

**PLAN FRAMEWORK
of the Philippine Plan for
Gender-Responsive Development
1995-2025**



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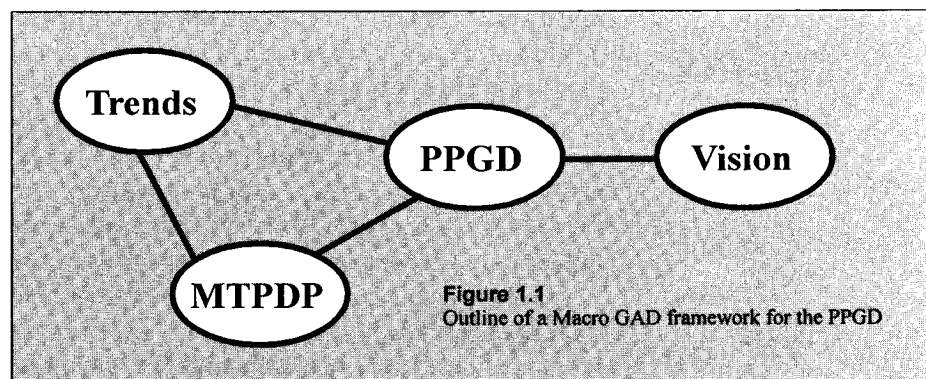
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MACRO CONTEXT FOR THE PPGD

The *Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD)* rests on a vision of development that is equitable, sustainable, free from violence, respectful of human rights, supportive of self-determination and the actualization of human potentials, and participatory and empowering. It places people at the center and aims to make development work for all groups. However, it recognizes that discrimination exists on the basis of gender, class and ethnicity. In the light of historical gender inequalities and inequities, it puts greater emphasis on women as a disadvantaged group.

A perspective plan for the next three decades should take into account not only the present reality but also future prospects and possibilities (Figure 1.1). Chief among these are: population growth and the creation of megacities; globalization of markets, tastes or investments, advances in technology, shifts in investments and the attendant division of labor; and the rise of social movements. Arrayed against these are the erosion of biodiversity as a result of a development that has pillaged the environment; diseases, including the acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other pandemics; and the erosion of nation-states brought about by globalization and retribalization



The PPGD should likewise consider strategies for development that will guide investment and expenditure of efforts and resources. To date, PPGD is linked to the *Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP)*, 1993-1998 and its strategies, namely: investment in education and in building human capacities through skills training and poverty alleviation programs; promotion of global competitiveness, which covers export expansion, liberalization of markets and foreign exchange, fiscal and monetary reform; and industrialization, including development of growth and tourism centers, and promotion of cash crops and raw

materials for industries. These strategies, however, need to be reconsidered in the light of the PPGD vision and future possibilities.

Economic, ecological, sociopolitical and similar prospects interact with Philippine development strategies to bring about positive and negative effects on the populace, in general, and women, in particular. To realize the PPGD vision, strategies have to be designed to explore alternative life conditions for women and men; support activities that would enhance women's chances for self-determination and participation; and actively espouse the creation of a world that guarantees gender equity, promotes sustainable development, respects human rights and abhors violence.

1. Looking into the Future

As the previous decades, the next three decades promise to be full of contradictions: amalgamation and dissolution, free trade and economic alliances, plow agriculture and information revolution, growth and destruction. These contradictions play themselves out in different settings with dramatically divergent results. Some prosper, others wither; some gain strength, others weaken. Similarly, in the first decades of the new millennium, some groups will prosper as others weaken, nations as well as peoples. Discussed below are some of the things that are likely to happen from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s.

1.1 Population, markets and patterns of growth

By 2025, the world's population is projected to reach 8.5 billion from 5.5 billion in 1992. Expected to top the population are six Asian and four non-Asian countries: China, 1,540 million; India, 1,390 million; United States, 320 million; Nigeria, 290 million; Indonesia, 280 million; Pakistan, 270 million; Bangladesh, 220 million; Brazil, 220 million; the Russia Federation, 160 million; and Iran, 140 million. Ranked 15th, the Philippines is estimated to experience a population increase from 65 million in 1992 to 105 million by 2025.

