

GREAT Women Project



Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership
Between the Philippine Commission on Women
and the Iloilo Local Government



May 2013

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Abstract This case study discusses capacity development on women's economic empowerment (WEE) and the partnership of the Philippine Commission on Women-GREAT Women Project and the local government units of Iloilo Province and municipalites of Badiangan, Miag-ao and Pavia.

Introduction In August 2007, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), conducted a Project Briefing in Manila to introduce the GREAT Women Project to the Provincial Government of Iloilo. PCW met with Iloilo Provincial Government representatives led by the Iloilo Provincial Administrator and Gender and Development (GAD) Point Person, the Human Resource Management and Development Officer, and the Assistant Provincial Planning and Development Officer. In the briefing, GREAT Women Project was briefly introduced, while participants were requested to provide a Letter of Intent (LOI) should they consider their province to qualify as a local project partner.



The Province of Iloilo, through its representatives, recognized that the project could bring benefits to the province in terms of poverty alleviation through the creation of new jobs and the development of enterprises among women. The Province of Iloilo promptly expressed their interest and gave initial commitment to be part of the project by submitting their Letter of Intent, signed by the Provincial Governor.

By April 2008, PCW replied to the LOI of the Province of Iloilo to inform the province of its selection as a local partner of the GREAT Women Project. The PCW later coordinated with the province for the hiring of a Local Area Coordinator (LAC), whose main functions were to represent the PCW in the local area as project officer and coordinator and to oversee project implementation in the site.

A local project briefing was conducted by PCW on August 2008 involving not only the LGU officials but also representatives from national government agencies like the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). The briefing aimed to orient these officials on the GREAT Women Project and conduct a process for selection of at least three (3) partner municipalities using project criteria. The briefing clarified expectations and functions of Project partners, while discussing steps toward project planning and implementation.

PCW and the LGU proceeded to discuss the creation of the Provincial/Municipal Technical Working Group (P/MTWG) and the drafting of an Executive Order (EO) legitimizing its creation. The PCW underscored that the composition of the Technical Working Group (TWG) should also include technical and financial partners from national government agencies

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

and business groups. An initial work and financial planning was tentatively set for September 2008 for the local partners.

During the Briefing, three Project partners were also identified and selected by the Provincial Government and the PCW. After all the municipalities of the five (5) Congressional districts were considered and assessed, three municipalities topped the list, namely, Badiangan, Pavia and Miagao. These three municipalities were chosen without difficulty following project criteria: high potential for development (i.e., accessibility, human and natural resources, and market), women in business (i.e., women enterprises and high percentage of women in high-value enterprises, GAD-supportive LGU, peace and order, poverty, other existing projects or programs and absorptive capacity of the LGU.

The Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project was a governance and capacity development project which aimed to create a gender-responsive enabling environment through policies, programs, services and

*Partnership
between
the Philippine
Commission
on Women-GREAT
Women Project
and Iloilo*

The Province of Iloilo

The Province of Iloilo is a first class province and one of the six provinces of Western Visayas (Region 6). Four provinces are located in the Island of Panay (Iloilo, Aklan, Antique and Capiz) while one is located in the Island of Negros Occidental and another, the Island Province of Guimaras.

As of 2007, the total population of Iloilo Province was 1,805,576 (NSCB 2007) with 344,869 households. The average household size was 4.9--which is very close to the region's figure of 4.89 (NSO 2007). Iloilo Province recorded a young population with 71.68 % with ages ranging 0 - 49 years old.

The Province has a total land area of 466,342 hectares with a population density of 387 persons/sq. kilometer. It has 42 municipalities and 1 component city.

The economy of the province is agriculture-based. In its 2011-2016 Strategic Development Thrust and Priorities, the province envisions a "progressive, peaceful, ecologically balanced and vibrant Iloilo with a sustainable agri-aqua forest-based and tourism enterprises having adequate access to information, education, technology and other entrepreneurial opportunities where men and women equally share the benefits of development."

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

Baseline Studies on Local Enabling Environment for WEE

institutional mechanisms (both at the national and local levels) that promote and facilitate the growth of women micro enterprises. The Philippine Commission on Women was the lead implementing agency of the GREAT Women Project.

In 2009, a baseline study on the local enabling environment for the economic empowerment of women micro-entrepreneurs was conducted by the Central Philippine University. Findings of the study discussed the gender-responsiveness of the Local Government Unit in the area of gender mainstreaming for Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) and the local enabling environment from the perspective of the technical working groups (TWGs) and the Sangguniang Bayan (SBs). It also discussed the situation of the women micro entrepreneurs and women workers.

