.

_Women’s Concerns in Politics_

83. Women electorate must be prepared to elect men and women who support women’s empowerment and gender equality. There is also a need to sustain the political agenda and parties
of women over the long-term and reorganize model capability-building interventions for women’s political groups.

Quota for Women in Appointive/Elective Positions

84. There is a need to pass the Gender Balance legislation to ensure that at least 30% of appointive/elective positions will be held by women.

H. Human Rights of Women

85. Generation of awareness on general and women’s human rights across all sectors has been a continuing effort of government.

Program Developments

Human Rights Information Desks

86. The DepEd and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) have put up Human Rights Schools, Colleges and Universities Linkages, a human rights information desk in educational institutions that provide human rights materials and conducts human rights orientation and seminars. The CHR, this time with the Department of National Defense, DILG and LGUs, put up a parallel Human Rights Government Unified Information and Dissemination Enforcer in local communities.

Women in Custody

87. In 2001, the CHR issued a human rights advisory against sexual abuse and torture of women in custody. It directs the PNP and the AFP to look into human rights violations committed against women in custody and instructs them to implement measures to protect them against rape, sexual abuse or torture as well as reprisals or any forms of intimidation. It also encourages the recruitment of more women police officers to specialize in cases of violence against women.

Training on Rights-Based Approach and Gender Mainstreaming

88. The NCRFW and the University of the Philippines Center for Women’s Studies pioneered in the conduct of seminar-workshops integrating the rights-based approach and gender mainstreaming. The NCRFW has been regularly monitoring education and information campaigns integrating gender and women’s human rights into the training modules of the police and the military, teachers and supervisors, jail wardens and employees and prisoners.

Ratification of UN Instruments Against Transnational Crime and Trafficking

89. In 2001 the Senate ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Supplementary Protocols – the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by
Land, Air and Sea. This provides opportunities for government to link up with other countries in a global effort to fight narco-trafficking and other transnational crimes and to stop the exploitation and trafficking of women and children.

Women in Detention

90. In response to the problem of the growing number of female and youth detainees and absence/lack of separate detention cells, the Bureau of Jail and Management Penology is constructing separate cells for female and minor offenders. Likewise, Quezon City, a local government city in Metro Manila, has a female dormitory that confines women offenders in the city. Various rehabilitation programs designed for women are implemented in this jail, including the so-called “Therapeutic Community Modality.”

91. Because of the risks of youth being influenced by adult offenders, separate cells for minors are maintained in some jails. In fact, there are already two youth centers—“The Molave Youth Homes” in Quezon City and “Operations Second Change” in Region 7— that confine children offenders. These centers offer the developmental needs of youth offenders. Programs like sports and therapeutic community modality are only among the activities that youth offenders could engage in.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Legal Definition of Discrimination Against Women

92. A legal definition of discrimination against women that is aligned with the definition in Article 1 of the CEDAW Convention has not been put into law. There should be a definition that would cover gender-based violence and practices not intending to discriminate but are discriminatory in effect.

Discriminatory Provisions on Women in Laws

93. Provisions in the law cited in the fourth report on the Women’s Convention as discriminatory to women or inconsistent with new laws persist. These laws are found in the Family Code, the Civil Code, the Code of Muslim Personal Laws, the Revised Penal Code, the Civil Service Law and Customary Law. For instance, contrary to the 1997 Family Code, the Revised Penal Code (Article 333 and 334) continued to define sexual infidelity separately in marriage—adultery on the part of the wife and concubinage on the part of the husband. It has been argued that it takes only one act for a woman to be charged with adultery, while the man’s infidelity can only be proved if the relationship has been going on an extended period, such that there is a separate residence for the mistress or even children between the two.

Shari’ah Courts and Revision of Code of Muslim Personal Laws

94. Efficiency and effectiveness in Shari’ah Courts, which handle cases covered by the Code of Muslim Personal Laws (CMPL), is called for. A proposal for the amendment of the CMPL has
been submitted to the House Committee on Muslim Affairs but no amendatory bill has been filed yet.

