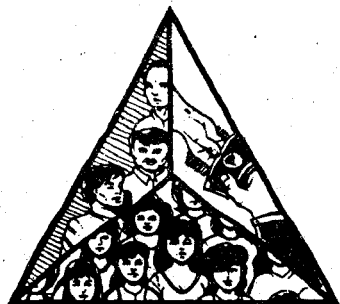


"Creation of NCRFW Project Groups"

FOR SEMINAR-WORKSHOP ONLY



project
group on
Women
&
PROSTITUTION



*framework:
prostitution from
a human rights
perspective*

No one should be subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. This is a fundamental tenet in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized by all people. Yet, it is routinely and often brazenly violated by the highly commercialized institution of prostitution, which victimizes the most vulnerable groups in society, mostly poor women and children.

Prostitution harms the prostituted, if not physically, emotionally and psychologically. No matter how they try to distance, disengage or dissociate their inner selves from the act of prostitution, the fact remains that their rights to personal integrity, dignity, and self-respect are negated in the process. They lose **the right to be human** in their own eyes and in the eyes of others.



It follows from this basic premise that **it is the right of all persons not to be prostituted**. No one should ever be violated, sexually exploited, or commodified. Thus, those who derive gratification, financial gain, or advancement from the prostitution of others should be considered human rights violators and prosecuted as such.

Those who have been prostituted have **the right to restitution and renewal**. Society owes them this as victims and survivors of a social evil which has been allowed to grow and thrive for so long within the prevailing economic, political, and cultural structures. It is society which needs rehabilitation, because it has driven its most vulnerable groups, through economic, physical and other forms of compulsion, into prostitution. It is society which has denied social protection to these groups. Consequently, their rights as hospitality industry workers to have the same entitlements, benefits, and privileges that other types of workers enjoy, and their rights to health, to be protected from diseases, and to have control of their reproductive functions through fertility management, are routinely denied or violated. The prostituted who have been harmed by social forces and influences beyond their control, deserve the best care that society can afford to give them. They must be able to fully enjoy the right to social protection and services, the right to a decent and remunerative livelihood, and the right to a self-enhancing lifestyle as they attempt to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives.

Far from being passive objects of charity, the prostituted can be active agents of their own empowerment. They can address the causes of their victimization collectively. They have **the right to participate in social transformation**, in the shaping and realization of alternative social structures and relations which will help eliminate prostitution in the long run.

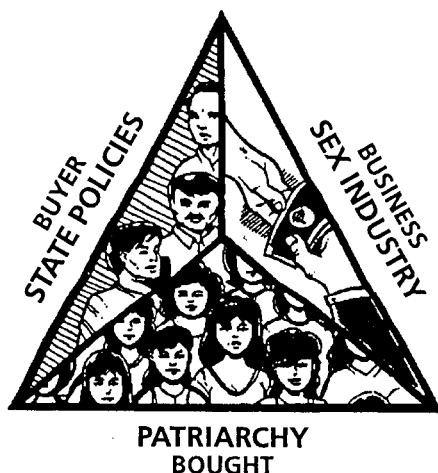
PROSTITUTION: THE BOUGHT, THE BUYER, AND THE BUSINESS

There are three major visible actors in prostitution: the bought, the buyer, and the business.

The onus of the trade is borne mainly by **the bought**, who are considered criminals under the law, and who are often painted as victimizers of innocent men and eventually as destroyers of homes. The bought are the focus of attention; they are seen as the problem to be solved, the sinners to be morally reformed.

More often than not, however, they were born into poverty and misery. Lack of education and skills, unemployment and underemployment, pushed them into prostitution. A significant number of them had earlier been victims of abduction, rape, incest, maltreatment, and other forms of violence and abuse.

What is seldom considered in the sexual transaction called prostitution is **the buyer**. While the supply consists most obviously of women, the demand comes mainly from men of different nationalities, including Filipinos of all classes, who serve as the clients or customers. Where there are military camps operating in a locality, prostitution arises. Where there are industrial estates or tourist spots being developed, there will always be male executives, workers, and visitors wanting to buy women's sexual services. Sexual transactions occur at sea in an anchored foreign or domestic ship, or at the shore with tourists or local fisherfolk. They take place in the strings of bars and watering holes lining red-light districts, in the pretentious health clubs such as sauna baths and massage parlors, in the "entertainment" establishments like disco-joints, sing-along pubs and restaurants, and even in dimly lit avenues and parks. (Vito Cruz, 1993). Brothels, more popularly known as *casas*, are often hidden from the public eye, being often engaged in white slavery. Suffice it to say that prostitution thrives in places frequented by men, and wherever they congregate in large numbers. Without the demand provided by men, prostitution will most likely cease to exist, and yet men are not considered, except by feminists, as the problem to be solved. The buyers are spared the onus of the trade, when they so clearly benefit from it through sexual gratification.



Prostitution is also a **business**, as obviously, there are those who derive financial gain from it. Among them are pimps, operators/maintainers of prostitution houses (local and foreign), tour operators (local and foreign), recruiters, and police officers/politicians. Establishments known to be involved in the prostitution industry include the following: bars, cocktail lounges, beer gardens, night clubs, sauna and health clinics, *casas*, cabarets, escort services, hotels, and special tourist agencies. Sexual transactions are extremely exploitative, with the pimps or establishment owners said to be reaping two-thirds or more of the earnings at the expense of the prostituted. (Vito Cruz, 1993).

BEHIND THE MARGINALIZATION AND SUBORDINATION OF THE PROSTITUTED

The bought, the buyer, and the business, are just the visible actors in the prostitution triangle. Behind this triangle, however, are a host of economic, political, and cultural structures and policies which together result in the marginalization and subordination of the prostituted.

Economic Factors

These are quite obvious, not only on the side of the sex workers but also of all other actors in the sex industry. All the studies so far done on and with prostituted women (Moselina, 1988; Wihtol, 1981; GABRIELA, 1987; De Dios, 1991; Miralao, Santos, and Carlos, 1990; BUKLOD, 1992; Ofreneo and Ofreneo, 1993), all show a pattern of poverty, unemployment, underemployment and inadequate income as "push factors" which drive women into the trade. These intermesh with facilitative factors such as active recruitment, and sometimes, deception, abduction and "conditioning rape" by agents serving the sex industry. There is a lot of migration from rural areas to cities, and from cities to foreign shores, as women search for better economic opportunities or are deceived/coerced into sexual slavery. The series of natural calamities suffered by the Philippines in recent years resulting in a massive loss of land, property, and jobs, are undoubtedly an aggravating factor. "Pull factors" include the relatively higher income at a shorter time offered by prostitution.

On the side of the pimps, establishment owners, tour operators and others benefiting from the sex industry, the profit motive is the clearest incentive. Prospects for profit are based on the

obviously strong demand for sexual services coming from a predominantly male clientele. Business goes where it can earn, and if the size of the sex sector is any indicator (one estimate is from P400,000 to P500,000), then business must be booming. Here the transnationalization or internationalization of the industry is certainly an important factor, because foreign tourists and businessmen are now the most attractive customers after the departure of the American soldiers and the consequent downturn in military prostitution.

These "push" and "pull" factors may be better understood within the backdrop of broad macro-economic policies and trends. **The labor-intensive, export-oriented, and debt-dependent Philippine development strategy** pursued in the last two decades under the aegis of the IMF, World Bank and other foreign financial and economic interests has failed to sustain the industrial development of the country, and meet the basic needs of the people. This strategy is anchored on attraction of foreign investments, often at the expense of local ones; concentration on the production of labor-intensive commodities such as garments, electronics, and handicraft for the export market while neglecting the establishment of basic industries; reliance on more and more foreign borrowings, which led the country into a costly debt trap; and an all-out drive to earn more and more dollars to pay the debt through the export of labor power and emphasis on tourism.

In order to borrow new money to pay Philippine loans, the government has acquiesced to a structural adjustment of the economy as prescribed by the IMF and the World Bank. **Structural adjustment programs** include tightened government spending, which means less money for economic development as well as social programs and services; increased taxation, cutting of subsidies, and currency devaluation, leading to higher prices of basic commodities, making these increasingly unaffordable to the poor; import liberalization and privatization resulting in the entry of foreign goods and entities, driving Filipino industries and products out of competition, and workers out of their jobs; and export-oriented, dollar-earning strategies which have increasingly led to the sale of women's bodies.

Such a pattern of **maldevelopment**, instead of propelling the Philippines to the promised status of a newly industrializing country (NIC) has instead resulted in **massive poverty** (conservatively estimated as affecting at least half the population), **unemployment** (ranging from 8.1 per cent to 14 per cent in the period 1990-92) and **underemployment** (ranging from 19.9 t

23.2 per cent in the same period), **rural to urban as well as international migration**, which are the factors associated with the prostitution of disadvantaged women with very limited economic options.

The very nature of the tourism industry invites prostitution. (PDPW). **Prostitution tourism**, which has the sale of women's and children's bodies as its principal come-on, is a continuing phenomenon but leads a semi-underground existence with police and military protection. The "package deal" is very much alive, a result of the "interlocking interests between air carriers, tour operators, and hotel companies which led to the formation of a new type of conglomerate specializing in the production of packages of services in tourism and trade." (de Dios, 1991:3-4).

Also as a result of the **internationalization of the sex industry,**" and the participation of foreign-based crime syndicates such as the **Yakuza** in sex trafficking, women exported to Japan and elsewhere as "entertainers," "mail-order brides," and "domestic helpers" actually end up doing sex work in their places of destination.

Internationalized prostitution therefore may be considered a result of the operations of the **new international division of labor(NIDL) interacting with the gender division of labor (GDL)**. Under the NIDL, the role of the less developed countries of the South is to supply the advanced industrial countries of the North with cheap labor. Such labor is needed not only by the low-technology and labor-intensive industries the North has been phasing out and relocating in the South through overseas investments, but also by manual and service-sector industries in the North as poor countries of the South like the Philippines provide cheap commodities and workers for utilization in the rich countries of the North, including the entertainment industry.

The NIDL needs to be seen in relation to the gender division of labor (GDL), wherein women occupy low-skilled, low-paying, and low-status jobs in a gender-segregated labor market in both North and South. They are therefore disadvantaged in relation not only to workers in advanced countries but also to men in both the receiving and sending countries. With the trend towards feminization of migration in the Philippines, more and more Filipino women are working abroad mostly as domestic helpers, chambermaids, waitresses, and entertainers. In these various capacities, many of them serve the needs of the men in the North, sexually and otherwise.

Political Factors

History has shown that **imperialism, militarism, and racism** have always resulted in the sexual subjugation and exploitation of colonized women, providing the "geopolitical-economic" context of military prostitution and sex tourism (Perpinan, 1982; Sturdevant and Stoltzfus, 1992). Colonial and racist attitudes continue to be cultivated on both the demand and supply sides of the prostitution relationship: a lot of men from the North receive images, often pornographic, of the exotic, lusty but pliant women of the flesh spots of the South, which often reduce the latter to "little brown fucking machines" in their eyes, while many of the women who serve them as such are taken in or sustained by the "mystique" of white men, their economic prowess, the prospect of "rescue" and a new and better life abroad, and the increased status of those who attach themselves to Caucasian males and raise mestizo offspring with them.

In the Philippines, military prostitution around **the US bases** had for decades served as a painful reminder of how imperialism, militarism, racism, and sexism reinforced each other in the sexual exploitation and degradation of Filipino women. Although a much welcome development, the closure of the **US bases** has not led to the elimination of prostitution in former base areas because of non-implementation of alternative employment programs (such as that done by WEDPRO) for the prostituted in these areas. The sex sector in these areas continues to exist, if not flourish, with clientele now consisting mostly of foreign businessmen and managers, tourists, and local men. Furthermore, US servicemen are still serviced by prostituted Filipino women when their ships are permitted to dock in Philippine territory.

Internal political factors also come into the picture. **Militarization and hamletting** to counter local insurgency have led to displacement of whole communities and migration of women to prostitution centers. As explained in the previous section on economic factors, the state's **broad development plans and policies** anchored on structural adjustment and built on the promotion of tourism and the export of female labor and bodies have facilitated the massive growth of internationalized prostitution, leading some analysts to conclude that the state has effectively served as pimp. (de Dios, 1991).

There are **laws, ordinances, and policies** which promote, legitimize and regulate prostitution, and yet criminalize the prostituted. The state has always taken an ambivalent attitude to-

wards the sex sector. On the one hand, it outlaws prostitution and its legal statutes. The prostituted woman is considered the criminal in a crime committed against her person. Article 202 of the Revised Penal Code defines prostitution as "the habitual indulgence in sexual intercourse or the lascivious conduct of women for money or profit." By this definition, prostitution applies only to women. The provision is silent with regard to the pimps, bar operators, clients, and others who are involved. (PDPW).

