

# Filipino women in the lead-up to the 2015 MDG deadline

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## Summary

*As state party to the Women's Convention and all other core international human rights conventions, the Philippines is often commended as being well ahead of its Asian neighbors when it comes to the realm of women's human rights. This view has strengthened over the years with the country's adoption of other international commitments, such as the Millennium Development Goals. The ultimate bar of success though, lies in how these pledges play out domestically. Some steps in harmonization have certainly contributed in improving Filipino women's lives, such as increased participation in basic education and in formal labor. Gender inequalities, however, stubbornly persist, challenging the gains women may have won from realizing these targets. Large gaps endure in productive and social reproductive labors. Women's presence is insignificant in spheres of political decision-making. Violence against women, manifesting entrenched discriminations against them, persists.*



*This paper looks at highly vulnerable groups of women from a rights-based perspective to examine the progress with Goal 3 on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. Further informed by intersectional approaches, it stresses the need to interrogate layered discriminations against women that has and will continue to block substantive advancements under this Goal. Women's empowerment will need interventions more comprehensive and substantive than ensuring gender parity and formal equality in school, work and political participation. Recognition of structural and systemic inequalities and inequities, including discriminations stemming from gender, is a crucial first step towards a more dynamic appreciation and implementation of Goal 3. These have to be brought front and center of all efforts to comply with Goal 3, as well as the rest of the MDGs, for deeper, wider and faster interventions that contribute to the strategic goal of women's empowerment.*

### **Gains for Filipino women in legislation and policy**

Compared to other registers of progress in women's rights, the legal and policy environments show the most significant progress over the last two decades since the formal recognition of gender equality in the 1986 Philippine Constitution. Continuing women's legislative advocacies produced more gains in succeeding years, such as the landmark Women in Nation-building Act (Republic Act 7192) passed by Congress 1991 and signed into law by Corazon Aquino the following year. It provided for the drafting of the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGD) 1995-2025, described as the "main vehicle for implementing the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action."<sup>1</sup>

The funding mechanism for these started with a general provision in the 1995 General Appropriations Act (GAA) mandating all departments, bureaus, offices and agencies to set aside a minimum of five percent of their appropriations for gender and development-related plans, programs and activities.<sup>2</sup> The Gender and Development Budget (GAD) Policy has since been incorporated in the annual GAAs and now covers

state colleges and universities, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and Local Government Units (LGUs).

Recognized as a means to support the PPGD, the measure gained ground with a memorandum issued by then president Fidel Ramos to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the issuance of administrative guidelines by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the DBM and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (now the Philippine Commission on Women or PCW).<sup>3</sup>

Other laws promoting and strengthening women's rights were adopted from the mid-90's onwards. Republic Act 7822 (February 20, 1995) provided assistance to Filipino women engaged in micro and cottage enterprises, including priority access to loans from public financial institutions for the purchase of equipment, tools and materials for their business. The Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 (Republic Act No. 8042) contains many provisions aiming to "establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers," many of whom are women in the domestic work sector. Significant strides in legally protecting women against sexual violence came with the passage of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Law of 1995, the Anti-Rape Law of 1997, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 and the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004. In 2009, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was localized in the form of the Magna Carta of Women, a framework law recognizing among others, the principle of substantive equality between men and women and stressing the state's duty to progressively abolish structures and practices perpetuating discrimination against women.

### **Gains and challenges in education targets under Goal 3**

Of the MDG indicators, those under Goal 3 on education show important achievements. Women and

<sup>1</sup> Philippine Commission of Women, "About Us,"

<sup>2</sup> Philippine Commission of Women. 2002. GAD Planning and Budgeting: Adding Value to Governance, *GAD Budget Policy Compliance Report 2001-2002*.

<sup>3</sup> Senate Economic Planning Office, "Engendering a gender responsive budget: A look at the GAD Budget policy," Policy Brief 10, No. 2 March 2010.

<sup>4</sup> "Basic education" refers to "pre-school, elementary and secondary education and basic non-formal/informal learning programs focused on functional literacy, livelihood-oriented training, and citizenship/values inculcation for adults and out-of-school youths." <http://www.nscb.gov.ph/activestats/psced/expnotes.asp>.

**Table 1. Basic Education and Literacy Indicators, Men and Women (Selected Years)**

Year	Literacy Rates of 15-24 years old		Total Net Enrolment Ratio in Primary Education		% of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach last grade of Primary		Primary Completion Rate	
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1999			89.9	90.0	71.1	79.8	85.0	90.1
2000	94.5	95.7						
2001			89.7	91.0	68.8	78.5	96.8	106.3
2002			89.8	92.0	67.6	77.3	91.4	98.6
2003	93.6	96.6	90.7	92.4	66.3	77.4	91.9	98.8
2004			90.4	92.5	65.9	75.4	90.9	97.2
2005			90.2	92.4	68.6	78.4	90.4	97.7
2006			89.2	91.4			88.5	95.6
2007			89.8	91.9			89.6	95.1
2008	93.8	95.7	91.1	93.2				

Source: Combined data from <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx?cr=608> (Last updated: 23 Jun 2010)

girls' access to and participation in the basic to higher levels of education<sup>4</sup> exhibited positive gains in terms of participation rates and cohort survival rates, according to the Philippines Fourth Progress Report on the MDGs. From a large gender disparity in 1997 favoring boys, when males' participation rate stood at 98 percent and females at 92.1 percent, the gap in participation rates closed in 1999 and the proportion of girls vis-à-vis boys steadily increased in succeeding years. Girls also showed better cohort survival rates in elementary school from 1996-2008 (see Table 1).

In secondary and tertiary education, young women maintained consistently positive participation rates. With better cohort survival rates and completion rates in the elementary grades, female students in high school exceeded the participation rates of males at 63.53 percent as against 53.65 percent. Consistent with these trends, females scored higher in terms of simple and functional literacy rates.

Early in the 90's, more men were enrolling in college, but this changed from 1994 onwards, especially in the fields of teacher education, commerce/business, medicine and health. The government recognizes that although women in the tertiary level, led participation rates from 1994 – 2008, they entered conventionally, in courses still strongly indicative of gender tracking. More men enrolled in law and jurisprudence, religion and theology, information technology, architectural and town planning, and engineering. Replicating socialization patterns, more women went into education

and teacher training, humanities, social and behavioral science, business administration, mathematics, nursing, home economics, service trades, mass communication and documentation.

A closer look at the overall direction and at regional information, however, reveals a more worrying picture than what the national averages portray. Elementary school participation rates of both males and females fell from 2001 to 2006 in a majority of the regions to below the national average—the whole Visayas region and four regions in Mindanao. Only the National Capital Region, the Ilocos Region, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, Bicol Region, and the ARMM registered SY 2005-2006 participation rates in elementary education equal to or above the national average. Net enrolment in the secondary level exhibited the sharpest decline in net enrollment from 2000-2001 and has hardly recovered since.

The general trend of decline in elementary participation and completion rates makes the possibility of achieving Universal Primary Education by 2015 dim. Economic issues always figure as the primary reason for children not enrolling and eventually dropping out. Basic education is free only as far as paying tuition fees are concerned; other costs such as transportation, food, materials for school projects, "donations" for various reasons, etc., hinder impoverished parents and children from enjoying this fundamental right.

The state continues to breach the constitutional provision that the highest budgetary priority be assigned

to education.<sup>5</sup> In practice, debt payments are of the highest priority, enjoying automatic appropriations in accordance with the 1987 Revised Administrative Code.<sup>6</sup> Spending no higher than 3.8 percent of GNP for education from 1996-2007, the Philippines' is some distance from the 6 percent of GNP recommended by the UNESCO Delors Commission.<sup>7</sup>

Gender parity as an indicator and a target have certainly yielded gains for the country's performance on Goal 3 but it also needs to be used in ways that connect to the bigger picture and to the wider goal of eliminating gender inequality and empowering women. We call to mind the observation a few years back by Education for All (EFA), that "[t]o the extent that progress towards gender parity suggests a weakening of the factors that keep women and men in unequal positions, it represents the first steps towards achieving equality of outcomes for the sexes.... However, gender parity indicators have some limitations, even when they are available over time. First, even if progress towards parity appears to be being made, this sometimes masks declines in male or female enrolment and participation, rather than indicating positive gains for both boys and girls. Second, a focus on quantitative balances reveals nothing about the processes by which they are being secured, nor about the qualitative changes that would be necessary if gender parity is to lead to full equality."<sup>8</sup>

Gender equality is concerned not only with formal equality between men and women but with equality in the enjoyment of the results of interventions. Thus, conditions outside schools, in households, communities and society at large are necessarily implicated. The EFA Report aptly stresses: "Inequalities arise from unequal power relations between women and men, and hence assessments of progress towards gender equality need to establish whether the changes that are being achieved are significantly altering these relations."<sup>9</sup>

In this light, studying the link between the males' poor performance in education and the need to earn an income for the household should be broadened to include the situation of girls and women as well. For one, parents' willingness to invest more in girls' education could be linked to increasing participation of women in non-agricultural sectors and the demand for female domestic labor abroad.