*Strengthening Enforcement of Anti-Mail Order Bride Law*

95. Republic Act 6955, or the Anti-Mail Order Bride of 1990, which seeks to protect Filipino women from being exploited through mail-order marriage schemes has been circumvented through new cyber technology and various means. The advent of the Internet has given rise to web sites that allegedly offer pen pal or dating services. However, since these web sites operate from places outside of the Philippines, it is very difficult to police or prevent a Filipino or a foreign national from availing of its services. Hence, there is a need to update enforcement of RA 6955 vis-à-vis such new technology.

I. Women and Media

96. Sexist and stereotyped portrayals of women persist in Philippine media, movies and advertisements. However, it is worthy to note that women’s rights, issues and concerns are slowly being aired at national and local levels.

Program Developments

*Gender Awareness in Mass Media*

97. Efforts have been initiated to counter this and to encourage media to present a more balanced image of Filipino women. The NCRFW has met with major mass media networks for gender information sessions. Together with the Philippine Information Agency, it coordinates the review and enhancement of the Code of Ethics and Media Guidelines so that women’s rights are protected when they become subjects of news reports and television and radio programs. The NCRFW is able to maximize increasing media coverage of gender issues to heighten public awareness in and support of campaigns against gender-based violence.

*Alternative Media Programs*

98. Some groups have also done their share in producing alternative media programs that highlighted current women’s issues. An example of this was initiated by the Women Features Service that presented a multi-media discussion on women, religion and reproductive health called “Body and Soul” on nationwide radio and TV talk shows and Internet fora.

99. *Reforms in Advertisements*

99.1 Likewise, some consumer and advertising companies have veered away from producing predictable commercials featuring stereotyped and sexist images of women. There have been ads depicting shared parenting and household responsibilities between husband and wife as well as showing women performing roles beyond their domestic functions.
99.2 The Department of Tourism’s Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation directed its ad agencies to produce marketing campaigns and promotional products that are “gender-sensitive and ensure no discrimination of either men or women in text or visual renditions; and under no circumstances will these promote (implicitly or explicitly) sex tourism or commodification of women.”

99.3 The NCRFW, in partnership with the Advertising Board of the Philippines, participated in the Araw Awards that recognized advertisements portraying positive images of women and promoting women’s empowerment.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Women in Key Roles in Media

100. Media has the capacity to influence how people look at the world, and as such, must promote a balanced and non-stereotyped image of women and men. Such a view promotes women’s greater participation, allowing women to freely practice their rights to free speech and expression, avail of new communication technologies, or become key decision-makers in the news desk or production room.

Gender Sensitive Media Environment

101. The absence of a lead government agency or instrumentality responsible for policy-making and monitoring for women and media has adversely affected the government’s inability to address gender issues in the media. Even without such agency, however, a positive media environment among media practitioners should be created. This would involve re-orienting/sensitizing women media practitioners on the important roles they play in highlighting women’s issues vis-à-vis other human related issues, and setting up a database to determine the extent that tri-media advertisements portray women in sexist, demeaning and stereotypical roles.

Measures to Address Pornography

102. The campaign to eliminate pornography, which perpetuates women as mere sex objects, is hampered by the lack of effective legislation against trafficking in pornographic materials and the absence of a government agency that is tasked to combat pornography on print. In the meantime, the interior and local government department is implementing an anti-pornography drive in cooperation with NGOs. However, a comprehensive approach to the problem of pornography is required, including an anti-pornography law. Pornography is linked to poverty, as it is viewed as a means of escape for those who are economically deprived. Cut-throat competition has encouraged the print media, the tabloids and the cinema in particular, to outsell each other by showcasing smut and pornography, perpetuating images of women and girls as rape victims, and their bodies as commodities.
J. Women and the Environment

103. Opportunities for women’s access to and participation in management of natural resources and promotion of sustainable development are gradually expanding.

Community Based Forest Management Program

104. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has instituted major policy changes to ensure women’s equal access to natural resources. Its community-based forest management program allows women to participate in its implementation, issues certificates of stewardship contracts to both spouses, and opens access to training to both of them as well.

Equal Opportunity for Women for Acquisition of Public Land

105. The DENR amended a 1936 regulation on alienable and disposable public lands that prohibited married women from applying for homestead patents except for certain cases and required the written consent of their husbands before they could apply for the purchase or lease of public lands. The new law now provides that women, regardless of civil status, enjoy equal rights as men in the filing, acceptance and processing of approval for public land applications.

