

## Gender Situation in the Philippines 2004

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### *Political and Institutional Environment*

- Government signatory to all UN instruments on human rights, and CEDAW
- Existence of supporting legislation:
- Philippine Constitution
- RA 7192 (WID & Nation Building Act)
- RA 9208 (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act)
- RA 9262 (Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act)
- Voter turnout higher among women than men (87% vs 85.7%) and more registered female voters than males
- Increasing number of women running in elective positions
- Women occupy less than 20% of all elective posts in the national and local levels
- While women comprise more than half of government personnel, they constitute only 34.8% of positions in the highest level of civil services
- Only 21% of the judges in the Philippine courts are women
- “hostage vote” by household male head is still prevalent
- Some women in politics are more like “extensions” or “heirs” of their husbands or fathers
- Many women officers in formal organizations occupy positions that are “extensions” of their reproductive roles (e.g. secretary, treasurer, budget officer)
- In labor unions, only 25.6% of the leaders are women

### *Cultural Environment*

- Filipino women enjoy better status than their other Asian counterparts
- Cultural norms have long favored women’s education and slowly been more open to women’s participation in economic and political activities
- Ideology of patriarchy is still firmly-entrenched in society and gender stereotyping continues to be perpetuated in the family, school, church, business and government
- Among the negative cultural values are:
- The sexual division of labor assigns solely to women the responsibility of social care and reproduction
- The “good-mother thesis”

- The notion that women are objects for male pleasure
- The belief that women are responsible for preserving the family's "honor"

### *Economic Environment*

- Married women may now lease or purchase public lands without the need to secure written permission from their husbands
- Women's participation in education is high, with a combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrollment ratio of 84%
- Disappearing jobs for women; about 300 workers are laid off per day – 105 women losing their jobs everyday affecting an average of 420 children everyday
- Women's labor force participation rate is still much lower compared to men (52.9% vs 83%)
- Women generally turn in more hours on their paid work than men (41 hrs/wk vs 40.2 hrs/wk)
- Women work longer hours, combining economic activities with domestic activities
- Formal sector employment is still biased towards men, both in terms of hiring and remuneration
- At present, there are more female OFWs than male OFWs
- Female OFWs are younger, are less skilled, and receive lower pay and are at greater risk of sexual abuse and exploitation
- Part of the Arroyo administration's job generation program is sending more than 1 million Filipinos abroad every year
- Despite their number, women have remained largely "invisible" in agriculture. Men still have much greater access to productive resources – such as land, technology, extension services, capital and infrastructure support - than women
- Female beneficiaries accounted for 27% of the total number of agrarian reform beneficiaries
- For every hectare distributed to women through an emancipation patent (EP) about 9.14 hectares were awarded to men. There are 5.94 hectares of Land Ownership Agreement distributed to men for every hectare given to women.
- Only 24% of the total number of beneficiaries of extension services from 1996-2001 are women
- Higher literacy rate and participation rates of women in education have not resulted in better absorption into employment
- There is pronounced sex segregation in the career choices of women and men

- About 0.25 million children aged 5-9 are in child labor – a crucial period in a child’s life when they need all the mental and physical nurturing that they could get

### *Social Environment*

- Filipino Women continue to bear the socially-ascribed burden of social care and reproduction, contrary to the norm of shared parenthood envisioned by CEDAW
- The burden of social care becomes exacerbated in poor household. Women spend two-thirds of their time in unpaid household work, while men allocate only a fourth of their time
- Over the years, social services are deprioritized and public allocation and spending for social services keeps decreasing
- The number of institutions, centers and facilities involved in the distribution of social services (both public and private) has been steadily declining
- Maternal mortality ration (per 100,000 births) in the Philippines is relatively higher than its neighboring countries (Phil = 170, Vietnam = 95, China = 55, Thailand 44)

### *Women’s Personal Security*

- Incidence of violence against women continues; 43% of all cases of violence against women and 39% of all cases of violence against children occur at home, and 61% of crimes against women and 46% of crimes against children are committed by persons known to the victim
- Society considers acts of VAW (wife battering, sexual abuse, incest) as “domestic” in nature and should therefore be resolved in the confine of the home
- VAW cases are usually relegated to the barangay justice system which cannot address the vulnerability of the victim at home
- Despite creation of women’s desk officers, it is still pervasive perception among the police that domestic issues are beyond their jurisdiction
- There are around 300,000 women in prostitution about 75,000 of who are children who are vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, other STDs, harassment, extortion and exploitation
- Complications due to abortion are the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of maternal deaths in the country accounting for 12% of all maternal deaths. The poor is most vulnerable since the main reason cited for terminating pregnancy is economic difficulty.