The need to work as one of the reasons recorded for decreased male enrollment and presence in school also fosters the view that women and girls are free from economic activity and thus have the time to participate and stay in school. This underscores the relevance of data on intra-level household decision-making and the gender division of labor, as one of the findings of a study undertaken by the Asia-South Pacific Education Watch points out. It showed reproductive labor such as housekeeping and childcare remaining as girls and women's responsibility; these burdens did not lighten because they enrolled and stayed in school. Housework was recorded as the second biggest factor causing drop-outs among females. Discrimination also emerges as a factor among females who left school due to pregnancy and early marriage.<sup>10</sup>

### Women's political participation

Women's voice in political decision-making did not fare as well as education, and many still entered the field through a historically embedded system of political patronage. The UN Statistics Division, on MDG indicators tracks the minuscule increases in the number of seats held by women in the legislature as compared to men and the snail's pace with which these increased over a 10-year period (see Table 2).

Women occupied only a 16.6 percent share of elective positions as of December 2008 as opposed to men who held 83.4 percent. Although, the number of male representatives decreased in later years, the gap

<sup>5</sup> 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article 14, Section 5, (5).

<sup>6</sup> The Revised Administrative Code of 1987 stipulates: "Section 26. Automatic Appropriations. — All expenditures for personnel retirement premiums, government service insurance, and other similar fixed expenditures, (2) *principal and interest on public debt*, (3) national government guarantees of obligations which are drawn upon, are automatically appropriated: provided, that no obligations shall be incurred or payments made from funds thus automatically appropriated except as issued in the form of regular budgetary allotments." (emphasis supplied).

<sup>7</sup> Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) and the Youth Against Debt (YAD), "The Neglected Generation,"

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Gender and Education for All, The Leap to Equality, Global Monitoring Report 2003/04*, (France, 2003), 116.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE), *Philippines: Summary Report, Mapping Out Disadvantaged Groups in Education*, (2007) 12.

**Table 2. Seats held by women and men in national parliament (updated June 23, 2010)**

	2001	2002-04	2005-07	2008-09	2010
Total number of seats in national parliament	222	214	236	239	267
Seats held by men in national parliament	197	176	200	190	211
Seats held by women in national parliament	25	38	36	49	56
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	11.3	17.8	15.3	20.5	21.0

Source: UN Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, MDG Indicators.

**Table 3. Elective Positions Held by Men and Women**

	As of March 2007*		As of March 2010*	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Proportion (%) of occupied elective positions	16.6	83.4	23.2	76.8
No. of elected women and men by position	2,901	14,565	3,037	14,440
President	1	0	1	0
Vice President	0	1	0	1
Senators	3	9	3	9
Congress representatives	32	179	1	11
Governors	7	62	45	173
Vice Governors	15	71	18	62
Mayors	125	623	13	67
Board members	244	123		1,352
Vice Mayors	222	274		1,375
Councilors	2,251	230		10,881

Source: NSCB Fact Sheet, March 1, 2010.

\* Reference period/source: 2004 and 2008 COMELEC, NSCB Factsheets, March 2007 and March 2010, respectively

**Table 4. Distribution of Government Personnel by Major Subdivision**

	As of March 2007*		As of March 2010*	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
<b>Total Number</b>	817,266	640,191	640,304	632,124
National Agencies (%)	72.8	58.9	66.0	59.6
Government Owned & Controlled Corporations (%)	6.2	12.7	6.3	9.2
Local Government Units (%)	21.0	28.4	27.7	31.2

\*Reference Period/source: 2004 and 2008 Civil Service Commission, NSCB Factsheets, March 2007 and March 2010, respectively.

remained significant at 23.2 percent and 76.8 percent for women and men, respectively<sup>11</sup> (see Table 3).

As for the government bureaucracy, numbers of men and women were almost equal in 2008, only because of a substantial decrease in female employees but this does not appear to be a gain when compared to the previous period reported when there were more than 800,000 women government employees. Women in career service positions, though still in the majority,

fell by over 100,000 from 2007-2010. Downsizing may have accounted for this fall, and the gender differentials show how women are disproportionately affected when the public sector contracts (see Table 4).

Of government personnel in the career service, the part of civil service founded on merit, women comprised the majority at 583,045 or 52.33 percent, a significant drop from previous years when they numbered 722,401<sup>12</sup> (see Table 5). They comprised

<sup>11</sup> NSCB Fact Sheets, March 1, 2010 (FS-201003-SS2-01), &(FS-200703-SS1-01).

<sup>12</sup> NSCB Fact Sheet, March 8, 2007.

**Table 5. Distribution of Government Personnel in Career Service Positions**

	As of March 2007*		As of March 2010*	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Total number of personnel in career	722,401	543,767	583,045	531,040
First level (%)	21.1	38.7	26.1	36.4
Second level (%)	78.1	59.4	72.3	60.4
Third level (%)	0.4	1.1	0.9	1.5
Non-executive career (%)	0.4	0.8	0.7	1.6

Source: Reference period/source: 2004 and 2008 Civil Service Commission, NSCB Fact Sheets, March 2007 and March 2010 respectively.

more than 70 percent of employees in the second level (professional, technical and scientific positions doing both supervisory and non-supervisory work). As of the 2008 Civil Service Commission (CSC) data, women in career executive positions (third level) numbered just over 5,000 or 0.9 percent as compared to 1.5 percent for men or almost 8,000. There were even fewer women in the past, when they totaled only 2,889 (0.4 percent) as against close to 6,000 men (1.1 percent).

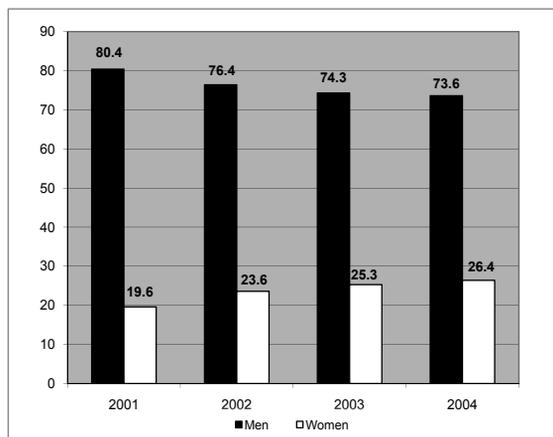
The same patterns hold for the judiciary where women are in the minority at 20 percent of total positions in this governmental branch. The participation of women in the judiciary barely increased from 20 percent of the total incumbent judges in the first and second level courts, including Shari'a courts (2001); to 24 percent in 2002; 25 percent in 2003; and 26 percent in 2004. The Philippine Commission on Women itself described women's presence in the judicial system as "dismal". The same can be said of the Supreme Court. There were 3 women out of 15 justices in 2001; 4 out of 15 in 2002; 4 out of 14 in 2003; 5 out of 15 in 2004; and 5 out of 15 in 2007<sup>13</sup> (see Figures 1 and 2).

**Women's economic empowerment: lagging behind**

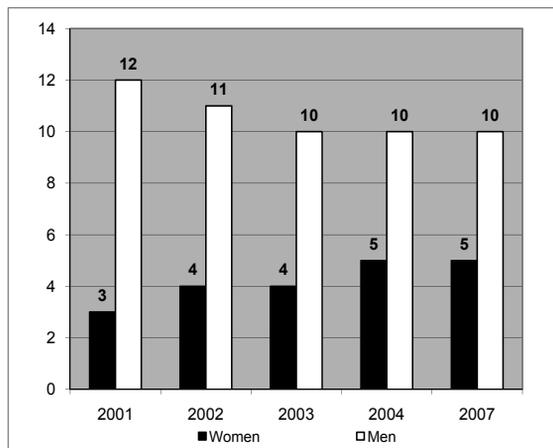
Gains in gender parity in education are difficult to make sense of when weighed against stubborn conditions of gender inequality that hold back women's empowerment. We do not discount the fact that socio-cultural factors also impede women's empowerment, but it is often the case that where women are enabled economically, they also advance in empowerment and autonomy.