Baselines required the examination of the following LGU documents: (1) Socio-economic Profile (SEP) (2) Comprehensive Land-Use Plan (CLUP) (3) Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) (4) Annual Investment Plan (AIP) (5) Annual Budget and others. Study findings showed that:

- The SEPs of Badiangan, Miagao and Pavia had little or nothing to show of gender disaggregation of gender issues, economic sources and gender interventions other than sex-age distribution of the population and sex disaggregation of some demographic data making it difficult to determine gender disparity in socio-economic advantages, deprivations or needs.
- Only Pavia's CLUP included plans and strategies related to the welfare of women although these are not gender and development specific.
- Only Pavia included women's welfare and gender-specific concerns in its CDP, while the CDP of Miag-ao only includes gender disaggregated data with no bearing on GAD and WEE concerns.
- The ELA of Pavia showed information on gender-specific issues, gender disaggregated data, clarity on gender equality and women's welfare. Miagao's ELA also included some gender-related information on women's welfare but none on economic empowerment.

All LGUs across the target municipalities showed very high indications of competencies in gender mainstreaming. Majority of the members of the TWG and SB have an awareness of gender-related laws, policies, gender concepts and

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

principles and pointed out that they have successfully integrated gender equality in their programs and projects. However, technical working groups and local councils indicated that they did not have adequate training on enterprise development.

Baseline Results on Women Micro Entrepreneurs. Study finding also profiled women microentrepreneurs. Local women micro entrepreneurs were in their late forties, married and are highly educated. They recorded an average household size of four (4) members with 32 as the average age. They reported a generally high access to financial sources, such as microfinance institutions and banks. They contributed more than half of the household income. Since most of the women enterprise were owned and managed by women, they control decisions regarding the financial concerns of their business even when some of them were married.

Prior to GREAT Women, women microentrepreneurs indicated low awareness of entrepreneurial laws and policies and programs due to lack of access to information. Those who had prior information had been able to avail of government services and financial assistance, although limited services in nature, they expressed high level of satisfaction.

Different levels of gross incomes were recorded for each of the three pilot municipalities. The average monthly gross income across the three LGUs was P6000 and below. One-third of total WME respondents earned Php 2,000 or less, while one-fourth earned between the range of Php 10,000 - Php 40,000.

Meanwhile, microenterprise workers were usually female, in her late thirties and with college education. She lives within the proximity of the enterprise in which she works. She is paid and is not usually related to the woman entrepreneur. Generally, she worked for the enterprise for more than four years and more than likely to be assigned a service-oriented function. She received minimal social protection coverage.

Baseline Results on Women Workers on Women's Microenterprises. More than half of enterprises of women micro entrepreneurs operated with a business license. The remaining number of enterprises and entrepreneurs saw business registration an unnecessary requirement for their business which was seasonal in nature.

Most of the enterprises owned and managed by women based in their homes or located in close proximity to enable them to perform household functions. Most of the women's enterprises, even though they existed for many years, were operated only to

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

meet their family's basic needs. Microenterprises existing in the three study areas were mostly wholesale/retail trade with basic commodities and some non-food items as the main products. Some were engaged in manufacturing and processing.

The women's enterprise appeared to be major source of income for both the women micro entrepreneur's and women workers' households. The income derived from such enterprises was, on average, still below the poverty threshold. In more than half of these enterprises, the capital was used to supplement household expenditures. Microfinance institutions must find a way to provide entrepreneurs additional loan windows that are non-business to address this issue.



GREAT Women Project Implementation. The implementation of the GREAT Women Project (GWP) in Iloilo Province was guided by the work and financial plans (WFP) of the respective pilot LGUs. These work and financial plans were formulated by the members of the Technical Working Groups with the assistance of the Project Management Office of the GREAT Women Project in early 2009. Workplan implementation contributed to the attainment of targeted performance indicators in the project's Performance Measurement Framework (PMF).

First Work and Financial Plan Implementation. Initial capacity development activities conducted were focused on increasing the knowledge and skills of the LGU officials staff and employees including the members of the TWG on gender and development (GAD) and women's economic empowerment (WEE) by way of gender sensitivity trainings (GST++) with emphasis on local economic development (LED) through women's economic empowerment (WEE). The first work and financial plan of the LGUs consisted of trainings, seminars, writeshops, policy formulation activities, survey/mapping and support to TWG meetings.

The GSTs++ were reinforced by following trainings on gender analysis and preliminary meetings on formulation of gender-responsive plans such as the CDP/CLUP and policies specifically, the GAD Code. Capacity development was geared towards integrating GAD and WEE in the local plans and policies to institutionalize these in the LGU.