The population explosion, coupled with dynamic investment and production in many parts of Asia, makes Asia the fastest growing market in the world. Demand for food and other basic goods will increase, and likewise, markets for durable and luxury items may be expected to flourish as member states become more affluent. Given the increasing population density and the rapid industrialization in Asia, including the Philippines, food will be increasingly supplied not by domestic producers but by producers in land-rich countries in the Americas, Australia and New Zealand.

Increasing population pressure and the unevenness of economic growth in Asia may increase intraregional migration problems. Female and male workers will continue to leave less-rapidly developing Asian states for more economically developed states, and tensions between sending and receiving countries are expected to persist. Unless the Philippines experiences dramatic economic growth, it is expected to remain a supplier of semiskilled and skilled workers to the rest of the world.

The blurring of boundaries will be magnified in the case of markets for goods and capital. The approval of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in January 1995 will pave the way for free and expanded trade and investment worldwide. Competitiveness and innovation will mark successful economies and firms. The liberalization of trade and investment will be accompanied by the increasing globalization of business. As their business becomes more global, corporation will increasingly operate autonomously from nation-states.

The creation of economic growth triangles or areas -- that of the South China economies; Singapore, Johore (south or Peninsular Malaysia) and Riau (in Indonesia); and Mindanao (Philippines), Sabah (Malaysia), and Brunei -- that cut across national boundaries is expected to continue and even expand. Increasing competition in trade and investment will also further encourage regional economic cooperation beyond the European Union and the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA).

In the first decades of the new millennium, the newly industrialized countries (NICS) are expected to shift to high-tech industries. Consequently, Southeast Asian states, China, India and Pakistan will compete for the niches left by NICS and corner the market shares abandoned by the latter due to changing comparative advantage. A considerable part of this comparative advantage depends on how cheap or expensive women's labor has become in an area.

Trade and market liberalization are expected to provide greater investment incentives, transform small and light industries, promote improved production and productivity, and create new employment opportunities for both women and men. These gains, however, can easily be undermined by the negative effects unregulated growth could have on the environment; the immediate adverse effects of trade liberalization on vulnerable producers, such as small farmers and manufacturers; and the exploitation of cheap female labor. Economic development is also threatened by what kind of investments the Philippines, an "emerging" market, attracts and how growth is financed. Highly speculative investments may not increase production or create jobs for women or for men, but may render the local economy highly vulnerable to collapse since they are withdrawn once the return to investments is threatened or other markets become more promising. Meanwhile, foreign debt and its consequences -- structural adjustment and diversion of domestic resources for debt servicing -- may bring about growth but at the cost of so much misery, particularly among the women who would have to provide goods and services that were once supplied by government or by the market at an affordable price.

The PPGD vision of a future that protects people's right to food and a decent life and that promotes peace and social justice requires a type of economic development that is less dependent on foreign debt, and one that recognizes both the positive effects of economic liberalization and the need to protect vulnerable groups, such as women workers and small farmers.

1.2 Information revolution and education

Giant strides in information technology and telecommunications have had and will continue to have significant impacts on the lives of people. Worldwide access to computers, satellite broadcasting, telecommunications-based economic transactions and other activities using new information technologies are expected to reshape work, recreation, education and even social relations. The advent of the Information Age in the Philippines is definitely expected to have tremendous impacts on women and men.

Computer-based technology makes access to information more readily available. For those traversing the information superhighway, informatics opens up a whole avenue for learning and for information accessing and exchange. As computer costs steadily decline and educational software becomes more readily available, schools and other training institutions are beginning to recognize the potentials of telecommunications-aided educational delivery systems. Young women and men are becoming computer literate and will likely have all the benefits of the information superhighway at their disposal. Through the Internet, libraries can be scanned. Interactive systems and virtual reality will change the configuration of the learning environment, making it possible to simulate conditions and situations that one could only invoke mentally in the past. Lesson plans for a 10-year basic education may be successfully compressed into half that period, leaving the rest of the time for new avenues of exploration and learning. A network of schools dedicated to training young people in encoding and word processing have sprung in the past two decades. By the year 2025, deliberate instruction in the use of computers may have become an integral part of the school curriculum, probably integrated into or supplementary to the subject of "writing."