In this area of women's economic participation, significant gaps endure, affecting other gender parity

**Figure 1: Women Judges in the 1st, 2nd Level Courts including Sharia Courts (percent)**



**Figure 2: Women Justices in the Supreme Court (in tens)**



Source for both figures: Philippine Commission on Women, "Statistics on Filipino Women in Politics and Governance"

<sup>13</sup> Philippine Commission of Women, "Statistics on Filipino Women Participation in Politics and Governance," <http://www.ncrfw.gov.ph/index.php/statistics-on-filipino-women/14-factsheets-on-filipino-women/72-statistics-fs-filipino-women-politics-governance> (accessed June 3, 2010).

targets not only in education but also across the other MDGs, vis-à-vis political participation, reproductive health, environmental sustainability, and the like. For purposes of this section, we take guidance from the Concluding Comments to the Philippine Government's 2006 report by the CEDAW Committee, which stressed women and work, specifically women in rural populations, the informal sector and migration.

Correlating employment and education data shows that having more years of education did not translate to greater participation in formal labor. Education is obviously not the critical determinant in increasing one's chances of employment. Government data on Labor Force Participation rates (LFPR) or the ratio of the labor force population to the household population 15 years old and older, shows the large gap between men and women persisting throughout the last decade, from the 1998–2008. Women's LFPR reached its highest point in 2002 at 52.8 percent, from

49.1 percent in 1998. Men's LFPR on the other hand, fell no lower than 78.8 percent during the 10-year period and reached a high of 83.8 percent in 2004 (see Table 6).

By 2008, LFPR stood at 78.8 percent for men and only 48.6 percent for women, registering a gap of 30.1. From the October 2009 LFS survey LFPR only slightly rose for women at 49.3 percent and minimally decreased for males at 78.8 percent, with no trend changes in the immediate future.

While there are more women in the workforce than before, they receive less wages for substantively the same work that men do. Wage gaps, an indicator not as often cited as other factors impeding gender inequality such as education and employment, have proven unshakeable as well in almost all categories of employment. Gains in increasing LFPRs of women cannot therefore be taken as absolutes; norms discriminatory to women continuously operate and when unheeded, erode already limited

**Table 6. Labor Force, Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Men-Women Participation Gap by Sex, Philippines: 1998 – 2008 ((In thousands except rates)<sup>14</sup>**

YEAR (Survey rounds January, April, July and October)	Labor Force			LFPR			Men-Women Participation Gap
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	
1998 Average	29,674	18,533	11,140	65.9	83.2	49.1	34.1
1999 Average	30,759	19,104	11,654	66.4	82.9	50.1	32.8
2000 Average	30,911	19,307	11,605	64.9	81.4	48.5	32.9
2001 Average	32,809	20,098	12,710	67.1	82.4	51.8	30.6
2002 Average	33,936	20,601	13,335	67.4	82.0	52.8	29.2
2003 Average	34,571	21,216	13,354	66.7	82.2	51.4	30.8
2004 Average	35,862	22,204	13,659	67.5	83.8	51.2	32.6
2005 Average	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
2006 Average	35,464	21,811	13,653	64.2	79.3	49.3	30.0
2007 Average	36,213	22,217	13,995	64.0	78.8	49.3	29.5
2008 Average	36,805	22,673	14,132	63.6	78.8	48.6	30.1

Source: Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics; source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey.

Notes:

1. Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.
2. Labor force is the sum of all the employed and unemployed persons.
3. Labor force participation rate is the ratio of the total labor force to total household population 15 years old and over multiplied by 100.
4. 1998-2005 data were calculated using population projections based on the 1995 Census of Population.
5. 2006-2008 data were calculated using population projections based on the 2000 Census of Population.
- a. The NSO adopted the new (ILO) definition of unemployment in the LFS questionnaire starting with the April 2005 survey round (survey rounds (January, April, July and October). Due to the change in methodology, labor force data series for 2005 and onward cannot be computed for the four are not comparable with the old. As the data for January 2005 were based on the old definition of unemployment, averages for 2005

<sup>14</sup> Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, "2009 Gender Statistics on Labor and Employment"

**Table 7. Average Daily Basic Pay by Major Occupation Group and Sex, 2002 - 2008**

<b>MEN</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>All Occupations</b>	<b>223.37</b>	<b>228.63</b>	<b>232.00</b>	<b>245.82</b>	<b>264.76</b>	<b>268.79</b>	<b>279.17</b>
Officials of Government & Special Interest-Organizations, Corporate Executives, Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors	505.37	541.09	561.80	581.80	639.61	649.15	665.90
Professionals	530.99	541.19	553.87	555.76	567.42	605.87	625.81
Technicians & Associate Professionals	359.74	354.19	361.20	381.63	445.28	417.86	435.30
Clerks, Service Workers & Shop & Market	266.80	275.17	277.01	296.44	323.97	342.95	363.31
Sales Workers	238.16	242.66	247.38	250.26	263.29	270.89	281.31
Farmers, Forestry Workers & Fishermen	116.79	117.47	129.97	138.91	163.36	183.11	174.37
Craft & Related Trades Workers	211.98	219.29	226.38	236.91	259.73	261.65	272.34
Plant & Machine Operators and Assemblers	219.90	227.30	231.74	247.48	264.10	278.18	284.94
Laborers & Unskilled Workers	133.63	138.29	142.86	152.21	166.35	165.40	172.96
Special Occupations	358.67	397.52	403.88	454.30	471.55	520.02	500.45
<b>WOMEN</b>							
<b>All Occupations</b>	<b>231.11</b>	<b>232.52</b>	<b>237.53</b>	<b>244.71</b>	<b>257.60</b>	<b>263.42</b>	<b>278.56</b>
Officials of Government & Special Interest-Organizations, Corporate Executives, Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors	518.81	520.03	555.90	579.08	614.94	636.79	685.32
Professionals	473.24	471.35	491.77	482.43	497.60	504.59	529.07
Technicians & Associate Professionals	332.21	326.93	325.28	337.38	384.76	364.77	386.08
Clerks	261.24	264.35	271.44	293.26	334.47	334.71	349.57
Service Workers & Shop & Market Sales Workers	153.06	155.84	161.11	161.64	165.36	175.60	182.82
Farmers, Forestry Workers & Fishermen	102.23	98.53	109.14	97.02	122.29	115.29	115.38
Craft & Related Trades Workers	171.01	179.79	181.29	193.53	195.22	205.43	211.07
Plant & Machine Operators and Assemblers	227.28	237.93	243.05	254.03	263.40	277.77	293.39
Laborers & Unskilled Workers	107.61	108.40	110.77	111.33	114.94	122.50	125.33
Special Occupations	222.74	228.65	216.92	244.80	295.81	291.39	337.39

Notes: 1. Data excludes basic pay of wage and salary workers paid on commission basis, honorarium, and boundary as in the case of jeep-ney/bus/tricycle drivers.

2. Data for 2002-2005 were based on 1995 Census of Population results, while data for 2006-2008 were based on the 2000 Census of Population.

Source of basic data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey.

spaces that incrementally open for women to enjoy their rights (see Table 7).

### ***An expanding informal sector***

Waged labor does not capture all the work that

women do and their substantial contributions to the economy. Filipino women have been going into informal work in large numbers for various reasons, among them the many gender gaps in employment and wages, discrimination in flexible labor arrange-

**Table 8. Employed Persons by Class of Worker and Sex, Philippines: 2002-2008 (in thousands)**

CLASS OF WORKER AND SEX	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>BOTH SEXES</b>	30,062	30,635	31,613	32,313	32,636	33,560	34,089
<b>MEN</b>	18,306	18,873	19,646	19,910	20,013	20,542	20,959
<b>Wage and Salary Workers</b>	9,022	9,554	10,368	10,129	10,316	10,827	11,093
Worked for Private Establishment	7,372	7,934	8,871	8,610	8,728	9,109	9,406
Worked for Private Household	398	354	193	215	246	302	269
Worked for Family-Operated Activity	91	107	95	93	89	111	79
Worked for Gov't/Gov't Corporation	1,161	1,159	1,209	1,212	1,253	1,306	1,341
<b>Own-Account Workers</b>	7,429	7,583	7,682	8,057	7,880	7,883	7,984
Self-Employed	6,091	6,296	6,391	6,854	6,766	6,784	6,878
Employer	1,338	1,287	1,291	1,203	1,114	1,100	1,107
<b>Unpaid Family Workers</b>	1,854	1,736	1,597	1,723	1,818	1,832	1,882
<b>WOMEN</b>	11,756	11,762	11,968	12,403	12,622	13,018	13,130
<b>Wage and Salary Workers</b>	5,631	5,800	6,105	6,187	6,357	6,682	6,754
Worked for Private Establishment	3,174	3,361	3,682	3,651	3,695	3,841	3,878
Worked for Private Household	1,212	1,199	1,179	1,259	1,380	1,481	1,467
Worked for Family-Operated Activity	29	33	34	35	36	42	27
Worked for Gov't/Gov't Corporation	1,217	1,209	1,211	1,241	1,247	1,318	1,382
<b>Own-Account Workers</b>	3,970	3,934	3,933	4,047	4,070	4,117	4,097
Self-Employed	3,646	3,616	3,620	3,730	3,759	3,787	3,777
Employer	324	318	313	316	311	330	320
<b>Unpaid Family Workers</b>	2,155	2,029	1,931	2,170	2,195	2,219	2,280