On the other hand, the state allows and even licenses, through local city and municipal ordinances, the operations of beer joints, massage parlors, and other establishments known to be fronts of prostitution. It requires "hospitality girls" and massage attendants, again through local ordinances, to submit themselves regularly to medical examinations for the detection of sexually transmitted diseases, in exchange for which they get colored cards guaranteeing they are safe for their customers. This is explained as a practical measure in recognition of the fact that though the state is officially for the eradication of prostitution, it has to act to help reduce health risks to people still involved in the sex industry. In the case of women wishing to work as "entertainers" abroad, government even serves as a screening mechanism for accrediting them. Although it is clearly not public policy to send women to be prostituted overseas, the lack of an effective mechanism to protect Filipina entertainers from a web of international prostitution syndicates and sex traffickers tends to give this impression.

It is in the shadow of such ambivalent laws and policies that **corrupt peace officers and notorious characters** preying on prostituted persons thrive. Harsh and intermittent measures such as bar closures after highly publicized raids which punish the women but oftentimes let the male operators and customers scot-free reinforce the government's ambivalent posture. Worse, they make the women vulnerable to stigmatization through media sensationalism, and to sexual harassment by policemen while they are in detention.

The state, although it is mandated to do so under the Labor Code, does not provide adequate protection to workers in the hospitality industry. They do not receive legislated wages and benefits. Self-organization as a right still has to be realized among them. (Vito Cruz, 1993). Such a situation does not leave these workers any choice but to engage in sexual transactions in order to survive.

The present system of **mandatory medical check-ups** as posed by local ordinances is discriminatory and oppressive to prostituted women because it is meant not to protect their health but that of their customers. The underlying assumption is that it is alright for them to get infected by customers who do not have to prove they are "clean" provided the infection is detected immediately and is not transferred to subsequent customers.

Furthermore, the state does not provide adequate health care and protection to prostituted persons who are easy victims of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV-AIDS. Apart from these infections, they are also vulnerable to batterers, rapists, and sexual perverts. To numb themselves to their misery, many of them become drug addicts and alcoholics. (Vito Cruz, 1993). [Due to a lack of information on and access to contraceptive devices, many of them have unwanted pregnancies and illegal, often life-threatening abortions.]

There are no **specific livelihood, credit, educational and other support services** provided by the state for prostituted persons employed in the sex industry, for those ready to leave, and those who have already left the trade. (PDPW). Furthermore, lack of coordination among the agencies involved in the solution of the prostitution problem has resulted in the overlap of areas covered and wastage of human and financial resources. Lack of GO-N collaboration and of a clear-cut distribution of roles among concerned agencies also hamper the initial implementation of stated goals [to address the problem.] (PDPW)

Cultural Factors

The principal factor here is **patriarchy** or male dominance which shapes **gender roles** in society in favor of men. Patriarchal manifestations and implications also extend to the economic and political spheres.

The **culture of prostitution** rests on a patriarchal base. Philippine society, most women are shaped by family, church, and school to be dutiful daughters, virginal girlfriends, devoted wives and sacrificing mothers. Many prostituted women cite the need to repay their "debt of gratitude" to their parents and support their natal and/or conjugal families as a major reason why they enter and stay in the trade. (Calalang:1985, 17). The **premium placed on virginity** and the sense of unworthiness which accompanies its loss have led many women deflowered by their lovers or even by their relatives (in cases of incest) to go into prostitution.

tion, thinking this is what they deserve anyway. (Calalang: 1985, 17).

The **double standard of morality**, on the other hand, does not require men to be virgins before they get married. Many of them have their sexual initiation with prostituted women, from whom they get subsequent relief and experience. When they get married, many do not feel morally compelled to be absolutely faithful to their wives; hence, they are quite likely to buy the sexual services of prostituted women. A lot of Filipino men, therefore, tend to have two images of women: **madonna and whore**, virgin and vamp, "good girl" to marry, and "bad girl" to bed. This explains why there is such a strong local demand for prostitution, and this includes men of all classes.

The culture of prostitution is highlighted by the **images of women in media**. These have tended towards more sexual objectification and gender violence, as pornographic and semi-pornographic materials make their appearance even in mass-circulation tabloids and magazines. Pornography, of course, has the effect of titillating the sexual appetites of men towards sampling real women. It also instills distorted notions of sexuality at the expense of the objectified and the commodified, usually women and children of color.

The culture of prostitution exists simultaneously with the **prostitution of culture**, as patriarchal gender construction occurs in the general context of a Western-oriented **consumerism** suffused with sexism and violence. Many women learn to fit into the mold of sexual attractiveness and to capitalize on their sexuality to gain material success and personal happiness. Many men as well as women imbibe misogynist views from media, advertising, and product promotions, which portray females as mindless consumers, sex objects, or flawed and inferior beings who deserve to be violated and abused.

The **materialism** which has infected even the rural villages cannot also be discounted. Many Filipino families dazzled by the appliances and electronic gadgetry brought home by overseas workers prod their daughters to take their chances abroad, even if they risk having to sell their bodies. ■

objective. and strategies.

Because prostitution in the Philippines is the result of a web of economic, political, and socio-cultural factors, it can only be addressed in an integrated way. Poverty, unemployment, low income, foreign exploitation, misguided government priorities, and a well-entrenched sexism all interact to provide the supply and the demand in the sex sector.

An integrated approach to prostitution has as its broad objective the recognition and protection of human rights particularly those they apply to those involved in or victimized by the sex sector: the right to be human; the right not to be prostituted; the right to restitution and renewal and the right to participation in social transformation. Most of the prostituted women in Philippine setting are clear victims of social inequities. To blame them for their present state and to treat them as criminals only add to their victimization by police, pimps, and others who take advantage of their vulnerable situation.

The rights of those who are still in the hospitality industry need specific protection. Among these rights are their rights as workers to have the same entitlements, benefits and privileges that other types of workers enjoy (so they need not engage in sexual transactions in order to survive); their rights as women, not to be subjected to sexual violence and abuse; and, their rights to health, to be protected from diseases, especially the life-threatening ones and to have control of their reproductive function through fertility management.

The approach can be broadly categorized under three major strategies: Policy advocacy (including legal reform and the research needed to push this forward); education and information

campaigns directed at various publics (prostitutes, other actors in the sex sector, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, schools, etc.) and direct services to assist prostituted women in the areas of health, legal aid, counselling and crisis intervention, training, livelihood, organizing, national and international networking, etc.

POLICY ADVOCACY AND LEGAL REFORM

This should start with the **decriminalization of the prostituted**. The desired effect of such legislation is that "women and children should no longer be arrested or fined like criminals." (ESCAP, 1991:57). Decriminalization of the prostituted should go hand in hand with the apprehension and prosecution of agents, recruiters, traffickers, pimps, procurers, establishment owners, customers and others who derive sexual gratification, financial gain and advancement, or any other benefit from the prostitution of others.

In the **Philippine Development Plan for Women 1989-1992**, "decriminalization means the abolition of sexist discrimination in general and removing the culpability and criminality which the law places specifically on women prostitutes." It will entail "repealing all articles in the Revised Penal Code and the Child and Youth Welfare Code that refer to prostitutes as criminal offenders. Local ordinances should also not further victimize prostitutes." (Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989:146).

Since Art. 202 of the Revised Penal Code is on vagrants and prostitutes, and many prostituted women are arrested on charges of vagrancy, the whole of the article, not just Sec. 5 (specifically dealing with prostitutes), should be repealed.

Together with the repeal of Art. 202, strengthening of Art. 341 of the Revised Penal Code against "white slavery" (which should be called something else to remove the racist connotations of the phrase) is also recommended. This is in line with the assumption that prostituted persons are victims and those who victimize them should be penalized.

Furthermore, there should be social laws to provide restitution and renewal programs for an alternative lifestyle and livelihood for those in prostitution. Thus, prostituted persons who are rescued or found in compromising situations with clients, pimps, or others connected with the sex industry, may have the option

of renewing their lives. Programs which have already been planned, such as the WEDPRO program for the prostituted in the former base areas, should be immediately implemented.

Other "programs directed towards decriminalization of prostitutes" include:

- Conducting regular dialogues with policymakers and support groups.
- Assigning women lawyer groups to further study the laws on prostitution to define it and to provide for stiffer penalties for white slavery.
- Designing and initiating feminist consciousness-raising training programs for law enforcers, prosecutors and members of the judiciary.
- Providing prostitutes with free legal services.
- Educating women in the hospitality industry in respect to their right to file charges for rape, physical injuries and sexual abuses.
- Organizing women employed in the hospitality industry.
- Popularizing and implementing the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of others, and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, of which the Philippines was a signatory in 1952 and 1981, respectively.(Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989:146-147).

Once prostitutes are no longer treated as criminals, then there should be no impediment in **the recognition, protection and assertion of the rights of workers in the hospitality industry**. Article 138 of the Labor Code which guarantees the same rights to hospitality workers as those enjoyed by other workers should be implemented. DOLE should have specific programs to ensure such implementation.

In connection with asserting the **health rights** of workers in the hospitality industry, the responsibility of preventing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, specifically AIDS, should be evenly borne by all high-risk groups (sex workers, overseas contract

workers, homosexuals, etc.), those who exercise power over them (e.g. employers in the hospitality industry), those who use their services (male and gay clients), and others with whom they have sex (husbands, wives, lovers).

As regards macro-economic policies, there should be a **critical review of existing tourism programs, and export of labor programs**. There should be "strict enforcement and monitoring of the provisions of the law against prostitution and the trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution at national and international levels by establishing national and international networks and by creating task forces." (Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989:145).

Similarly **the debt policy should be revised** so that more of the country's resources can go into economic and social development, rather than interest payments. Agrarian reform and other structural changes need to be instituted to stem urban to rural migration. Basic industries oriented to the needs of the people have to be set up within the context of sustainable, self-reliant development. Widespread gender discrimination in the work place has to be addressed to ensure more equitable remuneration and working conditions for women. All these are easier said than done but over the long haul, they are the prerequisites to the solution of the prostitution problem.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The Philippine Development Plan for Women recommends more effort along the following lines:

Intensified public IEC campaigns with focus on:

- a. exposing the racism and sexism of tourism, militarism and sex trafficking;
- b. feminist consciousness-raising on the issue of prostitution;
- c. demythifying virginity, romantic love and marriage, and female "beauty";
- d. identifying procurers so that women, especially from the rural areas, would not fall prey to them.

Campaign against sexism in media and sensationalism in the treatment of sexuality and pornography in any form it employs: radio, song, print media, shows, films, and others.

Changing the public's image of women by giving children moral and civic education in school, which includes mutual respect between women and men and preparing them for sharing family responsibilities. (Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989: 144-145).

DIRECT SERVICES

More of these need to be set up to aid in the empowerment of the prostituted, to assist them in organizing, advocacy, skills training, alternative livelihood, counselling, health care, alternative livelihood, legal work, and networking nationally and internationally. Ideally, women prostitutes should be "given the responsibility to design and implement programs for themselves" and provided the resources to renew and empower themselves. Such resources should include "financial resources for women in economic difficulties so as to prevent re-entry into prostitution." (Philippine Development Plan for Women, 1989:147).

Direct services to the prostituted can be enhanced under the following conditions:

1. Improvement of the data base and information network by developing data-gathering strategies and techniques that can be used in preparing comprehensive, factual and relevant analyses and reports on the issues for program planners and policymakers;
2. Ensuring the complementarity and maximum effectiveness of services by continuously exploring areas of cooperation and coordination among various groups, governmental, and non-governmental, involved in the issue of prostitution;
3. Deepening and expanding the positive experiences gained from programs and projects implemented by various groups to arrest the problem; and
4. Improving international linkages/measures to combat prostitution.

The last deserves to be underscored, given the global trend in the last few years highlighting gender violence as a human rights issue, and focusing on sexual exploitation, particularly prostitution, as an urgent matter to be addressed. The gains of the international feminist movement in foregrounding violence against women, including prostitution, in the global human rights discourse cannot be overestimated. Interactions with feminist groups abroad who are involved in the prostitution issue have helped immensely in the clarification of perspectives and strategies in the Philippine setting. Networking with them on a continuous basis will surely lead to more positive results. ■

policy recommendations

The following recommendations for various concerned government agencies were reached after a study of the levels of intervention of each identified government institution on the problem of prostitution. (Refer to Annex A for the Organizational Chart and Annex B for the Summary Matrix of GO Levels of Intervention.) Based on the study, there are no operative linkages among the concerned government agencies which can cooperatively respond to the issue in the most wholistic manner. Hence, the foregoing recommendations are directed to the specific agencies.