Series of women's consultation meetings and partners'/multi-stakeholders forum were conducted in each LGU geared towards the strengthening of mechanisms and partnerships to support GAD and WEE. Local women were able to articulate their concerns and needs in their enterprise for the LGU to plan to establish links with appropriate agencies for intervention.

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

Second Work and Financial Plan Implementation. Activities planned in the second WFP involved the expansion of capacity development activities to those who were not identified in the first year. The new participants included newly elective officials, department heads and technical staff handling project implementation. This resulted to an increased number of advocates and sympathizers of Gender and WEE.

Aside from roll-out of GST++ trainings to new participants, the second WFP focused on deepening the technical working groups' understanding of gender analysis concepts and utilization of gender analysis tools. These were very helpful in teaching project implementers how to incorporate gender and WEE in the projects and aided in the preparation of the local GAD plans and budgets.

After the inputs on GAD, WEE and gender analysis concepts and tools, the next set of activities zoomed in on enterprise development interventions. Enterprise development training and interventions were to provide the TWG and project implementers, the knowledge and skill in coaching and mentoring women's groups or individual WMEs on their business operations. Participants who were selected for these trainings were those involved on programs on agriculture development, cooperative development, enterprise/offices assisting WMEs and women's enterprise groups.

Around January 2011, the GWP PMO initiated a training on project development using Results-based Management. It aimed to capacitate selected TWGs in project development with a plan to download the capacity to the LGU and come up with projects for funding. Being committed to the project, the Iloilo group included it as one of the deliverables in the second WFP. The concepts, processes and tools were downloaded to the TWGs of all Iloilo LGUs with the hope that each LGU will formulate a gender-responsive proposal.

To reinforce the appreciation of TWGs on WEE, the second WFP included a learning visit to a GWP site with WEE structures and best practices in place. The learning visit aimed to impress upon the TWGs the outcome of women's economic empowerment if pursued within their respective LGUs. The trainings on GAD and WEE appealed only to the mind but the learning visit was perceived to be a different experience appealing to the heart as they touch base with women in enterprises who were enjoying the benefits of their income. The learning visit was conducted in June 2012 in Metro Naga Development Council, where the TWGs learned 'new ways of doing things.'

Alongside the implementation of the 2nd WFP, Iloilo Province provided seed fund for the construction of structures and mechanisms to sustain GAD and WEE.



Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

- In Badiangan, the LGU started the construction of the loomweaving production, with initial funds provided by the Province for the Loomweaving Production Center
- Pavia embarked on the construction of the Pavia Livelihood Training Center (PLTC)
- Miag-ao jumpstarted the operations of the Pasalubong Center, a display center and gift shop selling women's products.

There were activities in the second WFP that were either partially implemented or were not implemented at all due to conflicting schedules with the regular tasks of the TWG members. The GWP PMO allowed an extension of implementation from 6 months to one year to allow the LGUs to accomplish their deliverables. The extension granted to the LGUs gave them the opportunity to catch up with unfinished activities and outputs. Only the Iloilo Provincial Government and Pavia LGU were approved to implement a third workplan.

Third Work and Financial Plan Implementation. The bulk of activities in the third work and financial plan of the Iloilo Provincial Government were focused on institutionalizing Results-Based Management (RBM) as a planning and monitoring framework for the programs and services of the province, institutionalizing the Provincial Gender Unit, deepening the knowledge and skills of LGU business counselors on enterprise development and GREAT Women Project culminating activities.

A series of capacity development activities on RBM were conducted, this time for technical staff of all the offices of the provincial government. All the technical staff appreciated "the value of accounting for results and outcomes rather than outputs." Initial programs that were subjected to RBM were the programs implemented and funded by the 20% development fund of the Province. The creation of the Provincial GAD unit was also proposed. This is awaiting the approval of the governor upon the availability of vacant positions by January 2014.

The Gender and Enterprise Together Ahead module were rolled out to WMEs, through training by LGU and women business counselors.