Notes: 1. Details may not add up to totals due to rounding.  
 2. Data were averages of four survey rounds (January, April, July and October).  
 3. 2002-2005 data were calculated using population projections based on the 1995 Census of Population.  
 4. 2006-2008 data were calculated using population projections based on the 2000 Census of Population.  
 Source of data: National Statistics Office, Labor Force Survey, Public Use Files.

ments and multiple burdens of reproductive work in the home.<sup>15</sup> Without social protection and job security, the informal workers are widely recognized as a highly vulnerable sector. “While it accounts for a large proportion of employment creation,” Pascual writes, “the bulk of informal employment involves marginal activities characterized by low productivity and low pay. The poor quality of informal jobs is evident in high rates of underemployment—due to lack of work hours or low earnings—and high poverty rates among the informal workforce.... Besides underemployment and low incomes, informal workers face a host of problems with adverse welfare consequences, including irregular work, volatile earnings, indebtedness, lack of social protection, harassment at work, and multiple burdens for women. The consequences can be immediate: poor health status,

for example. Poor health can be long-term leading to loss of assets and future income, hence continuation of a cycle of poverty.”<sup>16</sup>

Using the Goal 3 indicator alone for women’s share of waged work in the non-agricultural sector leaves no room for looking at unremunerated work that women mainly do as part of family-owned businesses or enterprises. The total number of unpaid family workers rose from 4 million in 2006 to 4.16 million (average) in 2009. Table 8 shows women in unpaid work as consistently greater in number than men, comprising over 50 percent of the total number from 2002 – 2008.<sup>17</sup>

The numbers of those involved in traditional informal work (vending, dressmaking, operating small sari-sari stores, etc.) have gone down from 60 percent

<sup>15</sup> NSCB Resolution No. 15-Attachment 1, Official Definition of the Informal Sector: “... ‘units’ engaged in the production of goods and services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned in order to earn a living... [typically operating] at a low level of organization, with little or no division between labor and capital as factors of production. It consists of household unincorporated enterprises that are market and non-market producers of goods as well as market producers of services.... Labor relations, where they exist, are based on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than formal contractual arrangements.”

<sup>16</sup> Clarence Pascual, “Social and economic empowerment of women in the informal economy : impact case study of Sikap Buhay.” *ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series No. 18* (International Labour Organization Subregional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific: September 2008).

<sup>17</sup> 2009 Gender Statistics on Labor and Employment.

in the 80's, according to Sibal,<sup>18</sup> which he explains may be due to "...the absorption of some of its members in the formal sector as non-regular or contractual workers. Non-regular workers hired locally or overseas are absorbed in formal establishments periodically. If we add the number of non-regular employees and agency-hired workers to the informal sector, their numbers would be increasing as experienced in the Asia and the Pacific region." Similar to the trends in other countries in the region, employment is reported as becoming increasingly 'informalized', a condition that covers "...the traditional informal sector composed of the own account workers and the contributing family workers but also the 'casualized' (or contractualized) workers within formal establishments." In the same manner, domestic work here and abroad is carried out on informal terms, making adherence to labor laws and workers' rights difficult to monitor.

This is evident in flexible labor arrangements that have become standard practice in the country's pursuit of structural adjustment prescriptions, notably export-orientation and liberalization. Labor, and women's labor in particular, is only one of various types of collateral damage of this drive to fully open the country to the global market and to foreign investments. Flexibilization measures can take the form of casualization/contractualization or substituting temporary and casual labor for regular or permanent workers.

Arrangements like these abound in the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) where women comprise the majority or an estimated 74 percent of workers. The very nature of work in which women are preferred channels them back into their socially constructed identities and reproductive work roles that they disproportionately bear in their households. "Employers in the EPZs are more likely to favour women for routine, repetitive work in the low-tech and labour-intensive industries like garments and electronics. Some consider women more compliant, disciplined and hard-working than their male counterparts," a 2004 report on the EPZs noted. The comments of an executive of the IT manufacturer Fujitsu, which

had up to 80 percent women in its employ at the time, is illustrative. He reportedly said that "...they are better than men," and added that "they barely cost one-fifth as much as a skilled worker in Japan."<sup>19</sup>

Such issues can easily be masked by positive developments in the rising share of women in waged work, slow and incremental this may be. Studies of EPZs in other countries establish the link between the need for cheap labor and the rise of women's employment. Indicators must also be able to surface gender norms discriminatory to women that are acted out in the policies and organizational cultures of workplaces.

### *Rural women*

One of the issues raised by the CEDAW with the Philippine government was "...the precarious situation of rural and indigenous women, as well as the Muslim women in the autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao, who lack access to adequate health services, education, clean water and sanitation services, and credit facilities. The CEDAW Committee is also concerned about women's limited access to justice in cases of violence, especially in the conflict zones, and the lack of sanctions against perpetrators of such violence."<sup>20</sup> In noting these problems the CEDAW Committee brought to light the issue of discrimination against women as a major obstacle in rural and indigenous women's poverty.

Legislation is in place to claim gender equality. The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) provides that "[a]ll qualified women members of the agricultural labor force must be guaranteed and assured equal rights to ownership of the land, equal shares of the farm's produce, and representation in advisory or appropriate decision-making bodies."<sup>21</sup> This further gained strength institutionally with the passage of the Magna Carta of Women in 2009. The law reiterates the equal status of women and men, whether married or unmarried, in the titling of land and the issuance of contracts and patents. It also stipulates that equal treatment shall be given to women and men beneficiaries of the agrarian reform program, wherein the vested right of a woman agrarian

<sup>18</sup> Jorge Sibal, "Measuring the Informal Sector in the Philippines and the Trends in Asia." Paper presented at the 10th National Convention on Statistics, October 1-2, 2007, EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City, sponsored by the NSCB.

<sup>19</sup> Sarah Perman with Laurent Duveillier, Natacha David, John Eden et Samuel Grumiau, ed. Natacha David, "Behind the brand names, Working conditions and labour rights in export processing zones. December 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Raised as one of the CEDAW Committee's Concluding Comments, in response to the Philippine government's 5th and 6th report. For the full text, see "Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Philippines." 36th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, August 7-25, 2006, New York.

<sup>21</sup> Republic Act 6657, An Act Instituting a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program to Promote Social Justice and Industrializing, Providing the Mechanisms for its Implementation and for Other Purposes, Section 40, (5).

reform beneficiary is defined by a woman's relationship to tillage, i.e., her direct and indirect contribution to the development of the land.<sup>22</sup>

However, as what befalls other women-friendly laws, problems of implementation still prevent rural women from moving towards economic autonomy. Since women remain embedded in a status secondary to male farmers and bound to reproductive labor, these laws and policies have not eased women's access to and ownership of resources, especially land. Moreover, they are not seen as directly engaged in farming and fisheries, (although studies show them working longer hours<sup>23</sup>) which has the effect of policy targeting male beneficiaries in the assumption that they are the breadwinners of households. Government interventions have thus tended to benefit men more rather than women. Men consistently and overwhelmingly outnumber females in the number of Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) held, as Table 9 indicates.<sup>24</sup> The Philippine Rural Women's Congress has reported several cases of exclusion of women farmers from the list of agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs). Although the women had been farm workers and tillers before marriage, they were not counted as individual ARBs "...because their husbands have already been identified as such."<sup>25</sup>

**Table 9. Numbers of Certificates of Land Ownership Award by Sex, Selected Years**

	No. of Female Holders	No. of Male Holders
2003	16,616	33,711
2005	402,942	912,797
2006	431,222	960,298
2007	466,779	1,024,089
2008	504,340	1,078,643

Source: National Statistical Coordination Board

The agricultural and fisheries sector remains predominantly male-identified and oriented. Women in farming, forestry and fisheries received an estimated

daily basic pay of only Php 115 (as of 2008) as compared to Php 174 for males. In 2003 and 2005, this dipped even lower to Php 98 and Php 97 respectively (see Table 7).