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE ROLE OF FILIPINO WOMEN (NCRFW)

1. Initiate the sharing of information with other government agencies in addressing the problem of prostitution.
2. Integrate the various approaches of the identified government agencies - their programs and plans.
3. Prepare and disseminate a regular update of the compliance report of these agencies.
4. Develop a data base on prostitution.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG)

1. Review of all existing ordinances at the local level
2. Coordinate local government efforts in enacting ordinances addressing the issues/problems of prostitution (i.e. Manila Ordinance).
3. Create a center in each municipality catering to the welfare of women.

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM (DOT)

1. Review of tourism projects and their impact on women.
2. Monitor the sex tours.
3. Assess the promotional materials.
4. Repeal P.D. 152, which includes sauna baths and massage parlors as come-ons for tourists.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH)

1. More respectful and humane treatment for the prostituted women; HIV/AIDS victims.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE)

1. Have a special program for those who are trafficked nationally and internationally.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD)

1. Have a separate program for prostituted women and girls.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ)

1. Assess and update responsiveness of existing legal system to the various forms of violence against women by:
 - a) repealing all articles in the Revised Penal Code and the Child and Youth Welfare Code and local ordinances that refer to prostitutes as criminal offenders;
 - b) assigning women lawyer groups to study the laws on prostitution, to define it and provide for stiffer penalties for its perpetrators;
 - c) initiating bilateral relations to address the problems of migrants and the trafficking of Third World Women;
 - d) popularizing and implementing the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of Others, and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; and
 - e) organizing regular dialogues with policy-makers and support programs.

**DEPARTMENT OF TRADE
AND INDUSTRY (DTI)**

1. Provide skills training, seminars on entrepreneurship, marketing assistance, support for alternative livelihood.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CULTURE AND SPORTS (DECS)**

1. Consciousness raising.
2. Creation of modules for the prostituted women.

**CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
(SENATE AND HOUSE)**

1. Propose new bills that will really address/solve the problem of prostitution.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (CHR)

1. Popularize the theme, "Women's Rights are Human Rights".
2. Establish regional centers for women's rights.

*project
group on*

**VIOLENCE
AGAINST**

W *omen*



framework and policy recommendations

INTRODUCTION

The problem of violence against women has only been recently recognized as a crime and a major obstacle to equality, development and peace. Violence against women is a violation of women's rights and therefore a violation of human rights. The existence of this aberration is, in effect, a systematic denial of a fundamental human right to over half of the world's population, irrespective of the type of political and legal system under which women live. A woman's right to be free from danger and fear for her personal safety within the home, the workplace and society is the toughest battle women wage today and in the years to come.

Definition

Violence against women refers to all forms of violence inflicted upon women on account of her gender. It is also referred to as gender violence. Violence against women includes physical, psychological, emotional, verbal and sexual abuse. Its magnitude covers the relationship of men and women to a systematic and widespread abuse.

Forms

This bent towards brutality in women is manifested in different forms : rape, incest, sexual harassment, wife-assault, pornography and prostitution. The essential element of all these, however, is the use of force and intimidation.

Sites

Violence against women occurs virtually anywhere, from the domestic front to the workplace and society as a whole.

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In the home, violence takes on various forms. It can consist of physical violence or aggressive behavior such as punching, kicking, hitting, clubbing or even throwing acid or boiling water over

the woman. It can also manifest itself insidiously and with sophistication as in psychological and mental violence. At this level, violence includes constant verbal abuse, harassment, deprivation of economic resources and isolation from family and friends.

If women are abused within the sanctity of their own homes as well as by those with whom they have intimate relationships, then it is obvious that they are likewise vulnerable to those who are strangers to them. Sexual harassment in the workplace affects millions of women around the world regardless of their profession. It ranges from mildly distasteful sexist comments and jokes, pornographic pin-up posters, unwanted and unnecessary physical contact to outright assault and rape in extreme cases. In a male dominated workplace, sexual favors often remain the determinants of a woman's career rather than merit or hard work. Women's dignity is thus more often than not denied rather than respected.

Women are likewise prime candidates as victims of violence in society. It has been said that not all men are potential rapists, but all women are potential victims. Thus, few women walk the streets at night without the abominable fear for their own safety. A decade ago, the level of violence against women was already estimated by police authorities in that for every one rape reported, ten more were unreported. This could already be a conservative estimate. Recent statistics in the Philippines, as well as in other countries, indicate that crimes against women are continuously on the rise. Yet, given this reality, sexual assault accounts for the single most unreported crime not only in the country but in most societies as well.

Victims and Perpetrators

All women are potential victims of violence and generally, the perpetrators are males, be they relatives, intimate partners or strangers. Though some may argue that violence occurs even in lesbian relationships, figures and evidences indicate that these incidents pale in comparison to those committed by male perpetrators.

Effects on Victims: Violence against women has both short term and long term effects on the individual woman, her children and society, in general. Such a conduct frequently results in physical injury and, at times, death.

When inflicted on a regular basis, it causes incalculable suffering and deep scars on the victims, the victim's family and society as a whole. Women's physical and mental health is often permanently damaged or impaired. Victims likewise blame themselves for the incident and are usually trapped in a cycle of fear, affecting her personal relationship with herself and other people as well.

Popular Myths and Perceptions

Several factors account for the misunderstanding of the issue of violence against women. There is the view that perpetrators are usually drunk, under the influence of drugs, and/or mentally deranged. In addition, there too is the sexist excuse that they are only males and, therefore, vulnerable to the charms of women. Aggravating this is the view that victims usually had it coming to them, as no decent woman will ever be victimized under such circumstances.

Roots of Violence Against Women

The problem is a reflection of the sexual and economic inequality of women in society. It is also an affirmation of a particular social order that does not strongly recognize women's valuable contribution in the realm of socio-cultural development.

It thus arises out of structural inequality and will continue to exist as long as men are regarded as more important than woman. Such inequality condones and even encourages violence against women as it becomes crystallized in societal and cultural norms.

Role of Social Institutions

As structural inequalities are reflected in existing socio-cultural practices and norms, it is not surprising to note that social institutions, likewise, reflect this inequality. Violence against women thus permeates through social structures which in turn, reinforces the problem. The socio-cultural factors which reproduce violence against women are rooted in the basic social institutions of Philippine society.

1. **Family** - It is indeed tragic that for most abused women, violence begins at home with husbands, fathers, brothers

and uncles. The widely accepted concept of the sanctity of the privacy within the family and the distorted notion that males reign in the conjugal sphere contribute to the problem. Harmony must be maintained at all costs and interventions whether by society or an individual is taken as a threat. As women take on a subordinate role to the male members, violence is tacitly condoned within the familial spheres as a solution to frustrations and conflict.

2. **Education** - This social institution, likewise, reinforces the concept of the subordination of women in society. In curricula, subjects emphasizing leadership roles are given to males, while the traditional roles are allotted for women. Courses thus reflect the reproductive and subordinate role of women in society.
3. **Church** - That the church has contributed to the subordinate view of women is attributed to its patriarchal character. The church is a male dominated institution and consequently church teachings reflect this dominance. Its silence on the issue of violence, however, can be explained on the lack of theological and ethical clarity on the subject.
4. **Media** - While recognized as a powerful instrument to change the image of women, media remains the same powerful tool that perpetuates the negative image of women. Films depict women either as virgins or vamps. Rape scenes are included, if possible, in horrifying detail, not so much for educational purposes but more for entertainment and profit. Pictures of scantily-clad women or semi-nude women have become centerpieces of tabloids to the delight of male voyeurs. Media contributes to a cultural climate that is more accepting of aggression towards women by reinforcing the ideologies of masculinity and femininity -- is portrayed as naturally aggressive and women are the natural targets of this aggressive behavior.
5. **State** - There are enough national laws that ensure equality of women with men in all aspects of life (Constitution, RA 7192, etc.) However, there are still a lot of things to be done for the effective implementation of these laws. Philippine law discriminates women as seen in the inadequate legal protection for women victims of violence. Justice for crimes against women is slow pre-

cisely because of the absence of laws, or worse, the non-implementation of already existing laws. Rape is still considered as a crime against chastity. Sexual harassment has yet to be defined and there are no clear laws on incest and wife assault. This is, in turn, makes them helpless before their perpetrators and society as a whole.

RESPONSES TO THE ISSUE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

With the recognition and acceptance that violence against women is a serious issue, this sense of urgency must be addressed accordingly.

Considered as a pioneering effort in this area is the Women's Crisis Center. Established in 1989, it initially served victims of military rape but subsequently expanded its services to include all women victims of violence. It offers a broad range of crisis intervention services (feminist counseling, stress and tension reduction therapy, medical and legal advocacy service, temporary shelter and a survivor's support group). A training and education program as well as research and documentation are likewise being undertaken by the center. The WCC has trained and shared their wealth of experience with many women's groups all over the country who have also, in turn, formed and developed specific areas of concern. KALAKASAN balances direct services of hotline counselling, accompaniment and referral services with its public information and consciousness raising component which includes sustained media advocacy in radio, television and print media as well as a library for researchers on domestic violence. KANLUNGAN assists female migrant workers who were not only victims of illegal recruitment but suffered direct physical violations from their employers as well. Professionals have likewise contributed their skills and knowledge in the area. Fortunately, there are psychiatrists, psychologists, lawyers, and para-legals who volunteer their time to counsel women victims of violence. There, too, is LIHOK PILIPINA, a women's organization based in Cebu that offers counseling and temporary shelter for abused women. The network of organizations responding to the issue is increasing though the services they offer are varied. Others chose to concentrate their efforts at advocacy, like the GABRIELA Commission on Violence Against Women, and congressional lobbying from the network of women's groups

known as SIBOL. The Women's Legal Bureau, on the other hand, provides both legal services to women as well as research into existing laws affecting women. BUKLOD focuses its efforts on white slavery and prostitution.

It is the non-government organizations who are taking the lead in addressing the issues of violence against women. With their wealth of experience in the field of direct services to survivors of violence, as well as advocacy for raising awareness on the issues of violence against women, women's organizations deeply involved in the issues cite the following which need serious and immediate attention:

- violence against women is viewed more as an individual problem rather than a societal ill;
- existing socio-cultural norms, as well as legal procedures and policies, compound the situation as these are not adequate to meet specific needs of women victims;
- there exists a big gap in the provision of professional medical intervention services for women victims of violence;
- inadequate training for persons in the medical and legal professions on the proper attitude, knowledge and skills in handling violence against women cases; and,
- the limitations of material resources of non-government organizations.

Insofar as governmental responses are concerned, it has generally been remiss over the issues. Consequently, proper approaches to the problem are wanting. However, the issue was formally recognized when it was included as one of the major concerns of women in the Philippine Development Plan for Women. Though presented for the first time in a government document, the recommendations contained therein have yet to be fully acted upon.

PLAN OF ACTION

Women's groups have started to seriously advocate for legislative reforms and greater support services for survivors of violence. Even the Philippine Government, through the NCRFW, has recog-

nized the gravity of the situation such that the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW) has addressed the need for policy intervention and the establishment of support mechanisms for victims of violence against women. There is an urgent need to press for the implementation, follow-up and continuous monitoring of the very specific recommendations already incorporated in the document which was put together almost 5 years ago. These recommendations, which span the range of documentation, monitoring, and the setting up of support services, are already very well spelled out in the PDPW.

The need for more intervention mechanisms and direct services is constrained by the mantle of negative attitudes about women. Relevant response must crucially begin with the development of attitudes and values towards women: among the public, among policy makers and among implementors themselves. Policy on the negative portrayal of women in media and advertising should be addressed as these reinforce parallel negative attitudes towards women which, in turn, reproduce the socio-cultural environment of violence against women. As violence against women is a product of women's inferior status as opposed to men, the eradication of this violence will only occur if steps are taken to guarantee the equality of women in all spheres of life.

As NGOs and independent women's groups have initiated and sustained responses to the issues, despite limited material resources, many lessons from their creative, resourceful and workable approaches should be replicated on a wider scale. An assessment of many of these programs have shown that:

1. they are able to respond to identified needs of women victims;
2. they have high potential of mobilizing local level action and community participation; and,
3. the program's dynamism allows adjustment to changing conditions.

It is recommended that the value of NGO efforts be recognized through formal arrangements which would link up the networks of independent women's groups with the interdisciplinary network of services of the government, i.e. hospitals, the judiciary, the police. The experience of other countries in this matter of institutionalization proves that these linkages would redound in better delivery of services to women.

The political will of the government to recognize the efforts of existing women's groups should be translated into concrete action as budgetary outlay for programs of non-government organizations. These programs have to be shouldered and/or subsidized by government.