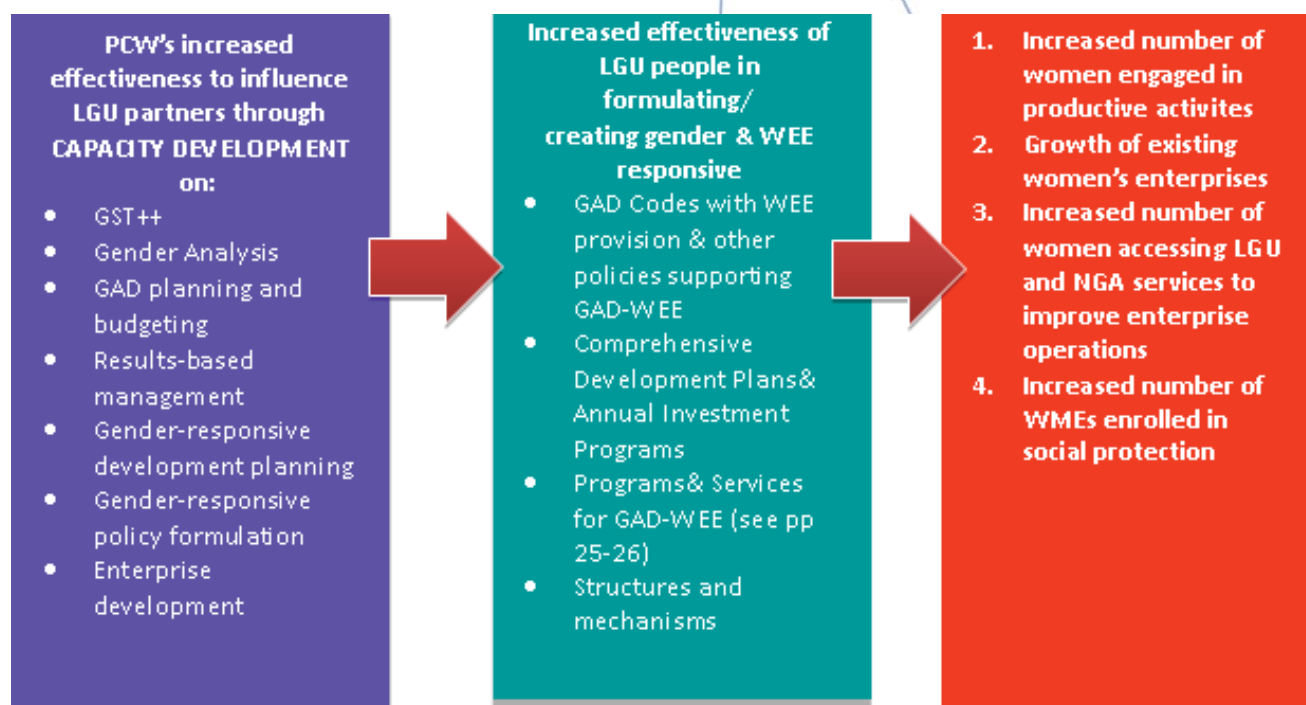
Pavia LGU, on the other hand, concentrated on the operationalization of the PLTC, institutionalizing RBM in a specific livelihood program of the LGU and creation of a brand for Pavia made products, specifically food delicacies. The PLTC was inaugurated in 2013 and currently serve as a functional center for women's livelihood trainings and a meeting venue for women's groups. Concurrently, a brand with matching logo for Pavia's food products was selected to be used for products which pass the quality standards set for food products of Pavia.

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

Results of Partnership with GREAT Women Project. Summarized below are the project results achieved by Iloilo partner LGUs within 2009-2013.

Capacity development. Capacity development activities were successful in pushing for gender responsive-governance among partner LGUs. The approach of PCW-GWP requiring every training to have re-entry or back home plans, roll-outs and echo sessions at the local area, challenged the TWG and participants to engage themselves fully in capacity development activities. Results of capacity development activities are shown in the results chain below:



- At the output level, Iloilo TWG members availed of the capacity development activities in the identified capacity development themes of the project i.e., gender sensitivity ++, gender analysis, GAD planning and budgeting, gender-responsive development-planning, local economic development, results-based management, enterprise development and monitoring and evaluation, among others
- *Results-based management* became an integral part in the good governance campaign of the Iloilo Provincial Governor for reform and transformation. Starting with the programs, projects and activities (PPAs) funded under the 20% development fund, the Provincial Planning and Development Office with the directive coming from the Governor started to utilize RBM and its tools for planning and monitoring of the said PPAs.

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

At the immediate outcome level, the 58 members of the Technical Working Groups have applied GAD and WEE concepts in their trainings as resource persons and facilitators, in planning sessions and policy formulation. Technical working group members of Badiangan utilized their knowledge and skills on GAD and WEE in the formulation of their Revenue Code. The Revised Revenue Code was approved and passed but this time with WEE provisions, e.g. exemption of WMEs to certain fees and dues to facilitate their business registration with the LGU. Similarly, the Iloilo Provincial Government made use of the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines to attribute the allocation of existing PPAs to the GAD Plan and Budget. In addition, Pavia and Miagao used the Gender Responsive LGU ka ba? tool for preparing their GAD plans.