Rural populations especially in Mindanao are also desperately wanting in the most basic social services, and women are particularly affected by this deficit. This southern island, where the largest concentration of Muslim and indigenous peoples reside, has consistently posted the lowest human development scores relative to other regions. The 2009 Philippine Human Development Report affirms this. Provinces of Mindanao scored lowest in the three Human Development Indicators (HDIs) of life expectancy, knowledge (simple literacy and combined elementary, secondary and tertiary enrolment rates) and income. Similar low scores were registered by several Mindanao provinces in terms of the Human Poverty Index, a measure also using the HDI but focusing on deprivation. Gender indices showed the participation of women in the formal economy as lower than men in all the Mindanao provinces. Sulu in particular registered the lowest scores, with only 16.5 percent of females engaged in the labor force.<sup>26</sup>

There is no sex-disaggregated data of internally displaced people, but we can perhaps assume the gender differentiated effects of the conflict in Mindanao. Predictably, women assume the bulk of social reproduction work. "[They] tend to be responsible for social protection..., undertaking livelihood projects, resolving conflicts at the family and community levels, and promoting peace."<sup>27</sup>

### *Feminized migration: into the global chains of reproductive labor*

Among the social and economic trends to have touched Filipino women's lives, none can surpass the depth and comprehensiveness of the impacts of migration. Even the CEDAW has taken notice, calling the attention of the Philippine government to widespread

<sup>22</sup> Republic Act 9710, Magna Carta of Women, Chapter V, Section 20 (b).

<sup>23</sup> Pambansang Konseho ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan, (n.d).

<sup>24</sup> The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) defines an Emancipation Patent as the land title granted to the tenant upon fulfillment of all government requirements while a Certificate of Land Ownership Award is given to agricultural Beneficiaries by the Department of Agrarian Reform in accordance with conditions in the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program of 198 (RA 6657) law and other statutes.

<sup>25</sup> Pambansang Konseho ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan.

<sup>26</sup> Human Development Network, United Nations Development Programme and the New Zealand Agency for International Development, *Philippine Human Development Report 2008/2009*, (2009), 102-103, 116, 120.

<sup>27</sup> Asian Development Bank, Canadian International Development Agency, European Commission, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Population Fund, *Paradox and Promise in the Philippines, A Country Gender Assessment* (Philippines, 2008), 100-101.

reports of female OFW deaths, sexual, physical and psychological abuse, and other forms of maltreatment by their employers. Few economic activities have brought in as much revenues for the Philippine government as migration, reaching as high as US\$ US\$17.3 billion in 2008.<sup>28</sup> The Philippines is one of the 10 countries in the world whose remittance-to-GDP ratio registers at more than 10 percent. Migration is a phenomenon that no development intervention can afford to ignore.

Female OFWs increased to 968,000 in 2008 and dropped slightly to 901,000 in 2009 (see Table 10). Consistent with previous years, the regions with the highest number of unemployed women—the National Capital Region, Central Luzon and CALABARZON—also sent the most number of female OFWs.

Care labor is in the highest rungs of “fertile job markets”, where women in the developed countries have the resources to hire other women to assume reproductive tasks. At the same time, there is no dearth of applicants because the qualifications for these jobs deemed

**Table 10. Overseas Filipino Workers by Sex (in thousands)**

Year	Both sexes	Male	Female
2009	1,911	1,010	901
2008	2,002	1,034	968
2007	1,747	890	857
2006	1,515	751	764
2005	1,327	667	660
2004	1,180	604	577
2003	983	508	475
2002	1,056	554	502
2001	1,029	528	501
2000	978	527	451
1999	1,043	547	497
1998	904	469	435
1997	1,013	554	459
1996	795	416	379
1995	795	504	396

Source: National Statistics Office - Survey on Overseas Filipinos. Details may not add up due to rounding

**Table 11. Deployed Landbased Contract Workers (New Hires) by Skills Category and Sex, 2002 - 2008**

SKILLS CATEGORY AND SEX	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Men</b>	77,850	66,401	72,355	79,079	123,668	160,046	174,930
Professional, Technical & Related Workers	14,849	11,620	13,677	11,953	17,212	21,464	27,929
Administrative, Executive & Managerial Workers	246	284	398	381	528	715	1,041
Clerical & Related Workers	1,501	1,761	2,230	1,985	3,271	4,782	6,455
Sales Workers	1,591	1,096	1,189	1,288	2,405	2,553	4,247
Service Workers	9,292	7,725	11,343	10,666	16,135	20,894	22,759
Agricultural, Animal Husbandry & Forestry Workers, Fishermen & Hunters	596	384	661	311	716	873	1,082
Production & Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators & Laborers	49,190	42,579	42,855	51,694	80,240	101,699	111,024
Not elsewhere classified/Not Stated	585	952	2	801	3,161	7,066 <sup>a</sup>	393
<b>Women</b>	197,441	166,325	209,372	201,538	184,454	146,285	163,324
Professional, Technical & Related Workers	84,828	67,330	80,450	48,356	24,046	21,754	21,717
Administrative, Executive & Managerial Workers	128	103	167	109	289	424	475
Clerical & Related Workers	2,511	2,204	3,093	3,553	4,641	8,878	11,646
Sales Workers	1,452	1,393	2,758	2,972	3,112	5,385	7,277
Service Workers	88,078	76,292	102,035	123,219	128,186	86,215	100,570
Agricultural, Animal Husbandry and Forestry Workers, Fishermen & Hunters	15	29	21	39	91	79	272
Production and Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators & Laborers	20,319	18,766	20,847	23,096	23,344	20,004	21,266
Not elsewhere classified/Not Stated	110	208	1	194	745	3,546 <sup>a</sup>	101
<b>Not Reported</b>		<b>8,785</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>44</b>	-	<b>52</b>	<b>12</b>

Note: Disaggregation by skill may not add up to totals due to non-reporting of sex of OFWs

<sup>a</sup> Includes workers whose skill were not reported and the 829 workers deployed thru Employment-based Immigration scheme.

Source of data: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

<sup>28</sup> Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

**Table 12. Number of Deployed Landbased Overseas Filipino Workers by Top Occupational Category and Sex, New Hires1/: 2009**

	Male	Female	Both Sexes
All Occupational Category	156,454	175,298	331,752
Household Service Workers	1,888	69,669	71,557
Waiter, Bartenders & Related Workers	4,97	6,999	11,977
Charworkers, Cleaners & Related Workers	2,140	7,916	10,056
Wiremen Electrical	9,709	43	9,752
Caregivers and Caretakers	507	8,721	9,228
Laborers/Helpers General	7,105	994	8,099
Plumbers & Pipe Fitters	7,702	20	7,722
Welders & Flamer Cutters	5,870	40	5,910
Housekeeping & Related Service Workers	908	4,219	5,127

Source: POEA, "Compendium of OFW Statistics," <http://www.poea.gov.ph/html/statistics.html>

as "unskilled" or "semi-skilled" are few and the hope of economic advancement is compelling. Professional and technical workers used to lead in deployments but this has changed over the years. As of 2008, there were only 21,717 deployments in the professional and technical category as opposed to 100,570 in service work (see Table 11). The same trend continued in 2009, with female new hires in household service work (HSW) leading in deployment, followed by nurses and caregivers<sup>29</sup> (see Table 12).

What started as a stopgap measure of the Marcos government in the 70's to provide employment is now an established practice, promoted by the highest government officials. The prevailing situation has been one of persistent violations of women's legal and human rights, particularly for the large numbers of women crossing borders (whether through regular or irregular<sup>30</sup> channels) as domestic helpers (see Table 13). The POEA has coverage only over documented workers, and hence has no reach over the significant numbers of undocumented women migrants or those whose status became irregular abroad.

Some of the policies intended to strengthen protec-

tion especially of domestic workers have proven ineffective. For instance, it set a higher minimum age for HSWs at 25 years old (the standard minimum age for all other migrant workers is 18) "to improve preparedness and maturity of the HSWs and in light of reports of unabated abuses and maltreatments against HSWs." However, no implementing measures are provided to attain this. The policy itself provides no proactive actions or measures to prevent abuse and instead seems to put the blame on migrant workers for their suffering at the hands of abusive employers without the benefit of consultations among migrants and migrant rights advocates as well as with receiving governments. The Center for Migrant Advocacy reported that the migrants were not consulted on these policies.<sup>31</sup>

The stories of abuse of migrant women raises questions as to the effectiveness of government agencies mandated to protect their rights, such as the Foreign Affairs Department's Office of Legal Assistance for Migrant Workers Affairs. The Arroyo administration alone has six OFW beheadings to its name; 26 remain in death row in the Middle East alone and hundreds more are incarcerated. In Singapore, 51

<sup>29</sup> The term "Household Service Workers" came about with the issuance of new guidelines from the POEA in 2007 for upgrading the skills of prospective migrant domestic helpers to turn them into what former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo called "supermaids". The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) administer the professionalization training course.