- establishment of hospital based crisis centers and its incorporation into the public health care delivery system;
- development of educational curricula especially in the medical and law schools so as to promote the professionalization of medical and legal services in the area;
- training programmes on the dynamics of violence against women for judiciary, health and social service personnel, as well as law enforcers to ensure humane treatment of victim;
- amendments to existing laws pertinent to the issues as well as the enactment of legislative measures defining violence against women;
- provision of temporary shelters at the local government level;
- accreditation of the proposed crisis centers to undertake medico-legal examinations of women victims of violence;
- establishment of a systematic monitoring system on the incidence of violence against women and the implementation of a gender-dissegregated data collection system down to the barangay level all the way to the National Statistics Office;
- fostering and encouraging positive images of women in the media focusing on their quality and worth;
- provision of governmental services (legal, social and health) for women victims of violence;
- adoption of measures and standards to ensure the dignity of women in the workplace; and,
- community and public education campaigns to raise consciousness on the issues.

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project
group on
Women
&
MEDIA



*a framework
for analysis
of women
and media*

REFERENCE ONE:

**Robin Morgan,
The Word of a Woman**

• " ... Pornography has gone mainstream: one out of eight
• Hollywood movies depicts a violent rape theme; by age
• eighteen, the average (American) youth has watched 250,000
• such acts of violence on television...

• "...Studies done during the 1970's and 1980's (at the Univer-
• sity of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Manitoba in
• Canada) legitimized what women had been saying: Casual
• links did exist between pornography and acts of violence in
• general- and against women in particular. Studies in serial
• killers have confirmed that such men were addicted from
• early age to high consumption of violent pornography. As
• recently as the Persian Gulf War in early 1991, a furor was
• created by the US governments denial and later admission
• that bomber pilots on aircraft carriers in the Gulf were
• deliberately shown films of violent pornography before tak-
• ing off on missions over civilian areas in Iraq."

REFERENCE TWO:

**The International
Women's Rights Convention**

• **Article 1. Definition of Discrimination:**

- Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, which has the purpose or effect of denying equal exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of human endeavor.

• **Article 5. Sex Roles and Stereotyping:**

- Social and cultural patterns must be modified to eliminate sex-role stereotypes and notions of the inferiority or superiority of either sex; family education shall teach that men and women share a common responsibility in the raising of children

REFERENCE THREE:

**McCann-Erikson Phil.,
The McCann Youth Study**

• Advertising is no longer mere persuasive information... the young as a generation has never known life without electronic media. Their whole world is almost interchangeable with what they see on screen. ■

WOMEN AND MEDIA: A THREE-FOLD PROBLEM

In trying to identify the factors that perpetuate the oppression of and discrimination against women in the 20th century, the UNESCO named three causes: Law and legislation; religion and traditional culture; education and mass media. Of these factors, mass media stands out as the only 20th century phenomenon, and yet it has the greatest outreach. Between formal education and mass media, the Secretary of the Department of Education recently admitted that the media are at least 60% more effective than the school or parents/family in influencing the attitudes and behavior of the youth. Should the Media be allowed to go on promoting discriminatory and unrealistic images of Women, the negative attitudes of society against Women may persist into the 21st century.

The problem of Women and Media is threefold. First, it consists of being conscious of the Image. Second, it is influenced by the socio-cultural and economic background of Image-makers and media practitioners. Specifically for women, this involves being aware of the Media's Idea of Women as projected on the screen, page or audio recording, and knowing who the Articulators of this idea are.

The First aspect is significant because society's image of women seems to be based on what the Media project as part of a uniform "normal" life. While people in the Media will turn the tables around and say that they only project what is part of reality, it is also important to know that definitions of reality are highly selective. Audiences see only what they are presented, or how the Media see reality. Therefore: How do the Media look at women? What pictures/words/sounds/actions are chosen by Media practitioners to present their idea/definition of Women? Are Women presented as whole people, as we know them to be in daily life? Or are they presented as stereotypes? Are women presented at all, and in what contexts? What patterns of discrimination are carried over and over again by the Media? Is there a deliberate attempt to perpetuate oppression and exploitation of women by projecting women as victims of oppression and objects to be exploited? What can be done to protect women from this? How can such images be changed?

However, given the costs of owning and operating Media, our analysis must include the Second aspect: Who controls Media? What interests do they have and what values do they uphold?

What is acceptable to them? The messages and images that Media carry depend on those who have access to it. Can they be convinced to change the messages they send out? Do they really know the negative effect stereotypes have on women? Do they care about the dignity of women? How do we make them care? How do we make them aware that uplifting women will in the long run be good for their business?

Of course, the Third aspect will have to be discussed, which is Understanding the Nature of the Media— that ever-improving technology gives Media greater and greater potential for reaching out to bigger and bigger audiences; that Media has now a more significant role in the lives of its audiences, and thereby it is able to influence them more effectively.

It must be noted that even knowledge of, and access to the use and control of, Media technology— the equipment, tools and hardware— has been limited to men up to today. None of the television stations in the Philippines employ a full-time female camera-operator, or a female technician or a female technical director. Female video editors in the production industry number less than 40%; newspapers and magazines very rarely commission professional women photographers.

If what men see, in terms of pictures, is what we get, then the perspective of Media on women is surely what men think women are.



STEREOTYPING AND SEXISM

What has always been the “universal standard” in the mass media is actually a male standard. The introduction of a new perspective, or an approach or practice by a female is then called an “alternative” perspective, and is not part of the mainstream. This tendency to keep alternative views in the fringes is one way of maintaining control of the industry.

For reasons many writers have already given (see Margaret Gallagher and Donna Allen, **Who Calls the Shots?** Circle Publications 1991), the media, particularly film and television, have historically been controlled, and therefore, been identified, as male media. Unless specified, media’s perspective— points of views, opinions, visions of reality, concept of the true-good-beautiful, etc.— has been male. The vision of what a female

person should be, the definition of femininity, has been that of men. To paraphrase a character from the play/movie *M. Butterfly*, "only a man knows how to be a woman." In the established media order, as in the minds of men, a woman's face, hair, senses, body, womb, teeth, dress, voice, growth, movement, behavior, thoughts, activities—her whole being—are the realm of men. In short, women were made for men, their pleasure, their fantasies and their violence.

The process by which the products of media are put together have been male processes. Women, in order to enter and make their mark in the industry, must adhere to the processes established by the men. It is not unusual, then, that up to now, we hear women in media saying proudly that they are "accepted as equal" by their colleagues, because they have acted as "one of the boys."

The increasing number of women entering the ranks of media industry without a corresponding change in the values or perspective has often become an argument for the "universality" of the male perspective. Many times, we have been told, anti-women features, headlines, photographs, etc., are reproduced because of decisions made by women editors, directors or producers. For example, Nick Quijano, Managing Editor of the best-selling tabloid *Abante*—which gained its wide circulation through a combination of vulgar headlines and front-page photographs of nearly nude women—cited that women comprise 80% of their staff. He also informed us that the decision to publish the front-page photo of a chopped up woman's body was made by a woman editor.

To shift the burden of responsibility from the males to the females in a male-dominated environment is like blaming the employee for the employer's policy, for a culture created and nurtured by a male establishment. Rather than promoting a few women at the top as examples of "equal opportunity," a critical mass of informed and gender-sensitive women in middle and top management positions will certainly see changes in attitude and perspective. In the absence of that, sexism—in that case, outward or attitudinal discrimination against women—would continue to be the standard by which the media will view and present the world.

THE CONTINUUM OF SEXISM IN MEDIA



It should take little effort, then, to understand the Continuum of Sexism in Media which consists of simple and subtle role stereotyping on one hand and graphic and direct violence on the other. The difference is one of quantity than of essence.

When an advertiser appeals to and promotes sex-role stereotyping, this may not be as harmless as it might look. Stereotyping as a technique in media, particularly in advertising, is also a technique of influencing and controlling audience perception and behavior.

It is much easier to attribute certain characteristics to a group of people— i.e. Chinese people are shrewd; women are emotional and men are rational; lesbians are unattractive, unhappy and violent women who only need good sex with a man to cure their “abnormality” and become “real” women; prostituted women are bad women who can’t have enough of sex, and want an easy job that brings lots of money, etc.— than to describe the complicated personalities and life situations of individuals. For instance, when an advertisement constantly shows women happily washing clothes, the following conclusions may be subconsciously drawn, to the advantage of the advertiser: that washing clothes is women’s work; that men who wash clothes are like women; that washing clothes make women happy; and that using the better laundry bar makes them almost ecstatic.

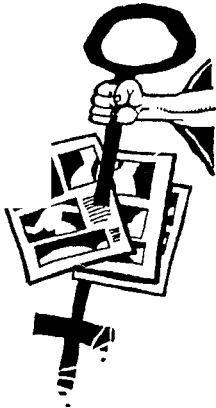
The power of the stereotype lies not in its statement alone but rather in certain speculations that may be associated with it. The stereotype may or may not in itself be harmful; it is the simplistic, illogical and irrational conclusions that are easily associated with it that become most damaging. Presented in a pleasing, even humorous, format and accompanied by attractive music, such as in a well-produced advertisement, stereotypes invade the consciousness of the audience, create a long-term appreciation for images that are imitated, idealized and idolized.

Combined with not so subtle techniques and images reproduced in a multi-media campaign, these stereotypes may become short-term fads, sensationalized, and given the right timing, drummed-up to create mass hysteria. The phenomenon of Robin Padilla as a role model, as a hero of superhuman proportions, for instance, is a result of continuous press coverage, media build-up and sensationalization of a news item/star created by publicity, the

media itself. In short, the media feeds on itself, fanning the psychological and cultural fantasies of its audiences/patrons/buyers. On the other hand, the impact of a negative campaign may also be seen in the rapid demise of a once-media-darling Miriam Defensor Santiago. (The first lesson for “media personalities” here is that they must learn to distinguish between illusion and essence, and not confuse one with the other. The second lesson is that tearing down a woman’s media image is easier than destroying a man’s.)

Another very common stereotype — that women must make themselves, or rather their bodies, physically attractive to men — can draw similar simplistic conclusions: women must learn to please men; women’s bodies must be made pleasurable to men; that women’s worth is found in their bodies; that women’s bodies are made for men; and therefore, men have the right to please themselves with women’s bodies.

Combined with another stereotype — that men are by nature more sexually active than women and, therefore, must be allowed to express their sexual desires — the demand for women to be physically attractive translates into a justification for sexual violence against women: men must be free to express their sexual desires; men must have access to women’s bodies in order to express their sexual desires; men have a right to control women’s bodies. The objectification of women is clear: women are only worth the amount of pleasure men can derive from their service and their bodies.



Stereotyping in this manner creates an environment — or enforces an established order, whatever the case may be — where women are conditioned to become prey to the desires of men and men are encouraged to express their manliness by using women’s bodies. In such a situation, in such a society, it becomes very difficult for a woman to prove that she has the right to control her body; that she has other concerns than attracting men; and that she is not a tool for men’s desires. In the end, stereotyping becomes a basis for pornography, prostitution and violence against women.

PORNOGRAPHY AND RAPE

Moving on to one extreme of Media Violence, and its influence on the behavior of men, it might be relevant to quote a report made by feminist lawyer Catherine A. McKinnon on the rape of

Croatian and Muslim women by Serbian soldiers in the ongoing war in former Yugoslavia:

"Pornography saturated Yugoslavia before the war. Its market, according to Yugoslav critic Bogdan Tirnanic, was "the freest in the world."... When pornography is this normal, a whole population of men is primed to dehumanize women and to enjoy inflicting assault sexually. The New York Times reported finding "piles of pornographic magazines" in the bedroom of Borislav Herak, the captured Serbian soldier who calmly admitted to scores of rape and murder. At his war crimes trial in Sarajevo, when asked where he learned to kill, he described being trained by killing pigs. No one asked him where he learned to rape, although he testified that his first rape in this war was his first sexual experience. *Pornography is the perfect preparation— motivator and instruction manual in one— for the sexual atrocities ordered in this genocide.*" (Ms., July/August 1993)

By conjuring up thoughts, emotions and activities associated with the vast number of sex-role stereotypes, the Media and Advertising Industry have actually created the building block for pornography and media violence. Expressions of power, dominance, maleness and achievement are combined with surrender, pleasure, femininity, and the accessibility of women's bodies to men.

It may be true that not all aspects of media have been detrimental to women, specially when media venues are managed and controlled by persons who are aware of the damage that has been done to women by media and are willing to initiate changes in their own way. In addition, the media have been used to inform, educate and empower large numbers of disenfranchised and neglected women. The media have also been used to mobilize nations into action against exploitation and oppression. But in so doing, the media have also the power to prescribe action and reaction, and to influence the feelings, thoughts and behavior of audiences. In fact, this direct influence on behavior has become the basis for the Advertising Industry and, unfortunately, the Pornography Industry.