Program Developments

Limited Participation in Decision-Making on Environmental Concerns

106. There is limited involvement of women in decision making especially at the grassroots level and also in government’s efforts to protect and preserve the environment. There is a tendency to limit women in traditional and non-confrontational positions in forest preservation and management. Lack of awareness-raising on the role of women in decision-making in environmental issues should also be addressed.

Evaluation of Impact on Environmental Projects on Women

107. There is lack of information on effects of environmental degradation and health hazards. Thus, there is a need to conduct more researches to validate the impact of environmental projects on women and to learn more about women’s initiatives in natural resource management. More mechanisms should be established to assess the impact of development and environment activities on women, including gender-responsive database, information and monitoring system, participatory research methodologies and policy analysis.

Lack of Efforts for Concerns of Indigenous Women

108. There is lack of effort from both government and NGOs regarding indigenous women. There is also a lack of political will in implementation and support for indigenous and community groups, especially against illegal loggers, commercial fishers, foreign mining corporations, developers, polluting industries, energy and other infrastructure projects.
K. The Girl Child

109. Concerns and needs of girl-children continue to be responded to either as part of comprehensive government programs or special programs and projects.

Program Development

Integration of Gender in the Country Program for Children

110. The NCRFW chaired the National Inter-agency Committee on GAD of the UNICEF-supported Fifth Country Program for Children (CPC), 2002-2003. It oversees the integration of gender considerations in regular CPC initiatives on early childhood care and development, child labor, children in need of special protection, and children in armed conflict, among others. CPC V targets all children from zero to 59 months in selected provinces and municipalities in 12 regions.

Frameworks and Guides to Address Needs of Girl Children

111. A Sub-Task Force on the Girl Child under the Council for the Welfare of Children, organized in 1997, continues to address the concerns of the girl child. It formulated a Medium-Term Strategic Framework on the Girl Child now used by LGUs and other stakeholders in responding to problems confronting girl children. Another document, “Developing Programs, Projects and Activities for the Girl Child: Guidelines for Planners and Implementers,” is being worked out.

Studies on Girl-Child Labor

112. The DOLE’s Institute of Labor Studies produced a rapid assessment report on girl-child labor in the country, particularly its worst forms. Balancing statistical precision with qualitative analysis, the rapid assessment provided policy makers with insights into the magnitude, character, causes and consequences of child labor, particularly on girl-children working in commercial agriculture, domestic service, and commercial sexual exploitation. These insights can be used to determine strategic objectives and to design, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and programs for eliminating the worst forms of girl-child labor in the country.

Reforms in the Judiciary on Procedures/Processes for Child Witnesses

113. The rising cases of child abuse being tried by family courts and the perception that court procedures are adult-oriented and not child-sensitive resulted in the creation of a subcommittee to revise the rules of court. The country’s judicial academy has proposed new rules on child witness to allow children to give reliable and complete evidence and testify in legal proceedings, while at the same time protect their constitutional rights. The proposed rules presume the child is a qualified witness; appoint special persons to assist her/him in and out of the courtroom; allow linked TV testimony and other devices to avoid face-to-face confrontation with the accused; allow as admissible certain hearsay testimonies of child abuse victims; and make child records confidential and subject to protective order.
Remaining Issues and Challenges

*Enforcement of Laws on and Formulation of Programs for Other Needs of Girl Children*

114. There is a need to strengthen implementation and enforcement of existing laws and policies on girl children. There is also a need to come up with government programs to address remaining issues on girl children such as those caught in armed conflict, teenage suicides, teenage pregnancies, increasing number of premarital sex among 15-18 years old, persistent forms of child labor, and commercial and sexual exploitation of children.
PART III:
INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. The National Machinery, Its Role, Partners and Sources of Assistance

115. Since its inception in 1975, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) has been at the forefront in the promotion of women’s empowerment and gender equality. Aside from serving as an advisory body to the President, it is mandated to review, evaluate and recommend measures to ensure the full integration of women in various areas of development. It guides national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) in their gender mainstreaming efforts.