<sup>30</sup> "Irregular migrants – These are migrants whose stay abroad is not properly documented. They also do not have valid residence and work permits; they may also be overstaying workers or tourists in a foreign country. Migrants belonging to this category shall have been in such status for six months or more. A related label to these migrants is "undocumented migrants". In Filipino parlance, these migrants are called "TNTs" (*tago ng tago*, or 'always in hiding')." See [http://almanac.ofwphilanthropy.org/component/option,com\\_frontpage/Itemid,1/limit,2/limitstart,2/](http://almanac.ofwphilanthropy.org/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/limit,2/limitstart,2/).

<sup>31</sup> Statement of the Center for Migrant Advocacy read by Atty. Cecilia Jimenez of the Geneva Forum for Philippine Concerns at the NGO meeting of the UN Committee on the Migrant Workers Convention. United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, November 25, 2008.

**Table 13. Trafficked Migrants Assisted by DSWD<sup>32</sup>**

Year	Sex		Total No. of Victims
	Male	Female	
2003	6	116	122
2004	23	141	164
2005	154	320	474
2006	69	120	189
NCR 2003-2006	22	478	500
2007	25	334	359
<b>Total</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>1,509</b>	<b>1,808</b>

Source: From data consolidated by the Center for Migrant Advocacy - Philippines, Inc. (CMA-Phils.)

OFW deaths of suspicious circumstances have also been reported.<sup>33</sup>

An additional layer of protection can be gained from bilateral agreements drawn between receiving and sending countries to establish regulated labor migration and to ensure that the contracting parties are both understand the protection and promotion of workers' rights. The CEDAW in its concluding comments on the last Philippine report pointed to the need for bilateral labor agreements with receiving countries. However, as of September 2009, the country has concluded only 34 agreements with 22 countries on employment

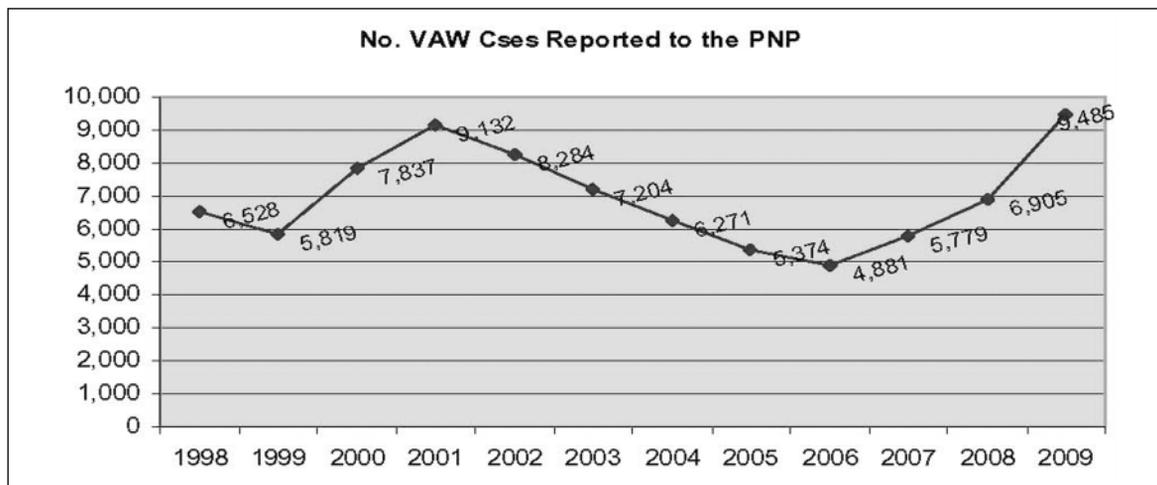
welfare and labor cooperation; 12 agreements with 10 countries on social security; and 44 agreements on recognition of seafarer's certificates.<sup>34</sup> This is grossly inadequate considering that there are more than eight million Filipinos working abroad in more than 190 countries, mostly in contractual or temporary jobs in Middle East countries.

### Violence against women (VAW)

To the government's credit, it recognizes the crippling consequences of VAW and their capacity to erode what gains women win in education, public life and economic participation. The UNDP cites data estimating that "...around 2.2 million Filipino women or nine percent of all women ages 18 years and above, experienced violence inflicted by their partners. In the past two years, around 70 percent of child-abuse victims were girls and about 40 percent of cases were sexual abuse and exploitation."<sup>35</sup> The Philippine National Police reports a sharp increase of 37.4 percent from 4,881 in 2006 to 9,485 in 2009 (see Figure 3). The number of DSWD-reported cases is even higher at 14,040 cases, increasing from 10,630 in 2008.<sup>36</sup>

Reporting VAW still meets with much stigma for the victim/s, so that actual figures are likely to be

**Figure 3. Number of VAW Cases Reported to the Philippine National Police, 1997-2009<sup>37</sup>**



<sup>32</sup> Center for Migrant Advocacy - Philippines, Inc., Philippine Migrants Rights Groups' Written Replies to the List of Issues Relating to the Consideration of the Initial Report of the Philippines. Philippines: March 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Abigail Kwok, "Better Migrant Filipinos' Protection Pushed," Inquirer.net, September 2009.

<sup>35</sup> "Millennium Development Goals, Goal 3, Gender Equality and Empowerment," [http://www.undp.org/ph/?link=goal\\_3](http://www.undp.org/ph/?link=goal_3).

<sup>36</sup> Businessworld Research, "Reported incidence of violence against women rises," July 21, 2010.

<sup>37</sup> "Statistics on Violence Against Women."

larger. Lack of efficient and well-coordinated systems in monitoring and evaluating incidents also results in various sets of data generated by different agencies, making it difficult to establish trends.

A step towards enhancing the quality of data on VAW, was to include in the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2008, questions on women's experiences with sexual, physical, emotional and economic violence. The NDHS found, among others, that one in five women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age 15 and that almost one in 10 women in the same age range experienced sexual violence.<sup>38</sup>

### **Climate change: new threats to Goal 3**

Added impediments to the realization of Goal 3 have been posed by the climate crisis. Experience and documentation indeed establishes that disadvantaged communities are more in danger of being hardest hit by the current climate crisis, or any crisis for that matter. Within these communities, however, social constructs such as gender, intersecting with ethnicity, age, and economic entitlements, add more layers of risk to already vulnerable groups.

“For example, in places where women have less access to food and health care than men, they start off at a disadvantage when facing natural disasters and environmental stress. Since they are often the primary caregivers for children and the elderly, they may also have less mobility,” writes Hartman. “Cultural restrictions on women's mobility can compound the problem. During the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh many more women died than men because early warnings were displayed in public spaces where women were prohibited and women delayed leaving their homes because of fears of impropriety.”<sup>39</sup> It is alarming that women's voices, especially those from the grassroots, are still not strongly heard in both international negotiations and national debates.

The framing itself of the phenomenon of climate change and the privileging of technical and financial solutions (e.g., carbon trading) contains bias against poor people and poor women in particular, who even remotely cannot be part of these transactions and processes. What is worrisome is how the Philippines has been abiding by this perspective, buying into debt-creating, market-based mechanisms installed

by international financial institutions and Northern governments. This immediately presents difficulties for women whose economic participation, social standing and political presence are already compromised and marginalized to begin with.

One example is the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), which allows industrialized countries to circumvent their caps by transferring “clean technology” to a developing country. CDM projects, whose costs the Philippines partly covers, now dot the country from north to south. In effect, the developed countries of the North conveniently elude the reductions in GHG emissions required to lessen global warming and the impacts of climate-induced disasters.

The focus of interventions and resources has been mainly in mitigation—the offsetting or reduction of GHG emissions, rather than adaptation, or responding to and preparing for the impact of climate change. The bias is evident against the developing countries that emit far less than the developed countries.

For the developing world and vulnerable groups in particular, adaptation is the greatest human need in the face of climate change. Even in everyday life, women stretch their time and incomes to adapt to economic difficulties. In situations of social service privatization, they fill in by default to compensate for services that are no longer state-subsidized and which their households can no longer afford. Thus, the adequacy of adaptation strategies is critical in determining whether more burdens will add to the coping and survival strategies that women in poor households and communities are already doing on a daily basis.

Thus far, the government's responses to climate-induced disasters have been found wanting in gender awareness and sensitivity. Interventions have tended to be gender-blind, reflecting a lack of understanding of equal but different needs and resulting in women's unmet reproductive health needs. Also absent is consideration for the physical and emotional toll on women who mostly stay behind with their children in congested resettlement and rehabilitation centers while men seek livelihoods elsewhere. Among others, they lose what little mobility they have, access to social networks and incomes from informal work.

Being the 12th most populous nation in the world raises a particular aspect of climate change debates, im-

<sup>38</sup> Romulo Virolo, “Violence Against Women...At Home!”