While producers of films, advertisements, television and radio programs, newspaper, books and comics, that project racism, sexism and violence may not want to take any responsibility for the 12 per cent increase in crimes against chastity in 1993 (Philippine National Police figures), the constant exposure of

audiences to images of antagonism, exploitation and oppression reinforce their normality. Abated by systemic corruption in government and the abuse of power by persons assumed to be role models (in real world societies and celluloid societies), audiences learn that some people are above the law because they are superior, and that victims of violence are at fault because they just happen to be inferior.

Having ready media-made roles as beings superior to women who need to affirm their self-importance may soon enough take after the illusions of their movie models, and commit sexual violence. The real world and the screen world are interchangeable.

ENTER: INTERACTIVE MEDIA



For the generation that grew up on television and video, the introduction of, first, Remote Control "zappers", second, the proliferation of channels and venues, and third, the growth of "interactive" technologies may soon make one-way communication—as practiced by the media and advertising industries—thing of the past. The first and second phenomena has created a mild panic among managers and programmers who have experienced the luxury of specific audiences react to specific programs. While we are only beginning to see the effects of both phenomena in Asia, it will not be hard to surmise that the effects on audiences and media managers may be similar worldwide. Together with the public's easier access to computers, camcorders and VCR's, however, zappers, satellitess, cable TV and the host radio and television channels have provided a unified background of one-way communication against which "interactive media may develop.

The interaction is between a wide choice of products and the audience, rather than between producer and audience, however, this may limit the illusion of multi-dimensional "exchange" to a rather impersonal dimension, which may contradict the reason for developing interactive media in the first place. On the other hand, certain formula and programs prepared for interactive media have been designed as video games and may, in fact, be encouraging interactive violence, with the added thrill of choosing among many preprogrammed ways of, say, "committing murder, torture and rape.

How these new interactive technologies translate into action has yet to be evaluated. The murder in Britain of a 2-year old toddler

by two 10-year-old boys has engaged the public in a debate on whether or not the violent American movie called "Child's Play 3", which was rented by the father of one of the boys for a month, had anything to do with the crime. (Newsweek, 17 January 1994) Perhaps, lurking somewhere in the subconscious are powerful images prodding people to act out dangerous "games."

WOMEN AND THE TELE-EVANGELISTS

How much good do the tele-evangelists do for women? Consider, first, how many among them are women, and how many men. What messages, then, do they preach? Are these not the elevation of stereotypical roles to a religious imperative? While it must be admitted that tele-evangelists do their share of campaigning against violence, there is no clear indication that they have any intention of changing the world order to give all humans equal rights, opportunities and status. In fact, the very reason for evangelizing is to convert audiences to a single and dominant "truth." Those who do not believe in the same faith are not equal.

WOMEN'S DEFENSE: REFORM FROM THE INSIDE, PRESSURE FROM THE OUTSIDE

Given the interchangeability between the real and screen world, women may have little choice at the moment other than to transform the real world by transforming media. Since the new communications technologies are easily smuggled through national borders because of their diminishing size—such as Palmcorders and portable transmitters—and can transcend borders because of their sheer broadcasting power—such as satellites and microwave systems—government sanctions alone may render futile efforts to control pornography and media violence. We have seen how community and pirate radio stations have helped to bring down dictatorships in Latin America; and how the "betamax revolution" helped discredit Marcos and his controlled media. *The ultimate goal should be socio-cultural change, economic restructuring, political empowerment of women and the upliftment of humanity in general.*

Alternative Images of Existing Reality

The picture of mainstream media in general is not as hopeless as stereotyping is prevalent. Some media managers and program-makers have realized that media must soon enough espouse "values" to do its share in nation-building. The advertising industry has begun giving citations for positive messages, specially those that have to do with the environment, the rights of children and to civic consciousness. However, these forward steps have yet to redound specifically to women.

While it has been difficult for non-mainstream concepts of programming, as well as concepts of media management, to be accepted, slow efforts have been made over the past two decades to change media by changing its content, i.e. programming. There has been talk of "values," "educational television," "relevant and developmental media." These changes, however, remain token changes; we are constantly reminded of "the bottom line: media is a commercial venture." Changes that will affect the commercial validity of a media venue may make it less viable, unrealistic and, therefore, not flexible.

It becomes the role of non-commercial media venues, therefore, to introduce changes in the mainstream. How effective these venues are will depend on the support they get from financiers (such as advertisers or the government budget bureaucrats) and from audiences. Which seems to be, of course, a chicken-and egg situation, since audiences will support what they have been conditioned to like. Given that human audiences cannot always be predicted, the chances of their supporting a good, alternative, program will depend on many factors, including their socio-political, economic, aesthetic and intellectual needs at the moment.

Apart from trying to destroy the mainstream of the the "established order," through violent revolution, we must begin "altering" the "universal reality" presented by mainstream media by showing that other realities exist, that other values are important to some communities, and that women are human beings with equal rights, obligations and privileges as men. We must show that communities, other than those allowed to "exist" on the air by the media establishment, have as much right to visibility and media access.

Women, and other victims of negative stereotyping, must be seen in an infinite variety of roles, personalities, contributing to

the upliftment of all humanity. Any effort towards the manifestation of this reality must be given material and structural support by all those who have profited from using the media. Controllers, owners and managers of media venues and technology must create opportunities to counteract the negative effects of stereotyping and media violence. Producers with alternative perspectives, too, must find ways of bringing their productions and concepts into the mainstream, and reach as many audiences as quickly as possible.

Media Monitoring

However, because media's general reason for being is to reach massive numbers of audiences, a critical response from its audience will serve as an indication of dissatisfaction with present programming, and can also instigate change.

Since audiences do not directly control the media, audiences must be organized in order to pressure media into presenting productive alternatives. It is in this context that Media Monitors, acting in the interest of audiences, become promoters of alternative realities. They may ask audiences to resist the spread of irrational conclusions and violent reactions brought about by stereotyping. They may counter negative influences of the media, consciously analyzing and criticizing attempts at behavior control, and the motives behind it. They may also mobilize audiences against certain products and programs promoted by media.

The media industry may be aware of the potentials Media Monitors may have on both their audiences and their financiers. The organization of pro-audience Media Monitors, and media critics, may not be a welcome development for the media industry, although an open-minded media practitioner will always see the gains it may bring to the industry, in terms of assessing what has been done, and the creation of more "realistic" images and roles. Or perhaps a new set of stereotypes. Media managers, practitioners and program-makers must see in outside pressure opportunities for growth, change and renewal.

GOING FULL CIRCLE AND FORWARD: RE-INVENTING MEDIA

In its present context, the media industry can be described as a propaganda machine for the domination of women by men.


Since government, big business and/or the military control the use of the airwaves, as well as the production and distribution of media hardware and most software, there seems little choice for women but to take advantage of rare opportunities and token initiatives. There are those who believe that, in order to change a system completely, we must destroy it completely. But then there are others who are willing to wait for traditional mass media to become "the new dinosaurs" as they create new inroads in communications.

Others are taking bold steps to challenge the prevailing order by creating new systems and cultures within the media industry. **Ms.** Publisher Gloria Steinem, for instance, removed publishing from the hands of advertisers and took her magazine directly to the readers, women who have been buying it for almost four years now. International funding and development agencies, whose involvement had erstwhile been research, community organizing and livelihood projects, are now beginning to understand the value of supporting media projects for social change. These involvements however, have been cautious, and almost too unimaginative for a field wherein vision and daring are premium.

Adapting the campaign strategies of politicians and advertisers, a few NGOs, themselves, are learning to use the mainstream media to their own advantage. For instance, a carefully-planned campaign launched by KALAKASAN against domestic violence saw a surge in media interest not only in DV—which had previously been a "secret war against women" hidden from public scrutiny—but also in cases of violence against women. But then again, the problem of how media covers crimes against women bring us back to the beginning of this discussion.

Perhaps mass media by its very nature cannot be gender-sensitive enough for the good of women and must be re-conceptualized and re-invented. Sometimes, we would like to believe that by changing the people that control media, we will be able to change media itself. But media may not be the neutral force we think it is. The end of the century might just be the time to think of methods through which humans may communicate that are gender-fair, ecologically sound, affordable and accessible to individuals and small communities, and that do not rely on psychological warfare, brainwashing or power-play. As we work for a new world order, and the destruction of an oppressive patriarchal system, we must remember that true communication in the Age of Information can only exist among equals. ■

policy recommendations

 In order to effectively curtail the proliferation of stereotyping in the local media industry, it is important to identify concrete courses of action which can be implemented by government institutions, private organizations and individuals. However, it is a general sentiment that the government initiate these changes within its present system first. As this process evolves, private institutions proceed with their tasks, this time, with conscious effort of the developments started by the government. Individuals, on the other hand, are given the responsibility to respond and integrate this newly found awareness into their moral values.

Three specific recommendations are presented here to address three corresponding major concerns:

- the collaboration of initiatives by the GOs and NGOs to have a cohesive action plan on stereotyping of women in media;
- the representation of women in government regulatory bodies concerning media; and
- the gender awareness of media practitioners and decision makers.

RECOMMENDATION 1

For the government to initiate a proactive role in the campaign to curb stereotyping and discrimination of women in media by enhancing collaboration of programs for women between the NGOs and the GOs. (Concerned Agency: NCRFW.)

RECOMMENDATION 2

For the government to provide more sectoral representation for women in the media regulatory bodies (i.e. Videogram Regulatory Board, and MTRCB). In relation to this, it is recommended that the process of appointment to these agencies be opened to the women sector in view of the Women In Nation-Building (WIN) Act. (Concerned Agencies: MTRCB, VRB, NCRFW.)

RECOMMENDATION 3

For NCRFW to present the training module on gender consciousness raising to the following government and private institutions and elicit positive "action-responses": (Refer to Annex B for a description of the training module)

Government:

- Videogram Regulatory Board (VRB)
- Philippine Information Authority (PIA)
- Movie, Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB)
- PTV-Channel 4
- Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS)
- National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA)

Private:

- Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters sa Pilipinas (KBP)
- AdBoard
- San Miguel Corporation
- 4As
- Philippine Press Institute (PPI)
- Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP)
- PMPPA
- Film Distributors

These recommendations were reached after a general analysis of the media environment in the Philippines through an organizational assessment of private and government agencies involved in media. (Refer to Annex A for the organizational charts) ■

project
group on
Women
& **T H E**
FAMILY



women in the filipino family

A FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN RECOGNITION AND EMPOWERMENT

INTRODUCTION



1994 has been declared the International Year of the Family. It is indeed time to focus on this most basic unit of society.

But, *how fares the Filipino Family? Where is it going? How does it relate to Filipino society, as a whole, and in relation to its other institutions? How are its members, particularly its women, faring?*

Like all human families, The Filipino Family is both a *community of persons*, i.e., people intimately relating with one another, and an *organization of functions*, i.e., a human institution beset by rules and traditions, defying all odds in order to survive and to thrive.

To do all these, it has to cope with the outer environment to which it is exposed. As it copes with its *without*, it rearranges its *within*, or internal environment, redefining its inner structures and the mutual roles and functions among its members.

In its core, the human family is indeed a living organism. All its members, particularly the woman (as wife and/or mother), play vital roles in response to the necessities of living.

The Filipino Family is no different.

This paper will present a framework with which to understand the various roles that women play in the contemporary Filipino Family, with the hope that its members, most particularly its women (as wife, mother and daughter) themselves, would become aware thereof, understand and appreciate them, and thus lead to their own process of empowerment.

The Project Group on Women and the Family of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) has identified 34 new typologies of the contemporary Filipino Family, which have emerged since the 1960s to cope with the deteriorating socio-economic and political environmental conditions that have since then come about.

Some of the identified emerging family typologies in the Philippines are (please refer to Annex A for the complete listing):

1. Single Parent (e.g. mono vs. dual cored families; single parent by choice; single adoptive parents; heterosexual with a family; etc.)
2. Two Parent (e.g. common law marriage with children; homosexual partnerships; female headed households; etc.)
3. Multiple Parent (e.g. one spouse plus transient spouses)
4. Surrogate (e.g. absentee parents; relatives raising the children)
5. Families in Difficult Circumstances (e.g. migrant families; homeless families; incestuous partnership; extreme age gap relationships; etc.)
6. Combination (e.g. nuclear but relying on extended family)
7. Others (e.g. impoverished; stressed and pressured; double or multiple income; etc.)

In order to understand the emergence of these typologies, a short excursion into history may help.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

We need not go into details as to when the Filipino Family began. But, like other human families, it must have been during the stage of *primitive hunters*, between almost 1 million and 10,000 years ago, when it was first forced to delineate the role of hunting for food to its males, whose basic physical anatomy enabled them to do this task better, and that of caring for the young to its females, whose basic physical anatomy likewise enabled them to do these tasks better in their more or less fixed nests. Thus, this early did gender roles begin — in response to the demands of the times. Moreover, for mutual aid and protection, groups of interrelated families banded and lived together, giving rise to the extended family system.