Partners in Gender Mainstreaming

116. It is ably supported by partner organizations and networks of gender specialists and women’s groups. These include the GAD Resource Centers (GRCs) and Gender Resource Network (GRN). The GRCs are based in academic institutions and composed of faculty members, members of government and non-government organizations trained to provide assistance in the conduct of gender sensitivity training (GST), gender-responsive planning and GAD planning and budgeting. At present, there are GRCs in five regions in the Philippines. Similarly, the Gender Resource Network (GRN) lends support to the national machinery in its gender mainstreaming work. It provides technical assistance to government agencies in GAD planning and budgeting and technical inputs in specific sectoral areas. It is composed of gender consultants, NGOs and active government GAD Focal Points.

Reorganization of NCRFW

117. The national machinery gained more ground in gender mainstreaming when it was expanded and reorganized in 1997. The reorganization enabled the NCRFW to create additional positions and correspondingly, beef up its human resource complement and extend its reach.

Support from International Donors

118. To enable the NCRFW to pursue its program of building its capacity as well as those of key government oversight and implementing agencies and pilot local government units, the Canadian International Development Assistance (CIDA), provided financial and technical support through two phases of Institutional Strengthening Projects (ISP). In ISP phase 2 in 1997 and ending in 2004, capacities of oversight agencies such as the Department Budget and Management, the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Interior and Local Government, the Civil Service Commission and House of Representatives were enhanced to create an enabling environment for gender-responsive policy-making, planning, human resource development and management in government. Moreover, statistical agencies which include the National Statistics Office, the National Statistical Coordination Board and the Statistical Research and Training Center were assisted in the generation of gender-responsive statistics. Likewise, pilot implementing agencies namely, the Department of Agriculture, the
Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Trade and Industry were supported to enable them to create enabling environments for the formulation and implementation of gender-responsive programs.

119. UNIFEM supported NCRFW in the evaluation of the GAD Budget Policy with the end in view of identifying bottlenecks in its effective implementation. It will provide further assistance in the forthcoming project strengthening and redirection of the GAD budget towards results-oriented and gender-responsive government planning and budgeting.

B. Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

GAD Budget Policy

120. All government agencies and instrumentalities are held accountable for the promotion of gender equality. Through the GAD Budget Policy, they are directed to integrate gender in their organizational mechanisms and processes as well as policies and programs for their respective clients. The yearly issuance of the budget call by the Department of Budget and Management alerts agencies for the preparation of their respective annual GAD plans and budgets together with their regular agency plans and budgets. The role of the GAD Focal Points is critical as they facilitate the preparation, submission, implementation and monitoring of agency GAD plans. The significant number of GAD plans submitted to the national machinery is proof of their important contribution not only on the compliance with the policy, but also in mainstreaming gender in the bureaucracy. For the last five years, an average of 130 national GAD plan submissions from departments and their attached agencies were received by NCRFW. As of 2002, around 100 out of 341 agencies had operational GAD Focal Points.

Monitoring and Reporting

121. NCRFW prepares reports on the results of the monitoring of the GAD budget policy. Aside from agency budget allocations, the reports produced include analysis of the kinds of programs, projects and activities pursued to strengthen the capacity of the agency in addressing gender concerns as well as the projects implemented to directly respond to the gender issues identified for their sector.

C. Mechanisms for Capability Building

Comprehensive and Integrated Technical Assistance Package (CITAP)

122. Cognizant of the need of the agencies and GAD Focal Points for continued assistance in building their capacities in GAD, NCRFW and its partners continuously provide technical assistance. It is significant to note NCRFW’s newly developed approach to providing technical assistance, which it has drawn from its extensive experience in its work with agencies in gender mainstreaming. Dubbed as the Comprehensive and Integrated Technical Assistance Package (CITAP), the mechanism is a systematic and holistic approach that includes identification of the needs of the agencies and their GAD Focal Point, the strategies and activities to be carried out. The CITAP is directed towards influencing all areas of the development planning cycle and
establishing the link between gender mainstreaming and its direct impact on improving the lives of women.

**Gender Tools and Materials**

123. In addition, NCRFW has developed the Gender Mainstreaming Resource Kit and all the other tools developed with partners namely with the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Interior and Local Government under the auspices of CIDA-ISP II. It consists of tools and materials to guide agencies in honing their knowledge and skills on GAD. Among the notable materials developed is the Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF). It is a self-administered and user-friendly tool for the agency to evaluate the extent of gender mainstreaming in its internal mechanisms and client-focused policies and programs.