<sup>39</sup> Betsy Hartman. ZSpace. “Gender, Militarism and Climate Change,” April 10, 2006.

plicating overpopulation and poor women, which can prove adverse to the realization of women's control over their bodies and is hence material to Goal 3 of women's empowerment. Some population control policies especially during times of political turmoil have led to harmful consequences for women and girls. Points raised by Jonathan Porritt, UK's chief environmental adviser, exemplifies how dangerous this terrain can be. He cited how China's prevention of 400 million births through a one-child policy implemented since 1979 also saved it some 1.4 billion tonnes in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions— "the biggest CO<sub>2</sub> abatement since Kyoto came into force." Phil Ward comments that Porritt "fails to mention that up to 2002 Chinese women were given no choice about contraceptive method, with the result that 37 percent of married women have been sterilized."<sup>40</sup> Though the example of China is extreme, it serves as a cautionary tale.

### **Conclusions: enabling the realization of Goal 3**

The Philippines' obligations to the realization of many international development and human rights goals, as concomitant to its ratification and adoption of the instruments in which these are enshrined, have been used many times and proven useful in pushing for the promotion of women's rights and in seeking state accountability for the full realization of the same. Since the Philippines became state party to the CEDAW, there have been many gains won especially in the field of legislative advocacy and policy reform. These international commitments continue to be used as platforms for calling attention to enduring gender inequalities and human rights violations against women. The adoption of the eight measurable, time-bound goals in 2001 and their mainstreaming in the Philippine Medium Term Development Plans add to the gains achieved thus far towards moving in the direction of improving women's lives.

The increased participation of women in education and comparatively greater enjoyment of their right to work are important steps forward in the framework of the MDGs. Purposively aligning the MTPDP with the MDGs and monitoring compliance have also generated measures towards progressively seeking women's empowerment. These include, as reported by government, shaping educational content to bring the gender

differentials and gender-based discriminations to the fore by highlighting the need for and importance of shared roles in care labor and household management, equitable spaces in decision-making and access to and ownership of resources, gender parity and affirmative actions for enhancing women's political participation, and ending VAW. Education is, after all, a critical part of the meso-level of institutions, laws and policies where gender biases disadvantageous to women are usually legitimated and institutionalized. A way of monitoring the impact of these interventions over time would yield invaluable information on government's compliance to both its CEDAW and MDG commitments to progressively address norms and practices discriminatory to women.

The recognition of inadequacies in VAW is recognized as "...a major obstacle to law implementation, sound programming and tracking for accountability."

However, as the preceding sections indicate, gains in education, waged work and public life have yet to translate into meeting other targets set towards empowering women. Gender gaps and inequalities endure, eroding the gains achieved and impeding women's moves towards realizing truly empowering goals of socio-economic and political autonomy. Data indicate that biases operating to the disadvantage of women remain pervasive at the macro level, at the meso level of institutions, laws and policies and at the micro level of families and households. Bridging the gaps towards women's empowerment will need interventions that are more comprehensive and substantive than ensuring gender parity and formal equality in school, in work and in avenues of political participation.

The greater majority especially among the economically disadvantaged remain at the fringes of political decision making and are compelled by long-standing socio-economic forms of discrimination at home to respond to high demand for lowly paid and dangerous work abroad. Women are disproportionately represented in unpaid work, which means that the price of much of the work they do they is priced zero; with income alone and economic growth as barometers, large numbers will not be accounted for.

Women are not only outnumbered by men in the labor force, but receive comparatively lower wages

<sup>40</sup> Ward, Phil. "Population Control and Climate Change, Part One: Too Many People?" March 2, 2008. <http://climateandcapitalism.com/?p=348>.

and are tracked in large numbers into extensions of their social reproduction work at home. Women contribute to production all the time but in home-based enterprises and this work is usually unpaid and unaccounted for. As the line between formal and informal work blurs under flexible labor arrangements, more of women's unpaid and invisible work is likely to be exploited.

The informal sector has provided women with many ways of earning a living, paving the way for a sense of empowerment in being able to have money of one's own, to have mobility, to have a say in the household, however limited this may be. However, they also suffer both instability in their livelihoods and insecurity in their persons. In agricultural production, women's contributions are also assumed as free and complementary only to the work that men do.

Various reasons —from economic constraints to narrowing spaces for individual development —draw large numbers of women to cross borders. Many have gained financial security, personal autonomy, positions of decision-making in their households and communities. But for others the costs have been too high. In migration, the intersectional discriminations arising from being a woman, poor, colored and often with little education, are further accentuated.

These impediments to substantive equality are too deep to be effectively addressed by piecemeal and mechanical approaches to development. Goal 3, towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, is already circumscribed by narrow indicators of gender parity in education, governance and waged work. But the achievement of these targets are dependent on the achievement of the other Goals, many of which are alarmingly off track and behind schedule.

When the Philippine government ratified the CEDAW in 1981, it took upon itself the obligation to mainstream gender and work towards gender equality and women's empowerment. This was already in place when it signed up with the rest of the world to work towards achievement of the eight MDGs. Five years before the MDGs, the Beijing Platform for Action was also in place. The Philippine government also has obligations under the other core international human rights treaties it has signed. The rights-based approach is inherent in these legally binding instruments but again, the HRBA has not been mainstreamed into the government's planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring processes.

Recognition of the structural and systemic inequalities and inequities, including discriminations stemming from gender, is a crucial first step towards a more dynamic appreciation and implementation of Goal 3. We need to bring these front and center of compliance with Goal 3. We can then build on the gains thus far, not with more measures that contribute too little and too late to improving women's lives, but with deeper, wider and faster interventions that contribute to the strategic goal of women's empowerment.

## **Recommendations**

### ***State obligations and enabling analytical and planning frameworks***

With the passage of the Magna Carta of Women, the legal framework for the enjoyment of women's rights has been further strengthened. It also gives added basis for laws, policies, programs and activities to be brought in line with the CEDAW and other core human rights and development commitments, the MDGs included.

A desirable first step that should accompany specific efforts to realize Goal 3 is to work towards developing a paradigmatic shift in the country's development framework that puts the most marginalized and excluded people at the center. This necessarily entails using gender as a category of analysis in planning, implementation and monitoring. All else should follow, such as reviewing a System of National Accounts that does not take into consideration women's reproductive labor as material to the economy, much less surfaces women's contributions, setting aside the necessary resources and engendering budgets and instituting tax reforms that do not further disadvantage women.

The experiences of women in establishing the economic value of social reproduction can be instructive. For instance, women in some countries like Canada have been able to add parameters in their Census of Population, “[making]... women's unwaged work visible - numerical, actual, and unavoidable” and allowing it to enter in the design of the country's national accounts. They were then able to introduce methodologies to calculate the cost of replacing unpaid with paid work and the income that women would have had the opportunity to earn in waged work instead of doing unpaid work. They estimated the replacement value of women's reproductive labors at 30 – 40 percent of Canada's GDP in 1992 or around CAN\$284.9 billion, and the opportunity value at

CAN\$318.8 billion. While they found the rates poor, it made a clear statement that women's care work is not priced zero.<sup>41</sup>

Gender analysis should further lead to interrogating the inequalities and discriminations built into systems, structures and processes at various levels of the economy and society. There are gender biases in economic and political decision making at the macro-, meso-, and micro levels. There are also gender-based distortions at these levels that constrain, even set back women's education choices, work opportunities, access to and ownership of land and other resources and entitlements, tax burdens, etc. There are institutional biases (schools, business, government policies and programs, laws) that foster norms discriminatory to women and ultimately impede efforts at gender equality and empowerment. Factors like these ground the many laws Filipino women have won to make their lives better but implementation (or the lack thereof) reveals how thin awareness and comprehension levels are.

### ***Budgeting for women's rights: 15 years of the GAD Budget Policy***

With one of the smallest allocations in the national budget, the national women's machinery PCW also taps into the GAD commitments of national agencies and LGUs. However, accessing this—if indeed five percent of agency/LGU budgets are set aside for GAD as mandated – has become more problematic over time. Rampant reports of misalignment and abuse indicate low levels of awareness and understanding of the basis and legal mandate of this policy. The biggest fall was from 2003 when allocation reached Php 4.7 billion or five times its amount in 2002 to less than a billion pesos or Php 951.7 million in 2007. It spiked up to Php 6.5 billion in 2006 but in 2010 dropped to almost the same level as when the policy began to be enforced. Total funds are indeed generally rising but as a share of the national budget, GAD money is shrinking. In all the years of implementation, the GAD budget's share of the national budget has not gone beyond 0.57 percent<sup>42</sup> (see Table 14).