The Age of Agriculture

Like all human families, too, the Filipino family must have thus found itself constrained to adapt itself to the *Age of Agriculture*, which started some 10,000 years ago, when it found itself more and more "tied to a particular tract of land" which its members intensively cultivated to provide for their basic necessities in life. To survive and to thrive, the *extended Filipino Family* became more solidified as an institution.

The gender role assigned to men and women, as husbands and wives, also became more demarcated during the Agricultural Age: the turf of women, as wives and mothers, was within the home; that of men, as husbands and fathers, outside it. Masculinity became equated with a man's ability to sire children; femininity, on the other hand, became identified with a woman's capacity to bear, to rear, and to nourish them.

Parental authority was stressed, as was filial obedience. The family's survival was paramount, and unity of the family was crucial to its achievement. Thus it was that *children were meant to be seen, not heard*. Their real value was in their being the source of strength for the family — more hands to till and to harvest the fields; more hands to defend the family in case of aggression, etc. — and in their being their parent's insurance for old age or *gabay ng magulang sa kanilang pagtanda*. Moreover, given a high death rate that faced them, husbands and wives consciously or subconsciously *planned their families large*, thus having many children per family.

THE INDUSTRIAL AGE

The *Industrial Age* unsettled much of what centuries of the *Agricultural Age* had done. As husbands no longer worked within "shouting distance" of their wives, but in a far-away factory or office, as children began to spend a good portion of the day in schools, and as mass media began to eat more and more of the time of family members, the *extended family system* gradually began to decline and to give way to the *nuclear family system*, composed of a father, mother, and their six to eight children. Moreover, in general, women, as wives and mothers, stayed and worked at home.

And that was how the Filipino family and its members were, generally speaking, during the decades of the 1950s and in the 1960s. But the fast changes that came during and after the 1960s reshaped the environment of Filipino families, thus making it necessary for them, particularly the poorer ones, to again reorganize their inner environment, thus giving rise to the newer family typologies.

Particularly caught in the whirlwind of these changes was the Filipino woman, whether as wife, as mother, or even as daughter, who had to abandon traditional roles, once functional but generally no longer so, and to assume new ones.

POVERTY INDICATORS

Compared to today's (1990s) families, the Filipino Family of the '50s and the '60s could, generally speaking, still more adequately cope with the socio-economic demands of those days. As the Philippine peso was still officially pegged to the US dollar at the rate of US1.00 = P2.00, and with the cost of living still low, a Filipino husband could still manage to feed, house, and clothe his family, even with a low income or salary. Thus, again as a general rule, while many wives did help to augment their husbands' income, few of them really had to leave the home to look for a permanent job outside.

Education, as an aspiration of every Filipino Family, for their children was still within easier reach than today. Tuition fees were low, books and school supplies were relatively cheap as were the cost of food, clothing, and transportation. A definite enabling factor was the still relatively low unemployment rate of husbands.

But though already located in an urban setting in Metro-Manila

and in other cities, the Filipino Family in the '50s, and even in the '60s, still retained much of its rural orientation. This is why the sociologist once referred to the families in Metro Manila in the 1950-60s as still *urban*. Hence, the Filipino family remained relatively large, with six to eight children. Also, though already nuclear in form, many Filipino families still received support from their erstwhile extended families.

Consequently, parental authority still remained strong, as did filial obedience. So was family unity. While the teenage subculture was already in, the worst form of deviant behavior that teenagers fell into was to smoke cigarettes or to drink rum, which were among the status symbols of those days. Drug addiction cases were extremely rare.

But things began to deteriorate and to deteriorate fast during the '60s, and beyond. The cost of living rose as the Philippine peso was unpegged from the U.S. dollar. Two costly national elections in 1965 and in 1969, further eroded its purchasing power. By 1969, the "first quarter storm" of activism and social protest against the *status quo* began.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND MASSIVE MIGRATION

Unemployment rose. Underemployment, too. In search of greener pastures, more and more rural families migrated to the cities, especially Metro Manila. Sad to say, but there were not enough jobs to accommodate them all. The inevitable result was more unemployment for their breadwinners.

Gradually, the kinship system gave way to other modes of support system. For example, in the '50s and the '60s, it was still the rule that rural migrants to the city still managed to live with relatives; in the '70s and 80s, it was no longer so, with more and more migrants now forced to live with families they had no blood relations with.

Teenage pregnancies were also already on the rise. But as the value of *hiya* was still very strong even among urban residents, these pregnancies often led to early marriages and all its negative consequences. Abortion was thus rarely resorted to.

On 21 September 1972, Martial Law was declared in the Philippines. At first, Filipinos gave it a chance to show what it could do for them. But not for long.

The economic situation of the country turned from bad to worse. The value of the peso eroded from P4 = US\$1 before the turn of the decade, then became P7 = US\$1 by 1978, then slid further to P13 = US\$1 after the assassination of Senator Benigno Aquino in 1983 and was somewhere near P30 = US\$1 by 1985. Today, it fluctuates around P27 = US\$1.

The price of gasoline was P0.39 per liter in 1968, rose to P1.50 in 1973 during the OPEC gas crisis, and is now at P10.00. As energy affects other commodities, specially prime ones, their prices consequently also skyrocketed.

In the 1970s, economic opportunities came when dollar-paying jobs abroad became abundant. First, it was the husbands who took advantage of these opportunities. They went to work in the oil-rich Middle East countries and remitted their precious savings to their wives and children at home.

Later on, wives also left for employment abroad as domestic helpers in countries in Europe, like Italy, and in the newly industrialized countries of South East Asia, namely, Singapore, Taiwan, Korea, and Hongkong. They too remitted home their precious dollar savings and thus provided not only for their husbands and children, but also for their country's need for foreign exchange.

In exchange for these economic opportunities, however, the Filipino Family and its members paid dearly in terms of psychological and other difficulties.

NEW FAMILY TYPOLOGIES

As all these were happening, the Filipino Family underwent much changes within itself and brought about the new typologies of the human family referred to earlier. One foremost typology was the *single parent family*. Some such families were brought about by unwed mothers. But many, if not most of them, were due to the phenomenon now known as *Overseas Contract Workers* or OCWs.

There also rose the phenomenon of *street children*. These were, generally speaking, not orphans or abandoned children. They had parents and families to come home to, but poverty had necessitated both their parents to work, thus leaving them uncared for and thereby free to roam the streets; or their parents had precisely asked them to go out and beg, to "watch cars" or

to clean them, and thereby help their families to cope with their dire economic conditions.

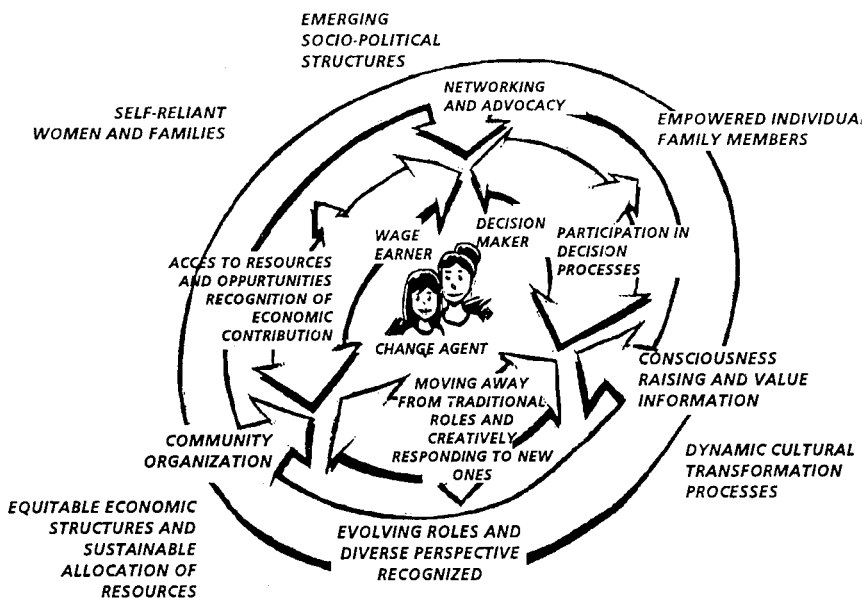
NEW WOMEN ROLES

As stated, 34 new or emerging typologies of families were identified by the Project Group on Women and the Family of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW). They are all evidence of the rearrangement of the *within* or *internal environment* of the Filipino Family in response to the demands of its contemporary *external environment*.

What are the effects of all these on Filipino wives and mothers? What also are its effects on Filipino husbands? Similarly, what effects do they have on the children of Filipino Families today?

Finally, what policy recommendations should be made to better enable the Filipino woman, not only to better perform her role in the Filipino Family and society, but also to be able to realize as much of the immensity of possibilities that she, as a human person, is?

To better analyze and answer these questions, the Project Group on the Family devised a conceptual framework which it called the **Family Wheel**. As its chief concern is understandably that of the woman in the family and in society, the wheel has her at the center. (See figure below.)



THE CENTER OF THE WHEEL

Three primary roles of women today are highlighted in the center of the wheel, namely, as *wage earner*, as *decision maker*, and as *change agent*. This is not to deny the traditional role of *motherhood*, but only to stress that motherhood itself is precisely one that is part and parcel of three primary roles mentioned. Hence, *motherhood is something to be freely and responsibly decided upon* by every woman.

Thus, motherhood is a result of a woman's and her husband's free decision to have a child (decision-maker), considering their economic capacities which include hers (wage earner), and her other commitments (change agent) to God, to society, to her husband, to a child (or children) they may already have and, last, but most important of all, her commitment to her own self as a human person.

Women are thus to still value motherhood. But precisely because they should so value it, they are to freely and responsibly choose it, and not have it by chance. Moreover, they are not to simply equate the entirety of their womanhood with motherhood.

Women as Wage-earners

Briefly then, *woman as wage-earner* means that she continuously struggles to gain equal access to economic and social resources and opportunities. Perhaps, it was the harsh economic conditions her family faced that initially forced her to become a wage-earner. Whatever it was, she now also works her best in the socio-economic field of endeavor so that her personal contribution to her family and to society itself might be formally recognized. Hopefully, the days when her work within the family were not even considered in computing her country's *Gross National Produce* (GNP), would be a thing of the past.

It should of course be noted that women have always been "workers", but with no salaries to speak of, as plain housewives. The household chores they do, in addition to the tremendous effort they exert and the amount of time they consume at child-rearing, if quantified, would certainly add up to a substantial amount each month.

Traditionally, however, a housewife's work was not even considered when her country's GNP is computed. But now, with more and more women working outside the home, their efforts have rightfully become part of it.

It is both interesting and important to note that the New Family Code of the Philippines mandates both husband and wife to support each other and the whole family. Previous legislation simply mandated the husband to support his wife and family, thus making the wife and the entire family completely dependent on him.

The Woman as Decision-Maker

The role of *woman as a decision maker* recognizes the inherent right and capacity of every woman to be given equal access to the decision-making process. Within her home, this means her inherent right and responsibility over her own body which has not been negated, as might traditionally have been regarded, by her entering into the contract of marriage. Thus, among others, it means her right to decide *with* her husband when to have a child, how many children to have, as well as the right to all the medically safe, legally permissible, and morally acceptable (as per informed conscience) means by which she and her husband can translate to reality this decision to have (or not to have) children.

Outside the home, this role means that women have the right to fully participate in the political and social processes of the country. It also includes her right to decide on outside employment, or to manage a business of her own, things now also provided for in existing legislation.

The Woman as a Change Agent

The *woman as change agent* sees her as moving away from traditional gender roles (for example, of being a plain housewife). Again, *de facto* she has gained credit and recognition for her initiative and determination to creatively respond to new socio-economic and political conditions, by assuming new roles either as an economic contributor, as a civic or social worker, as a producer and/or consumer of media, as a partner or contributor in nation-building, or all of these together. She should thus also formally recognize these new roles that she responsibly plays as well as be formally recognized for them by society.

THE WHEEL'S SECOND LAYER

The second and larger inner wheel in the framework contains three classification of creative, innovative, and significant responses which women as wage earners, decision-makers, and as change agents, do.

The first response classification is that of a woman's *gaining access to socio-economic resources in society and of struggling for deserved recognition for her socio-economic contribution to the family and to society itself*. This first response enables her to perform the second classification of responses: *to move away from traditional roles and to creatively respond to new ones*. In turn, these two classifications give her the freedom and the responsibility to *participate in decision-making processes and strategies*, not only within the home, but also outside it.