Considering the current cost of computers in the Philippines, one can safely assume that middle and upper classes benefit the most today from computer-aided learning. However, with the encouragement given to the introduction of computers in public schools, coupled with the reduction in computer cost, computer-aided learning may be available to the lower classes as well. Since training in computers presently occurs in tertiary or secondary levels, and if enrollment trends continue, more female than male students will benefit from the training.

Future possibilities offered by information augurs well for women's development. It can lead to the realization of the PPGD vision towards actualizing human potentials by streaming women into innovative high-technology levels of knowledge and employment. It may also result in greater equality of education and employment opportunities for women and men.

1.3 Media and culture

Interactive television (TV) has been described as offering subscribers not only substantially more channels but also computer-driven facilities that will provide home banking, educational programs, and video on demand. It will allow subscribers to direct their own movies, offering the choice of various story lines as the plot unfolds. Using a powerful black box attached to an ordinary television,

interactive TV will harness massive computer power along cable networks and connect homes to the much-touted world of multimedia and the information superhighway.

Global television already exists in most countries in the South. The film and television media deliver the same images throughout the global villages, and promote a North American consumerist lifestyle. Cable television and satellite transmissions have brought right into living rooms a wide range of imported television programs ranging from Disney cartoons to soap operas and game shows to the horrors of the civil wars in Africa and Eastern Europe. They also flash images of women as decision makers, newsmakers as well as newscasters. However, some of the images commoditize women, as when their bodies continue to be used to sell things, or reinforce roles that are deemed too traditional in many cultures.

In the Philippines, global images of women are woven into the dominant notions about women and gender relations. The concept of the home as the woman's place finds expression in many advertisements and programs. Similarly, the use of the female body to sell cars and other products tend to reflect the way in which a society renders women as objects. Finally, dramas on broadcast and print media usually include scenes of rape or other forms of violence against women. In some cases, these scenes are totally gratuitous and have nothing to do with the plot. For as long as decisions on media content are made by men or by male-dominated institutions, all these images will likely be continuously exploited by both Philippine and foreign mass media. More progressive images of and messages about women would remain the exception.

The PPGD vision of gender equity, of respect for human rights, of self-determination and of women's empowerment requires that women struggle for access to media and participation in its production and decision-making processes. These recognize the crucial role the media system plays in every major process of conflict, change, integration and control.

1.4 Technological niches and employment

The production of information is a vast industry which requires physical space, infrastructure and facilities to create. Thus, it is expected that certain sites will grow into post-industrial centers for information generation and dissemination. In a country like the Philippines, these post-industrial centers will likely co-exist alongside more traditional agriculture, agribusiness industries and labor-intensive small and medium-scale commercial and service enterprises.

Within the traditional production sectors, different "ages" of production technologies will be found, although more progressive firms -- particularly multinational firms -- will probably take advantage of advances in genetic engineering, biochemistry and similar fields. These technological changes will define not only new raw materials and new products but also new possibilities of producing old things. Some of the new industries or firms will be based in export processing zones (EPZs) that have been or will be established in the country.

The location of the post-industrial center will be crucial since this might bring about greater concentration of activities and populations in key areas of the world or a country. These information nerve centers are presently situated in major cities of the world, such as Tokyo, London and New York. As more countries are drawn into the global information network, it is expected that more cities will become information industry hubs, the strategic nodes of the information superhighway. In the Philippines, Manila and Cebu can be expected to be the hubs for information, or areas where banking, education and media activities are conducted electronically.