**Building Capacities of Oversight Agencies**

124. The assistance from CIDA through the CIDA-ISP II has resulted in substantial gains which include capacitating oversight agencies namely the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission as well as the partnerships which they have forged to consolidate their oversight functions in gender mainstreaming.

**Pursuing South-South Cooperation**

125. In response to further actions in the Outcome Document, NCRFW is implementing South-South Cooperation for gender mainstreaming through study visits conducted for members of national machineries from Indonesia, Cambodia, Pakistan, China and Japan, among others, to share experiences and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming. NCRFW envisions that through this cooperation, a regional gender training institute will be established.

**D. Monitoring and Evaluation**

**GAD Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

126. As part of its efforts to improve its monitoring, implementation of national and international policies and commitments, the national machinery formulated an integrated monitoring and evaluation (M & E) framework which aims to provide an appropriate and powerful gauge of outputs produced, as well as medium and long-term results thus increasing the capability of NCRFW and partners to approximate more closely the situation of women and eventually better plan for their empowerment. The framework will also help systematize tracking effectiveness of program/projects implementation. Consequently, this aims to improve the national machinery’s overall capability to carry out its role and achieve the GAD objectives and targets.

**Compliance Monitoring System**

127. To support the existing M & E system, the Compliance Monitoring System (CMS) was developed. The CMS, a computer-based system, stores and processes data, specifically, GAD
policies, programs, projects and activities indicated in the agency GAD plans and accomplishment reports as well as from other relevant sources/documents. The information are used to monitor the extent of gender mainstreaming in the bureaucracy and compliance of government with international policies and commitments such as the CEDAW and PFA, among others.

**Gender Indicators**

128. NCRFW works in partnership with the statistical agencies in the development and continuous enhancement of indicators and gender statistics which are key elements in the government’s GAD M & E system. Composed of the National Statistical Coordination Board, the policy-making and coordinating body for statistics, the National Statistics Office which conducts major surveys and gathers statistics and the Statistical Research and Training Center, these agencies have helped NCRFW craft the GAD Indicator System which measures the changes in the lives of women and extent of enjoyment of their rights; monitors progress in the implementation of gender mainstreaming policy and tracks specific gender issues. Likewise, they generate and disseminate gender statistics for use of government agencies and the general public.

**Challenges in Monitoring and Evaluation**

129. While milestones have been achieved in engendering statistics, there are remaining challenges in this area that need to be addressed. Foremost is the need to ensure the full implementation or application of the indicators in frameworks to generate much-needed information on gender issues. Users and producers on key sectors need to be sensitized and oriented so they can effectively use and analyze gender statistics that are produced.

**E. Role of Other Stakeholders in the Promotion of Gender Equality**

130. The role of NGOs, the legislative and judiciary in promoting GAD are critical in helping achieve the national machinery’s vision of men and women equally contributing to and benefiting from development.

**Measures in the Judiciary**

131. The NCRFW, in collaboration with women advocates in the legal profession and academe, has established linkages with the judiciary. Efforts were made to raise the gender awareness of the pillars of the justice system. These include gender sensitivity trainings (GSTs) for the five pillars of the criminal justice system. A key result of the endeavors is the recent initiative of the Supreme Court Chief Justice to create a Committee for Gender-Responsiveness in the Judiciary that formulated a five year plan to mainstream gender concerns in the judiciary, to include gender training of judges and gender-responsive review of judicial policies, among others.
132. In the legislative branch, the NCRFW provided technical assistance and worked closely with the Committee on Women and Family Relations in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to ensure that bills on women and gender concerns are not only integrated among its priorities and the legislative agenda but more importantly, are adopted by the legislative branch.

133. Women’s organizations continue to actively lobby for the passage of women-related laws and form coalitions to promote gender balance in decision-making positions in government. At the local level, the 400 Local Councils of Women (LCW) composed of women’s organizations were set up to mainstream GAD in city and provincial governments. They liaise with national agencies and NGOs to monitor the LGUs policies and programs on women.
PART IV: 
PHILIPPINE VISION IN ADVANCING THE GAD AGENDA BEYOND 2004

134. While the Philippine government celebrates the milestones in the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment, it is fully aware of the need to effectively respond to both existing and emerging challenges and issues in order to achieve equitable and sustainable development.