We can see better how these three classifications of responses work out, by way of an example. The harsh economic conditions of the times have forced women to go into economic ventures or to even look for full-time employment in society. The fruits of their labors help them to provide for their families' needs and to contribute to the economic well-being of the country itself. This is specially true of women-OCWs, because of their dollar remittances to their families, which redounds to their country's economic welfare as well.

De facto, employment or work outside the home has moved women away from the traditional role of being *plain housewives* who are completely economically dependent on their husbands' income or earnings. It has also forced them to look for and has thus enabled them to find non-traditional ways of rearing their children (e.g. day care centers).

The wealth of experience women acquire in the outside world of work and business, bolstered by added education gained through formal education and/or through seminars and workshops, have also added positively to their own *self-esteem* as persons, and to their *competence* as professionals or as workers. These, in turn, enable them to better participate in decision-making processes within the home, in the community, in the business world, in socio-civic engagements, and even in politics.

THE THIRD LAYER

The Family Wheel's third layer contains the positive results of the creative and new responses contained in the second layer. But one can also view them as indicators for the total well-being of the Filipino Family today: *self-reliant women and families; individual family members that have been empowered; and the recognition of evolving roles and diverse perspectives*.

All these indicators speak well of the Filipino Family and the

Filipino woman. The Filipino Family has not only been *nuclearized*; economic hardships have even physically split it into smaller atoms, or to new typologies.

Moreover, it has also become *de-functionalized*, i.e. it has lost many of the traditional functions (which families 50 - 100 years ago had to perform to survive) to contemporary Philippine society and its other institutions. But, in losing them, It has assumed new ones.

By way of example, traditionally, most Filipino families (specially those in the rural areas) had to plant and harvest their own food, build their own homes, produce their own clothing materials, take care of their own members in times of sickness, educate them, and even provide them their own forms of recreation. In contrast, in most of today's Filipino families, husbands and wives simply have to earn wages and then use them to acquire any, some, or all of these necessities.

Most Filipino families have also lost most of the social pressures, which used to keep the family intact, due to the process of industrialization and urbanization. Thus, today, family members no longer stay together because they *have to stay together* (whether by social pressures or because of functions to perform). Rather they will only stay together because they *want to stay together*.

Given these developments, self-reliant women and families, not dependent ones, will fare better. Likewise, individual empowered and self-motivated family members, not those dependent-on-the-outside, will be able to cope better. So too will self-actualizing women and other members of the family be more daring enough to assume new roles and thereby cope with new diverse expectations.

THE FOURTH LAYER

Like all human families, the Filipino Family does not lie in a vacuum. It is indeed a basic unit of the whole of Philippine society. Thus, it is affected by the latter and, in turn, affects it. In the process, the roles of its members, specially those of the woman's as wife and/or mother, have become modified.

One weakness of the traditional Filipino Family, which sociologists have pointed out, is its *familialism* or *small-group centeredness*. This means that, traditionally speaking, Filipino

husbands and wives, their children included, do maintain close family ties, which is good. However, it also means that, perhaps because of socio-economic insecurities which it has encountered through the colonial years and even beyond them, Filipino family ties have become *too close* to the point of *becoming practically closed* to the rest of Philippine society.

This phenomenon, these experts say, is one reason why many Filipinos do not develop a national or social concern, as they confine all their concern within the parameters of the family and its welfare. Consequently, it makes the whole country a mere *anarchy of families*, with each family working merely for its own welfare. In other words, Philippine society thereby becomes a self-destructing or self-debilitating *nation-divided- in-itself*.

If this negative phenomenon is to be overcome, then the Filipino Family and its members must be helped to open up and to embrace the welfare of the whole nation as a whole. Only then will national development truly occur.

Likewise, only then will democracy, essentially a government of, for and by all the people become a reality in the Philippines. And only then will a *brethrenhood of all people under the parenthood of one God* become a living reality among Filipinos.

It is this situation that the fourth layer of the Family Wheel addresses. According to it, families must be *organized into functioning and self-reliant communities*. To achieve these, Government Organizations (GOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) must join hands and *network their efforts to advocate* the building of self-reliant families and communities. And in both processes, effort must be laid in *consciousness-raising and in the value-formation* of the Filipino Family and all its members, but most particularly, its women.

But a word of caution is in order. The goal should not be to *impress* family members with *values from without* but, rather, to *inspire* them to look into their own selves and into their own situations and to thereby develop *values from within*.

THE FIFTH LAYER

But all the above presuppose the existence of positive elements in the outer environment of the big society, namely, *equitable economic and social structures and a sustainable allocation of all such resources; enabling socio-political structures; and dynamic*

cultural transformation processes. These are the materials focused on by the Wheel's fifth and final layer.

Accordingly, laws should be changed or revised so that those who may have less now in life may be enabled to have more through more equitable laws; so that traditional gender-biased laws and traditions may be transformed to gender-unbiased ones, thus enabling women to be at par with their men. In brief, so that every man, woman, and child may be able to translate the *immensity of possibilities*, which each of them is, into shining realities. ■

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project
group on

Women
&
ECOLOGY



introduction

W

hile it has been more than two decades since interest in and advocacy of "women in development" issues gained ground in this country, only recently have the linkages among gender issues, poverty and environmental degradation been the focus of attention. Until lately, environmentalists did not distinguish between men's and women's roles in environment and sustainable development. On the other hand, feminists concentrated more on areas which specifically concerned women—sexual harassment and discrimination, prostitution and violent acts against women.

When the project group on Women and Ecology was organized, the group members each had their own orientations and biases—hardly a common ground from which to launch an activity which clearly reflected the mandate of the group. The linkages between gender issues and environmental concerns needed to be defined well for the group to come to an agreement about its plan of work.

A review of what has previously been accomplished on the subject of "women and the environment", both locally and internationally, indicated that much has still to be investigated and documented and that whatever the group's activity and resultant outputs be, these would be a valuable contribution to the still limited body of knowledge in the country. While the available materials on the subject were limited, this did not mean, however, that initiatives did not exist or that the level of awareness on the subject was low.

Some group members felt the need to enhance their own awareness and understanding of concerns regarding "women and the environment" and that a levelling-off on these concerns should constitute the initial group activity. The stronger sentiment, though, was that the group needed to come up with a concrete contribution from which would emerge their recommendations for policy reforms addressed to NCRFW and concerned agencies of the national government.

After a thorough discussion on possible alternatives, the group decided to conduct a study of resource management projects focusing on women's roles and participation in these projects. Based on the outcome of the study, a gender framework was formulated and ecosystem-specific guidelines drawn.

INSIGHTS AND LEARNINGS

The group's experience gained from:

- the review of available materials and pending legislation pertaining to environmental/natural resource protection and management;
- the sharing of ideas and insights of those who have attended seminars and conferences on the subject; and,
- the study of the Sampaloc Lake project of NACFAR/SPCMBY,

point to the following:

- when environmental degradation occurs, women are the first to suffer its effects and consequently bear the burden of ensuring their families' survival;
- although women play a pivotal role in natural resource conservation and management, their contribution is not given due recognition;
- there is a lack of gender sensitivity in policy pronouncements and laws and regulations. Gender responsiveness in both government and non-government programs and projects is only slowly being attempted and only by a few agencies;
- to ensure effective resource management, such efforts need to be paralleled by income-augmenting activities, to allow the families' needs to be met while longer term objectives of resource conservation and management are pursued;
- support mechanisms need to be set in place to allow women to meaningfully participate in resource conservation and management efforts; and,

-
- efforts must be exerted to involve women in all aspects of project development, implementation and monitoring. Their views and interests must be reflected in the design and implementation mechanisms of projects.

These ideas, insights and learnings are reflected in the major outputs of the Project Team: the Gender Framework for Resource Conservation and Management, the Case Study Report: Women's Participation in the Sampaloc Lake Rehabilitation and Resource Management Council (RMC) Organizing Project, and the Guidebook: Gender, Environment and Development Checklist for the Planning, Review and Evaluation of Natural Resource Conservation and Management Programs and Projects. ■

policy recommendations

B

ased on the learnings culled from the various experiences mentioned above, the Project Team present the recommendations below. These recommendations are aimed at addressing the need to give due recognition to women's valuable contribution to environmental protection and management and to ensure greater participation of women in all aspects of planning and implementing resource conservation and management programs and projects. These recommendations also seek to address the need for agencies of government to apply greater gender sensitivity and responsiveness in the planning and implementation of such programs and projects.

The recommendations are directed to the lead agency in charge of environmental protection and management, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and are addressed as well to other involved agencies.

INTEGRATION OF GENDER CONSCIOUSNESS INTO ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Gender consciousness must be integrated into environmental education and vice-versa. Feminist theory and practice must include an ecological perspective, while efforts at raising environmental awareness and seeking solutions to environmental problems must incorporate a feminist perspective.

Gender Sensitivity Training (GST) and Gender-Responsive Development Planning (GRDP) seminars should be continued and conducted at the local level. These trainings must emphasize the urgency of environmental concerns and the role women play in addressing these concerns.

Agencies involved: DENR, NCRFW, DOST, DECS

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Information/education/communication campaigns on "women and environment" issues.

Environmental education, including para-legal training, is a requisite for lobbying and advocacy work among community-based organizations and volunteer organizations. Such information/education/communication packages must introduce appropriate technologies for popular application.

Agencies involved: DENR, NCRFW, DECS, DOST

- Research and Documentation.

Research and proper documentation on the linkages between women and the environment needs to be supported. For purposes of research and planning, gender-disaggregated data need to be made available or to be generated.

Agencies involved: DENR, NCRFW, NEDA, NCSO, DILG

- Establishment of support mechanisms for empowering women: such as, access to credit and livelihood projects, capability-building, and community support systems.

Agencies involved: DENR, NCRFW, DILG, DTI, DSWD, NGOs and POs

Identification of the agencies involved in the aforementioned recommendations, is based on an organizational chart of government institutions with ecological concerns. (Refer to Annex E for the chart.)

*gender framework
for resource conservation
and management*

FRESHWATER LAKE ECOSYSTEMS

INTRODUCTION

Women have long been at the center of the development and environment nexus (Mehra, 1993). In many developing countries, they have played a pivotal role in resource conservation and management efforts—growing crops, tending livestock, fishing, gathering fuelwood and bringing in water. As farmers, stock breeders, fishers and providers of fuel and water, they interact most closely with the environment. Yet “international agencies and Governments have everywhere ignored the vital part women play in caring for the environment. Their voice, like their knowledge and experience is simply not heard.” (Chitepo, 1989).

Women’s links with the environment lie not only in that they depend on it for providing sustenance. Women also share the plight of the environment: “man’s domination (of the environment) parallels the colonization and subjugation of women in many societies (and) until all societies value women and the environment, their joint degradation will continue. (“A Joint Declaration of Interdependence”, Women’s Environment and Development Program, 1988)

Without falling into the fallacy that women’s relationship with and impact on the environment is completely benign and harmonious, it is important to recognize women’s potential to effect changes and to provide alternatives to avert the current environmental crisis.

BACKGROUND:**SITUATIONER ON SAMPALOC LAKE
AND THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN FISHERFOLK**

This framework has been generated from a study documenting the experiences, the ideas and insights of a group of men and women in the fishing community of Sampaloc Lake and the neighboring lakes of San Pablo City. The study focused on the nature and extent of women's participation in a project aimed at piloting an organizational mechanism for lake resource management and at operationalizing lake rehabilitation activities.

Sampaloc Lake is one of seven lakes within the City of San Pablo, Laguna and Nagcarlan, Rizal. It is the largest of the seven: 105 hectares in area and an average of 27 meters in depth.

There are 5 baranggays surrounding the lake: Bgy. Concepcion, San Lucas, 4-A, 4-C and 5-C. Fish culture in floating fishcages started in 1974 in Bunot Lake. In 1977 it was introduced in Sampaloc Lake under the administration of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. The floating fishcages then totalled 2 hectares and the cultivation relied mostly on natural feeding. Since then, the area devoted to fishcages has been progressively increased, taxing the natural carrying capacity of the lake. At present the fishcages cover an area of about 30 hectares, with production (270,000 kilos) barely equalling that in 1977 (380,000 kilos).

Early this year, the combined effects of overfishing, water pollution due to artificial feeding and the cold temperature led to fishkills of disastrous magnitudes. These fishkills rendered the lakes uncultivable and also rendered the fisherfolk's families more disadvantaged and economically deprived than ever before. The degradation of the lakewaters has thus burdened the women of the fishing communities in San Pablo City thrice over: As their economic situation worsened, many of them had been forced to have their children stop schooling; as their husbands have found themselves out of work and unable to find employment, many of them have had to assume the role of primary breadwinner for the family.

This crisis situation has left many of the women in these fishing communities in a bind. Because many of them are aware of their environmental situation, they are able to take on a long-term view about the need to rehabilitate and maintain the lake. But because many of them are now primarily responsible for the

support of their families, the dire and urgent demands to respond to these immediate needs constrain them from participating in concrete actions.