The nature of work in information centers and that in industrial areas or sites for education and governance affect gender roles and individual access to benefits and resources. While work may be done at home in computerized centers, industries which require machine operators and manual workers will continue to divide a workday into work/productive and recreational/reproductive hours.

Until the 1990s, the agricultural sector was the major employer in the Philippines, absorbing at least two out of every five employed workers. The services sector employed 34 percent; manufacturing, construction, transportation and communication, 21 percent.

These sectors are likely to continue providing jobs through the turn of the century. Job opportunities in the various technological niches, however, will affect groups of workers differently. Workers with access to resources, including education or training in high technology, will be able to avail themselves of the new jobs offered by the computer/information revolution. Those residing or could afford to reside in manufacturing and information enclaves would have better chances of landing jobs than those from distant areas.

In the more traditional agricultural sector, demand for labor may be expected to decline as more and more farmland is lost to residential subdivisions or to industrial estates. In response to international competition, local farms will strive to become more productive and cost-efficient. While this is bound to result in cheaper food and other agricultural products, the net employment effects on women are unclear as of yet. Nonetheless, agricultural employment will likely to continue to fall as non-agricultural jobs and overseas employment become more attractive.

As in the agricultural sector, restructuring of the manufacturing sector is bound to occur as a result of less restricted foreign trade. Industries that enjoy comparative advantage will persist, while those that do not will likely die or will be forced to transform themselves. In the case of textile and garments industries, which are unlikely to be able to compete with products from lower-wage countries such as China and Vietnam, Philippine producers will attempt to regain comparative advantage by resorting to cost-saving arrangements (including domestic outwork or homework) or pressing for lower wages. Either alternative puts workers, many of whom in the industry are women, at a great disadvantage.

As in previous decades, the jobless from the agricultural and manufacturing sectors will veer towards the service sector or engage in countless microenterprises of the self-employed. Unlike in the past, however, some of these enterprises may be high technology home-based jobs, such as data encoding, word processing, tour packaging and labor recruitment and placement.

Informatics has created a whole new line of work: encoding, programming, software and hardware development and maintenance of information systems and their machines. Schools which teach encoding and word processing have mushroomed in cities, ensuring the supply of labor for lower-end jobs in the superhighway. On the other end of the line, global business and banking networks are interested in using such skills. There are a number of companies operating in the Philippines today which serve the information requirements of multinationals and other foreign-based businesses. With increasing globalization of work and investments, such demands are likely to grow and draw in more workers and computer-related jobs await women and men, but probably more women since they compose the greater proportion of tertiary-level graduates.

While informatics has opened up new work opportunities, the position of Filipino working women and men vis-a-vis the rest of the world may not appear too rosy. Encoding would be at the lowest end of the production line for information. Software development, which commands higher wages, are likely to occur abroad, or, as happening now, to be done in the country for foreign firms. Encoders are expected to be women, while engineers, who would occupy the higher positions in the hierarchy as programmers and hardware specialists, would likely be men. Hence, the danger is imminent that the information industry will replicate anew a hierarchy of gender-differentiated jobs, a stratification that may cut across national boundaries and effect an international division of labor that has begun in the 1980s. Moreover, bringing home data or word processing jobs will just be the latest form of flexibilization, a labor market trend that pushes workers to casual and informal-sector jobs.

These dangers, however, should not obscure the promises of the information revolution by way of knowledge, jobs, new technologies and the like. Nonetheless, to secure the PPGD vision of self-determination, the Philippines should strive to gain some control over key aspects of both computer software and hardware development. In so doing, employment for women and men will be generated not only in the lower-end but also in the better-paying end of the informatics job market.

1.5 Movements of labor and capital and the new international division of labor

In response to government incentives and prospects of low wages, corporations have moved their businesses to low-wage countries. This transnational movement of capital generally boosts local production and employment. It also invariably ushers in a division of labor which is based mainly on wage differences between workers of North and South, and between male and female workers.