135. The following are some of the broad areas of issues and priorities that the national machinery will pursue to further the implementation of the critical areas of the Platform for Action:

Protection from adverse impacts of globalization and economic liberalization

136. As cited in the challenges in the Philippine Progress Report on the PFA in 2000, globalization continues to pose challenges to the Philippine economy especially on the vulnerable sectors such as women and girl children. While economic and trade liberalization policies benefited some sectors, these macroeconomic thrusts adversely affected the economic situation of women. Flexible work arrangements, lack or absence of social protection, displacement or marginalization of women workers and human and trafficking are some of the negative effects of unbridled free flow and exchange of goods and services in the global economy.

137. NCRFW will continue to look into and demonstrate the relevance of issues and impacts of globalization on women and the widening gap in the areas of social protection, provision of decent jobs, poverty and changes in agricultural production as a result of tariff regimes. The national machinery will systematically investigate the gender impact of globalization with special focus on labor issues and develop a comprehensive and integrative strategy for understanding and addressing the effects of changes in trade regimes, Filipino women labor and migration issues, human and sex trafficking.

Support for women in the informal sector

138. Statistics indicate that women comprise 85% of productive labor in the informal sector which include family-based agricultural production who contribute significantly to the economy. However, there is limited understanding of the structure of the informal sector and appropriate interventions that could be developed for women in this economic group.

139. To enable government to identify and formulate relevant measures, NCRFW will study the structure, profile and concerns of women in this economic sector. The Commission will gather data, specifically on the contributions of informal work to the national economy. It will also identify areas for advocacy regarding the rights of the people in this group, particularly women.
**Micro-enterprise and sustainable development**

140. Micro and small enterprises produce items that are among the prime products (e.g., garments, food, giftware) in the export market. These enterprises need more comprehensive and technical assistance to make them viable and globally competitive. They need to be provided with breakthrough credit and make this accessible to all kinds of poor women. Credit schemes need to be integrated with livelihood and enterprise development. Further, women’s access to these resources need to be complemented by increased capacities to control the resources and fully participate in economic decision-making.

141. NCRFW will assist in this area by extending its research and policy advocacy to ensure that economic opportunities reach women who are most in need and reduce poverty.

**Rights-based approaches to development and the Women’s Convention (CEDAW)**

142. The concerns on women’s human rights outlined in the Women’s Convention are reflected in the FPW’s priority of promoting and protecting women’s human rights. NCRFW will step-up advocacy for the adoption of a rights-based approach to development and gender-responsive governance. This will be applied to development planning through NCRFW-sponsored training, particularly at the community level. Linkages with the Supreme Court and the Department of Justice will be strengthened to advance a gender perspective in the legal system.

143. A four-year CIDA-UNIFEM CEDAW project with six other Asia Pacific countries will commence in mid-2004 to strengthen the systematic implementation, monitoring and reporting of CEDAW. The Philippines has been selected as one of four countries where modeling of multi-stakeholder action (executive, legislative, judiciary, civic organization, media, academe, private sector) will be done on a specific discriminatory issue.

**Women and peace-building**

144. The continuing peace and order problem and terrorist threats displace women and children. Women should be enabled to participate in peace building and in the rehabilitation of their communities.

145. The national machinery participates in government efforts in peace negotiation where women are concerned. It aims to examine the varied implications of the aspects of conflict such as militarization, terrorism and religious fundamentalism and their impacts on women. In addition, NCRFW will heighten the awareness of women’s vital role in peace building and explore innovative and effective strategies for their participation in it.

**Women and media**

146. A five-year project for a successor generation capacity-building for women, youth and media on building transformative communities for peace has been formulated and is currently seeking funding.
Correcting Discriminatory Laws on Women

147. The national machinery has included in its priority legislative agenda the revision of remaining discriminatory laws on women such as the Revised Penal Code. It will also endeavor to influence the revision of the Muslim Code of Personal Laws which still discriminate against women.
REFERENCES


________. Fact Sheets on Women and Men, March 2004.