The growing responsiveness of the LGUs also resulted to improved delivery of gender responsive policies, programs and services (P/P/S) to WMEs at the local project sites. The following were among the programs (some new and others already existing but given enhancements) which are currently being implemented by the LGUs for WMEs:

Iloilo Province

- Integrated Social Forestry livelihood training for upland farmers
- Iloilo Technology and Livelihood Development Center provision of equipment & Skills Training
- Livelihood training to farmers and fisherfolks
- KaLiPi, RIC, SEA-K, 4H Club (cap dev, technical assistance, financial assistance)
- SMED Foundation partnership programs (technology incubation center)
- Provincial Livelihood Project Fund for microfinance for associations
- Gender Sensitivity Trainings(GST) ++ to other LGUs
- Capacity Development to Municipal Planning Development Coordinators on Results-based Management, GST ++, GAD planning and budgeting

Pavia

- Pavia is Alive Program- capability building for farmers' association
- Swine dispersal program for the 4H Club
- Income Generating Program: capability building & Financial assistance for Rural Improvement Club (RIC) members
- Uswag Pangabuhian Project which extends financial & commodity assistance
- SEA-K for provision of Livelihood capital (KALIPI)
- Cosmetology & therapeutic massage (Healing Touch Therapy Center)

Badiangan

- Capacity Development and Livelihood Program
- SEA-K - provision of livelihood capital
- Product development program

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

Some of the programs stated above were either initiated by the LGUs themselves or in partnership with national government agencies (NGAs). Under the project, new partnerships had been forged. Convergence became a key word for this Project. Below are some of the partnerships that were made during the GWP life:

Iloilo Province

- Provision of livelihood assistance to cooperatives and associations in partnership with the Cooperative Development Authority and Provincial Cooperative Development Office
- Skills training for Out of School Youths with State Universities and Colleges, municipal LGUs as partners

Badiangan

- Provision of loom with skills training with Rotary Club of Iloilo-
- Fund for SEA-K Livelihood Project with DSWD
- Cosmetology & Loom weaving with DOLE
- Hilot Wellness Massage & Commercial Cooking with TESDA
- Business Development Trainings, Product Development with DTI

Miag-ao

- Fish Processing Technology, Equipment, Business Trainings and Product Packaging with UP-IFPT

Pavia

- Packaging & Labeling with DOST
- Therapeutic Massage with DTI
- Therapeutic Massage & Cosmetology Training with DOLE
- Culinary Course with TESDA and Iloilo Province
- Technology Marketing & Training with DA
- Accelerated Coco Vinegar Technology, Equipment and Materials with DOST and SMEDF
- Credit and Savings and Social Protection with PEMPC

Through the GREAT Women Project, the four (4) pilot LGUs' programs and services were able to reach approximately 1,138 women micro entrepreneurs majority of whom belong to a WME group. The assistance included attendance to trainings, either for awareness building, or new technologies and skills, and microfinance provided by the LGUs.

Sustaining project gains. Partner LGUs installed mechanisms that will ensure the sustainability of women's economic empowerment gains with the GREAT Women Project, herein discussed:

- *Technical advisers on GAD and WEE.* Almost all project sites including Iloilo Province have technical advisers in place to help in the advancement of women's economic

Applying and Sustaining Gender-Responsive Governance

Results of the Partnership Between the PCW-GREAT Women Project and Iloilo Partner Local Government Units

rights and gender-responsive governance. Technical advisers can assist other agencies, municipalities and barangays in mainstreaming gender and WEE in local governance.

- Growth of women business leaders at the local area started involvement in the advocacy of women's economic empowerment and leadership. Women business leaders could provide business ideas and encouragement to other women entrepreneurs.
- Gender and WEE related ordinances and resolutions were now in effect in the pilot LGUs, having the legal groundwork that would advance implementation of gender and WEE-responsive programs and services. Presence of programs integrated in the Annual Investment Plan would be implemented annually by the LGU in support to WEE.
- WEE structures were set in place. Infrastructure for WEE such as the Cabayogan Women Loom-weaving Center (production center), Miagao Pasalubong Center and Pavia Livelihood Technology Center-- were made functional and now benefit various women microentrepreneur groups.

About The Project

The Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project is a governance and capacity development project that aims to promote and support a gender-responsive enabling environment for women's economic empowerment, particularly those in microenterprises.

The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the national machinery for the advancement of women in the Philippines, is the lead executing agency for the Project.

The Commission forged partnership with key national government agencies involved in micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprise (MSME) development and select local government units to create a gender-responsive enabling environment for women's economic empowerment. This project receives technical and financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

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