The new international division of labor is expected to become more entrenched in the succeeding decades. Less developed countries are expected to supply advanced industrial countries with cheap labor. This comes in two forms: labor for labor-intensive and low-technology industries that are being phased out in advanced countries and relocated, through overseas investments, in labor-surplus underdeveloped countries, and “international labor circulants” or overseas contract workers needed by home industry and service-sector firms in the North, offering low-paying, labor-intensive, hazardous and generally unattractive jobs. These labor circulants are highly mobile migrant workers who seek employment in countries where labor is scarce and wages are relatively high.

Labor circulation has and is likely to have a gender dimension. In the Philippines, there is a trend towards feminization of migration as more and more women are working overseas mostly as domestic helpers, chambermaids, nurses, teachers, hospital attendants, waitresses and entertainers. These women occupy low-skilled, low-paying and low-status jobs in a gender-segregated labor market.

In developing countries, like the Philippines, foreign investments have found their way into EPZs. These businesses tap mainly young, female workers for the low-skilled, low-paid and monotonous jobs available. Problems have plagued and, unless government moves in, will continue to haunt EPZ workers. These include substandard wages, strict and ever-rising production quotas, exposure to extreme temperatures and harmful chemicals, union-busting and sexual harassment. Outside the EPZs, conditions are not much better in the export-oriented factories which may be subsidiaries of transnational corporations or Filipino firms tied to foreign markets through the subcontracting chain.

The higher female unemployment rate weakens the bargaining power of employed women workers. Wages for “feminine” jobs have been kept low by the fact that for every woman who quits her job due to low pay or management abuse, there are so many who would be willing to take her place. The worldwide trends towards the informalization and casualization of female labor -- more and more women eke out a living at home or on the streets rather than in factories and offices -- have worsened women’s position as these trends render women workers more invisible, unprotected and unorganized.

It is expected that if the labor market tightens, wages will rise. The PPGD vision of gender equity and equality calls for the improvement of wages of both female and male workers, paying workers, regardless of gender, the same rate for work of equal value. In addition, the goal of self-determination and women’s empowerment requires that women workers should be encouraged to organize themselves to protect their interests vis-a-vis their employers or contractors.

1.6 Megacities and the family

Migration patterns of today will continue, with rural migrants being drawn, as before, to the densely populated cities of Manila and Cebu. The continuing migration to crowded cities will strain basic services and exacerbate traffic problems.

Urban workers face different possibilities. Unskilled workers will end up, as they do now in informal-sector activities or jobs. More skilled workers will have more options. Information-industry work may be distributed so that home terminals will enable workers to accomplish their work at home. This may decrease the flow of traffic. In present-day circumstances, women are more likely to do work in home terminals than men. However, if wages are attractive for home-based information processing, then men can possibly be drawn into this network of virtual offices. Home life and its contours may then change.

Those unable to work at home or are employed outside the information industry may opt for a different lifestyle: leave the children at home in the suburbs with a parent or with the grandparents and see one another only at weekends. In the first case, the woman is likely to choose to remain with the children; in the second, the nature of family life becomes dramatically different from usual expectations. Moreover, the pressure of working away from the family could also result in smaller family size.

Thus, life within megacities will have impacts on the structure and composition of households. When one of the parents in an intact family-household opts to leave a rural or less-urbanized setting for productive work in the city, the household left behind will inevitably be a single-parent one. If the jobs are attractive to males, then the household will be female-headed, and the present levels of such households can be expected to increase. In instances where more service-sector jobs are available, the single parent left behind will be a male.

To compensate for the loss of one adult worker, it is expected that extended family households will increase -- especially when the household is female-headed -- to provide additional supervision over the children, and even to augment household income. Where both parents migrate to the city for work, their households will be headed by surrogate parents, most likely the grandparents. Hence, children will be reared and socialized by grandparents, while the parents are spared the responsibilities of caring for and disciplining of children.

Inevitably, these new household formations will have impact on intergenerational relationships, gender roles, as well as on value formation among the younger generation. The dangers of marital discord may increase as a result of physical separation, especially if a second inner-city family is formed by the migrant parent who is lonely for family companionship. Discord in some instances may be translated into domestic violence.