PREMISES

The links between the environment, women and development have been recognized for the following reasons (Asian and Pacific Development Center, 1992):

- development activities have had profound and sometimes adverse effects on both social and ecological balance. These effects can be understood only when both people and their environment are understood together;
- women who work closely with their environment are affected by environmental degradation in ways that have not always been acknowledged by development agents. Women and men have differentiated roles within both social and economic structures; likewise their connection with the environment are different;
- the perspectives and needs of women have not been adequately addressed when choices are made regarding development strategies. As governments and other agencies move to change their approach towards environmental concerns, women are once again being marginalized in the planning and decision-making;
- women are important to any action to prevent and/or reverse environmental degradation and to move towards a more environmentally and socially viable development. Their perspectives and their visions are invaluable and need to be incorporated into any plan for change;
- there is a vital link between the impact of gender sensitivity and environmental consciousness in development strategy; both provide a strong critique of development models and expose fundamental flaws in the kind of development being pursued; and,
- women play a significant role in environmental movements and have made their own linkages between the various movements.

VISION

WOMEN FISHERS' ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF LAKE RESOURCES GIVEN DUE RECOGNITION AND WOMEN ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO DEVELOPMENT OF SELF, FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND THE INDUSTRY.

Concrete expressions of this vision are:

- individual women able and capable of engaging in alternative livelihood and participating in the conservation, protection and management of the lakes/lake resources;
- cooperativism taking root among women and becoming the base of their collective action in economic terms as well as in the realm of social support;
- strengthening of family ties; and,
- increasing participation and leadership of women in community organization and development.



GOAL

TO EMPOWER WOMEN FISHERS AND TO GIVE DUE RECOGNITION TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF THE LAKES AND LAKE RESOURCES

Dimensions of empowerment:

- enhancement of self-esteem, self-reliance and self-determination;
- promotion of shared economic/social/domestic responsibilities;
- building women's capacity to access/manage project resources and benefits; and,
- active involvement and participation in planning and decision-making processes regarding the development of their communities.

STRATEGIES

While strategies and actions for other women's issues have been well defined and articulated, the interlinkages between women and the environment are relatively new concepts in the country. While a larger framework for women and the environment is still evolving, some strategies can be suggested (APDC, 1992):

- developing a "women, environment and development" perspective;
- sensitizing government agencies and non-government organizations regarding this perspective, emphasizing gender-sensitive approaches;
- formulating theoretical frameworks articulating the linkages between women, environment and development;
- providing and institutionalizing support systems and mechanisms for existing women's initiatives, and encouraging the formation of new ones;
- studying and documenting the "women and environment" linkages and popularizing women's experiences on the subject;

-
- developing and strengthening women leaders in the field of "women and the environment";
 - mobilizing women's organizations and networks to take action and to articulate the "women, environment and development" perspective; and,
 - reviewing traditional ways and exploring alternative ways of living in harmony with the environment to provide insight for future strategies on "sustainable communities".

ACTION

Action on this area of concern may include:

- lobbying for women's issues, concerns and perspectives with respect to the environment to be included in national policy;
- networking activities with both government and non-government entities, including conferences and workshops, regarding the linkages between women, environment and development;
- research and documentation on existing initiatives and alternatives;
- awareness-raising (information/education/communication) on women and environment issues;
- rallies and demonstrations against environmental degradation;
- collective and individual efforts towards environmental regeneration and rehabilitation; and,
- training on self-help, leadership and alternative employment to address women's immediate economic needs. ■

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project
group on

Women
&
P E A C E



*a statement of vision***W**

e envision a society without war, and without reliance on the use of arms. We believe that warfare is not inevitable. Rather it is a product of culture and social conditioning, supported by political and economic greed and the culture of militarism. We believe we must direct our energy toward eliminating war and the bearing of arms as means of solving local, national and international conflicts.

The society of our vision is one in which people's security is primary. Yet it is not a security built by arms but one rooted in the basic human needs of food, adequate shelter, meaningful work, and social and economic justice, and also in the sustainable care of the earth.

Historical evidence shows that it has been primarily the male species that has engaged in warfare. Women have been the victims of the wars of men, which ironically have often been waged in their "defense." Hope for the elimination of war lies in the rising consciousness of women (and many men) throughout the world. They are realizing that war and violence are extensions of the dominator model of human relationships that has characterized human societies, to varying degrees, since the dawn of civilization some five thousand years ago.

Women (and children) have suffered and still suffer in distress from war (i.e., rape, forced migration, unavailability of food, source of cheap labor and sexual services for the military). In the Philippines, as well as in other parts of today's world, such as Angola, Bosnia, Burundi, Somalia, etc., the tragedy, horror and the ultimate futility of war is being played out: hundreds of thousands of people are forced to flee for their lives and almost as many lose their lives. In the Philippines alone there are at present more than one million internal refugees.¹

We need ways of resolving conflicts without resorting to war and the bearing of arms. Humans are capable of moving beyond the mental, social and political frameworks that promote armed conflict, toward the building of alternative structures that promote peace based on justice both nationally and universally.

¹Citizens' Disaster Rehabilitation Center

We understand peace to be more than simply the absence of armed conflict. In contrast to the usual negative definition of peace as non-war, we assert a positive understanding of peace as the presence of conditions that promote life, growth and cooperative relations among groups and requires the engagement of as many persons as possible in active peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding initiatives.

The *peacefare*² society which we envision is one in which human beings are able to meet their basic needs and enjoy a quality of life such that genuine well-being prevails. The promotion of such a society requires that we transform a culture of militarism into a culture of life which promotes genuine well-being for all.

Looking beyond the crises of today, we must also ask what these mean for the children. Traditionally, women are the ones who rear the children and thus play a significant role in the process of early socialization. What values are communicated that make violence attractive to the boys, and makes mere victimization romantic and even an option to the girls? As the main socializers, women do have a particular interest in the peace process. Increasingly, however, men must be drawn into both parenting and the peace process.

Even as men need to be drawn more into the home, women need to be drawn out. Women must claim their place in public discourse and decision-making at all levels. This research project, therefore, hopes to contribute to this process by

- making visible how women have experienced the war and have contributed to the process of peacemaking and peacebuilding;
- providing data for the formulation of policies that are sensitive and responsive to women's particular situations;
- asserting the right of women who have carried the burden of the armed conflict to determine, wherever they are, the terms by which peace will be articulated and the contours around which the future society will be shaped.² ■

² Peacefare is a word coined by Norwegian Peace Researcher Johan Galtung.

introduction

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iversal and lasting peace will not be attained without the full participation of all members of the society, women and men alike. Beginning with this general realization, the members of the Project Group on Women and Peace decided to focus their inquiry on the role of Filipino women in advancing a just and lasting peace in the country.

This focus was reinforced by the general observation that the Philippine peace process – that is, the multi-sided efforts to strike out the roots of the armed conflicts besetting the country in order to arrive at a negotiated political settlement with the parties in conflict as a step to building a just and lasting peace – has largely been male-dominated.

The Project Team observed, for instance, that the members of the bodies and commissions that have been established by the government to lead and coordinate its peace program have been drawn from institutions that are traditionally male enclaves. These institutions include the defense ministry, the local government and Cabinet, and the churches.

As a result, even though a considerable number of women are in the thick and thin of the numerous consultations and campaigns that have been waged, the men for the most part, have held the leadership of these initiatives. Women invariably have been charged with the important but nevertheless secondary secretariat functions which served as the locomotive for all of these efforts.

On another plane, the Project Team realized that the peace process does not operate only at the level of national politics. In grassroots communities, especially in areas which have been used as battleground for the ideological and political conflicts between armed groups, peace is equally desired.

While national groups (governmental and non-governmental) have come out with comprehensive peace agendas that reflect on the national situation, grassroots people, particularly the women, may have their own concepts of peace and their own perceptions of their participation in the process.

To sum up, the Project Team felt that the status of women in the Philippine peace process needs further study and affirmative action at both the national and local levels. However, there are more established peace groups responding to the needs at the national level. Members of the Project Team, in fact, belong to these national-level groups. It is therefore the local level peace processes that are more grossly underresearched and unelaborated.

With these observations in mind, the Project Team agreed to give special attention to grassroots women's concepts of peace and to their perceptions of their possible (and actual) participation in the peace process.

The Project Team also agreed to use the methodology of conscientizing or participatory research. This is a method that incorporates a catalyst role for the researchers. In this case, researchers make grassroots women aware of the bigger peace process, and of their potential role in it, and of its relevance applicable to their specific circumstances.

The more tangible output of this method and project are: (1) a framework addressing the need to enhance the participation of grassroots women, and women in general, in the peace process; and (2) a set of recommendations which could be used as a guide in policy formulation and program implementation leading to the institutionalization of these concerns. ■

research objectives

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To promote the role of women in the peace process; and
2. to make the peace process gender-sensitive.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To find out how women, particularly those in poor, rural communities who have suffered the brunt of militarization, perceive the effects of the armed conflict;
2. to find out how these women perceive peace and their role in the process of building peace;
3. to generate data and develop a framework useful to future projects on "women and peace"; and,
4. to define direct intervention measures to address the concerns of women in situations of armed conflict and enhance their role as peace-builders.

F **FRAMEWORK**
paper

framework paper

GRASSROOTS WOMEN AND THE PHILIPPINE PEACE PROCESS

LOCAL VIS-A-VIS NATIONAL PEACE PROCESSES

The resolution of conflicts involving the state and opposition against the state necessarily entails solutions at the national or state level. The commitment of these national actors to a peace process is essential for any negotiated settlement to take place. Moreover, since such conflicts can generally be traced to structural inequities, only major structural transformation could comprehensively address the conflicts.

The peace process is thus termed "national" because it involves actors who represent groups and forces with a nation-wide character. These actors include the two parties in direct conflict – namely, the Philippine government and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front, and third parties known collectively as the "peace constituency."³

The peace process is also national because it aims to address the major concerns besetting the nation and seeks reforms that would spur social transformation.

But while national politics becomes the focal arena for this national peace process, local communities are also centers in themselves with their own set of actors and action-reaction processes.

In fact, it is in the local communities where structural violence is directly manifested and where, therefore, community residents have a direct stake in the resolution of the conflicts.

³ Since our case studies are concerned with these parties, we therefore do not include the MNLF and other opposition armed groups here.

Local communities in themselves, however, cannot eradicate the roots of structural violence, since, as mentioned, the latter involves national actors and national-level policies.

However, local communities can undertake local peace processes geared at lowering the level of political violence in their community. A lowered level of violence will allow for other modes of political and non-military intervention, make conditions more favorable for organizing work for popular empowerment, foster political and cultural pluralism, and enable the community members to plot out and initiate socio-economic development projects.

In effect, local communities, especially those that have gone through actual war situations, can start to reconstruct their socio-economic and political lives even as the national-level resolution of conflict has yet to be achieved.

Local reconstruction of families and communities need not wait for the nationally negotiated political settlement of the armed conflict. Admittedly, such efforts would necessarily be limited by the structural constraints. The absence of violence could in fact be tenuous in the light of constant threat of the eruption of armed confrontations.

However, by building strong peace constituencies at the grassroots, local communities can evolve into moral and political forces able to negotiate their own interests vis-a-vis the armed groups. By rebuilding and enhancing their socio-economic lives, they can meet their basic needs and become more active peace movers.

In so doing, local processes could in fact enhance the national peace process. "National" becomes, in effect, the sum total of all such local peace processes. But it is also more than the mere sum of its parts. As the national process progresses, it also enhances the progress of peace building at the grassroots.

Local peace processes can thus be viewed as strategically linked to the national process for peace and social transformation.

ROLE OF WOMEN AT THE LOCAL PROCESS

Women can be valuable actors in local peace processes. As wives, widows, mothers, and young women who are direct or indirect victims of violence, women can transform their negative experiences into positive action designed to end violence and build new societies.

Without the realization that they can act now from where they are, many grassroots women may feel they do not have the time, resources, and skill to engage in national level politics. However, the realization that peace and development progress together and that the process begins with and proceeds from their homes and communities can effectively empower women to work for peace. ■

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A WOMAN'S PRAYER

by Judy Chicago

*And then all that has divided us will merge
and then compassion will be wedded to power
and then softness will come to a world
that is harsh and unkind
and then both men and women will be gentle
and then both women and men will be strong
and then all will be rich and free and varied
and then the greed of some will give way
to the needs of many
and then all will share equality
in the earth's abundance
and then all will care for the sick
and the weak and the old
and then all will nourish the young
and then all will cherish life's creatures
and then all will live in harmony
with each other and the earth
and then everywhere will be called eden once again.*

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