15 years after the landmark 1995 GAA that institutionalized gender-responsive budgeting in the country, it is high time the GAD Budget Policy is reviewed in a comprehensive, transparent and participatory manner. The lackluster performance and even outright resistance to its realization are clearly worrisome concerns. Part of the problem could be operationalizing the instruction for agencies to utilize at least 5 percent of their total budget appropriations for GAD-related activities. Francisco wrote of the government's difficulty in concretely calculating the cost of services and activities in the PPGD. "Without the necessary computation behind the proportional allocation to GAD, it was easy enough to dismiss the 5 percent benchmark as a political concession that was neither significant nor to be taken seriously."<sup>43</sup>

The Policy also has accountability issues, relying only on reporting procedures. This prompted calls issued many times in the past to strengthen these with "innovative and more participatory methods of monitoring and surveillance"<sup>44</sup> A Policy Brief released by the Senate Economic Planning Office, noted the same issues, including "weak institutional mechanism[s]" for monitoring. Among their recommendations are monitoring and evaluating the impacts of GAD related programs and projects; setting clear targets and benchmarks; developing even stronger links of coordination, monitoring and evaluation with other agencies. The Commission of Audit has a significant role in conducting a gender budget audit, considering that the PCW does not have the institutional mechanism to audit and evaluate GAD budget compliance, much less enforcing capacity in the case of non-performing agencies.<sup>45</sup> With the office of the GAD Ombud now mandated by the Magna Carta of Women, ensuring accountability in full GAD Budget compliance should have greater chances of being realized.

### ***Harmonizing Goal 3: Taking the CEDAW Committee's concluding comments forward***

Measures to realize the MDGs and address the challenges specifically on Goal 3 have to be harmonized

<sup>41</sup> "Valuing Unpaid Work," Citing a keynote address given by Evelyn Drescher at the symposium "Counting Women's Work" of the UN Platform for Action Committee (Manitoba) Canada May 1999.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Josefa Francisco, "The GAD Budget Examining Public Financing with a Gender and Poverty Lens." *2001 Report: Social Watch Philippines*, <http://www.socialwatchphilippines.org/publications.htm>.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Senate Economic Planning Office, 8.

**Table 14. Trends in GAD Budget vis-à-vis National Government Budget (in billion Php)<sup>46</sup>**

	Total National Government Budget	GAD Budget Allocation	GAD budget as % of NG Budget
1995	372.1	1.0	0.27
1996	416.1	1.3	0.31
1997	491.8	2.8	0.57
1998	537.4	2.7	0.50
1999	293.6	3.4	0.57
2000	682.5	3.2	0.47
2001	710.8	2.9	0.41
2002	742.0	0.8	0.11
2003	826.5	4.7	0.57
2004	867.0	3.9	0.45
2005	947.6	2.2	0.23
2006	1,044.8	1.1	0.11
2007	1,155.5	0.9	0.08
2008	1,314.6	1.1	0.08
2009	1,426.0	6.5	0.46
2010	1,541.0	1.3	0.08

Source: BESF-DBM, NCR; Senate Policy Brief

with the government's other obligations as signatory and state party to the core international human rights treaties and to several development accords. Many of these have their own mechanisms for reporting that often cause various responses to be generated separately by the different government agencies concerned. Multi-treaty approaches should encourage coherence and generate more holistic interventions to address the multiple and intersectional discriminations in women's lives.

Bringing Goal 3 in line with the CEDAW, we need to revisit and take account for the concluding comments or recommendations of the CEDAW Committee to the Philippine government in 2006. A welcome development is the Philippine government's cognizance of the need for sex-disaggregated data in truly responsive policy reform. Data on men and women are more readily available today from government statistical bodies as well as national agencies, although scrutinizing the

measures used for gender bias remains a relevant concern. These should be pursued across all branches and agencies of the government and throughout the local levels where the inadequacy of sex-disaggregated data and statistics has been noted.

Also relevant to monitoring and evaluation are the recommendations of the 2006 NGO Shadow Report for 1) putting in place open, credible and accountable monitoring mechanisms to track results and impacts of the government's own initiatives and varying measures addressing women's rights especially social services covering health, education, and infrastructure, which especially affect grassroots, poor communities; and 2) ensuring that gender analysis and social impact assessments of the government's projects on environment and ecological preservation meticulously consider impact on culture and participation of, and the effect on women.<sup>47</sup>

Other recommendations, however, have yet to be acted upon in substantial and strategic ways. These concern the review and repeal of laws discriminatory to women, the uncertain and dangerous conditions of rural women in the face of trade liberalization, conflict, and climate change, the high risks faced by migrant women, the persistence of VAW, and most especially, the prevalence of gender-based practices norms and norms that are particularly discriminatory to women. Some of the recommendations pertinent to this paper are excerpted below, with additions from long-standing advocacies of women's groups and people's organizations.<sup>48</sup> They are by no means a complete list of the steps towards fulfilling Goal 3.

#### ***a. Women's political participation***

i. Establish concrete, time-bound and measurable goals and undertake sustained efforts at putting Temporary Special Measures in place to address the low level of women's participation in elected and public bodies. The representation of rural, indigenous and Muslim women is particularly stressed.

ii. Give the highest priority to the passage of pending bills ensuring women's rights such as the reproductive health bill and the anti-sexual discrimination bill.

<sup>46</sup> Senate Economic Planning Office, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Mae Buenaventura and Maureen Pagaduan, *2006 NGO Shadow Report*, (Quezon City, 2006, unpublished).

<sup>48</sup> Women's reproductive health rights are discussed in a separate article in this volume. Thus for brevity and considerations of space, the CEDAW recommendations on women's health have not been included in this list. For the full text of the Concluding Comments, see <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/36sess.htm>.

### ***b. Women's economic empowerment***

- i. Study the impacts of trade agreements and attendant labor arrangements on the socio-economic conditions of women, especially the effects of trade liberalization on women in the rural areas.
- ii. Create new sustainable employment opportunities to address women's high unemployment
- iii. Eliminate gender discrimination in the formal labor market, such as wage gaps and gender tracking
- iv. Enhance the situation of women in the informal economy by ensuring stronger mechanisms and processes of social protection.
- v. Review and repeal laws, policies and programs that de-prioritize public expenditures on social services (e.g., automatic appropriations for debt payments) and constrict access to the same (e.g., privatization law for power and water).

### ***c. Rural women***<sup>49</sup>

- i. Implement CARP's guidelines governing gender equality in agrarian reform, that all qualified women members of the agricultural labor force must be guaranteed and assured equal rights to ownership of land, equal shares of the farm's produce, and representation in advisory or appropriate decision-making bodies.
- ii. Recognize women farmers as agrarian reform beneficiaries in their own right, not as spouses of male agrarian reform beneficiaries.
- iii. Implement the issuance of EPs/CLOAs without prejudice to women's marital status.
- iv. Strengthen women's access to support services especially credit.
- v. Educate program implementers on legal gender mandates, gender equality, and women's rights.

### ***d. Women migrants***

- i. Strengthen bilateral, regional and international cooperation with countries of origin, transit and destination to address trafficking in women. (The Committee took notice that "...bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding do not exist with all countries and regions to which Filipino women

migrate and that women workers who migrate to other countries and regions in search of work opportunities through informal channels remain vulnerable to becoming victims of various forms of exploitation = violence and trafficking.)

- ii. Adopt holistic approaches, such as measures towards women's economic empowerment, sustainable development, and the generation of "safe and protected jobs for women as a viable economic alternative to migration or unemployment."

### ***e. VAW***

- i. Increase awareness on all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, marital rape and incest, and the unacceptability of all such violence.
- ii. Repeal laws and/or amend provisions discriminatory to women (e.g., the provision in the Anti-Rape Law of 1997 canceling criminal action and reducing penalties in the event the offended party pardons the crime)
- iii. Enhance data collection on various forms of violence (e.g., harmonizing data collection of the DSWD, PNP, NGOs, etc.) and research the prevalence, causes and consequences of domestic violence
- iv. Conduct consistent and sustained education and awareness raising on attitudes and stereotypes that discriminate against women. (The Committee stresses these stereotypical norms and views as constituting a "significant impediment to the implementation of the Convention and...a root cause of violence against women, as well as of the disadvantaged position of women in a number of areas, including in all sectors of the labour market and in political and public life.)

### ***f. Women and climate change***

- i. Ensure women's representation, especially of grassroots sectors in climate change negotiations and debates.
- ii. Conduct participatory gender analysis of climate-stressed and vulnerable groups and impact assessments of climate change responses.

<sup>49</sup> Culled from "Pantay ang Karapatan ng Kababaihan at Kalalakihan sa Pagmamay-Ari Ng Lupa." (n.d.) Position Paper. Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Kababaihan sa Kanayunan," (n.d.).

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