The PPGD vision of empowering women may be realized in cities of the future, through their direct participation in the production sectors. Women in female-headed households will be drawn into decision-making situations, enabling them to work out solutions to problems and to determine for themselves their own future. New household formations likewise have the potentials of redefining gender roles in the households, thus encouraging greater gender equality and equity therein.

1.7 Women's health and reproductive technologies

A current concern about women's health revolves around the right of women to have their health needs addressed as women and not merely for their roles as mothers. This has forced the expansion of reproductive health concerns beyond maternal and child health to include fertility regulation, sexual health, infertility, safe motherhood and child survival. Influencing response to a broader agenda, however, are such factors as the government's efficiency and effectiveness in making available to all, married or not, protection against unwanted pregnancies and in ensuring services for women's health, and the information women and men are given about sexual health, fertility regulation and general health care. Moreover, any improvement in women's health that depends on widening contraceptive choice will likely entail surmounting the politics of a nation well-entrenched in the religious dictum and by the circular consequences of poverty and ill health.

Global estimates show that more than half a million women die each year because of pregnancy and childbirth-related causes, with many of these deaths found in developing countries. However, the death rates have been slowing down and are expected to continue declining. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of maternal deaths could have been prevented had women been able to prevent unwanted pregnancies and high-risk births, including births to older women, high parity births and closely spaced births. Unless these factors are addressed, safe motherhood will remain beyond the reach of many women.

The total fertility rate in the Philippines stands at 4.09. It is lower than in 1970, and is expected to decline but slightly in the next three decades. This is indicative of women's condition, their incapability to make reproductive choices, and the headway that has yet to be attained in making contraceptive use more prevalent among couples.

Moving in the direction of affording more choices for fertility regulation are attempts to develop and market new contraceptives: a method involving a hormonal contraceptive implant that is almost 100-percent effective; a female barrier method (the femdom), touted to be more convenient to use and is already in the market, and a male contraceptive pill, now on its final stages of laboratory testing, which provides a rare exception to contraceptive technology that puts the burden of protection on women. (An abortion pill, RU480, is already available elsewhere but not in the Philippines where abortion is illegal and unconstitutional.)

Even as more contraceptives become widely known and available, however, couples may desist from using any of them due to ignorance or cost of the contraceptive. The increasing use of modern contraceptive methods in the country, however, may hold, bolstered by an aggressive information campaign aimed at overcoming the knowledge barrier and educating people on their options, and a cost subsidy or regulation that should bring contraceptive methods within the reach of many couples.

A great danger to women's well-being, STDs are now hyperendemic, and are likely to remain so, in many rural areas where facilities for treatment and diagnosis are usually inadequate and the cultural atmosphere is uncooperative to medical

treatment. Since sexually transmitted organisms are easily passed from a man to a woman than vice versa, and since early detection and hence early treatment is facilitated in males due to the anatomical characteristics of the female, STDs have more serious consequences for women than for men. Yet, the most effective method against STDs -- the condom -- is for men and its usage is controlled by men.

While venereal diseases like gonorrhoea, syphilis and chancroid are still common, they have been replaced by new bacterial and viral syndromes, including the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), a second generation of sexually transmitted organisms frequently more difficult to treat and eradicate. The Philippine government estimated that in 1992, there were 30,000 to 35,000 HIV positive persons in the country. Many of these are professionals, managers, service and production workers.

AIDs will continue to pose a greater threat to developing countries like the Philippines, where spread is faster because of the realities of prostitution, sex tourism and labor-exportation strategies and where the population's immune systems are weak due to malnutrition and overcrowding. Transcending medical issues, AIDs puts additional pressure both on the government resources for AIDs education, research and health care facilities and on society's humanitarian systems. One challenge lies with the development of contraceptives, but without a strong tradition of contraceptive research and development, the Philippines could only rely on developed countries.

The PPGD vision that seeks to empower women to control their fertility and sexuality with informed choice and minimum health problems specifies that fertility limitation should not merely be seen as a means to achieve societal objectives. It constitutes part of human rights, as do safe motherhood and access to health services.

1.8 Physical environment and biodiversity

The continuous destruction of the environment is said to endanger biodiversity, or the variety of life in all its forms found on earth -- all species of plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain and the intricate ecosystems they form. It includes both number and frequency of ecosystems, species or genes in a given area.

Biodiversity is crucial in regulating global temperature, atmospheric quality and climatic patterns, and in maintaining stability of ecosystems which are crucial life-support systems for humans. An area equivalent to 800,000 square miles of young forest can absorb about one billion tons of carbon dioxide. Thus, the loss of forest ecosystems brought about by deforestation threatens not only the flora and fauna but also the quality of the air we breathe. From 1860 to 1987, a period equivalent to one and a quarter of a century, 60 billion tons of carbon dioxide were released into the atmosphere due to forest clearing and other changes in land use. Massive deforestation, the global estimate of which is 56,700 hectares destroyed daily or 2,349 hectares per hour, has destroyed wildlife habitats, leading to the extinction of certain species. In the Philippines alone, there are already about 60,000 species of organisms which are in danger of extinction even as we reportedly clear about 80,000 hectares of forest annually.

Biodiversity is also important for food security. There is enormous potential for increasing our food supplies through the utilization of untapped biological resources. Recent estimates show that even as there are about 75,000 edible plant species, only about 7,000 (or roughly one percent) is being used by human societies. A lot of plant species also serve as raw materials for the production of life-saving drugs. Biodiversity holds enormous potentials for new pharmaceutical drugs for cancer, leukemia and possibly, even AIDs. In the Philippines alone, there are at least 68 common plants with medicinal value.

Developments in biotechnology have provided mechanisms for the preservation of biodiversity. They also enable the storage of enormous amount of genetic materials that serve as security for the *in vivo* loss of biodiversity. However, these new developments have also provided the foundation for the emergence of a new trend, known in some literature as "botanical imperialism," wherein rich countries and scientific enclaves are able to control biological resources by patenting rights on life forms.

The principal threats to biodiversity include high rate of population growth and its adverse effects on forest habitats and marine sanctuaries; economic systems and policies that fail to put value on the environment and its resources, inequity in the ownership, management and flow of benefits from both the use and conservation of biological resources; deficiencies in knowledge and its applications, legal and institutional systems that promote unsustainable utilization. Unfortunately, there are no indications that these threats to biodiversity will disappear in the next three decades. The state has long put emphasis on economic growth without adequately addressing the need for quality of life in all its aspects -- economic, socio-cultural, political-institutional, psychological and ecological. The Philippine government is now involved in an array of policy and program interventions that would like to reverse the trend. Some programs appear successful, but others fail.

The dangers to biodiversity could also be crosslisted as threats to, burden of, or key issues for women. The population debate has become a woman's concern for reasons ranging from women's struggle to control their own reproduction to issues being marginalized or trivialized by religious debates. Economic systems have been confronted by policies which are mostly gender-blind and make women's contribution -- and culpability, in case of environmentally stressful modes of production such as unsustainable upland farming practices -- invisible. Inequity in access to and control of resources and benefits has always been at the forefront of gender and development debates. Women's knowledge has not been given serious attention, if not totally neglected, in the generation of technologies for engaging the environment and its resources. It has been argued that policy and institutional systems of exploitation are manifestations of male bias. Destruction of ecosystems by male-controlled modes of production has, in many cases, reserved its most burdensome consequences for women. For example, even as timber harvesting has bled the forest dry of its resources, it is the women who have to walk an extra mile or an extra hour to gather fuelwood in the face of dwindling supply or to get water for their domestic needs. Indeed, the loss of biodiversity is life-threatening, but it is especially more threatening to marginalized women.

The PPGD vision of sustainable development that equally benefits women and men rests on a sustainable environment. The protection of habitat and the conservation of biodiversity are crucial in achieving this end.

1.9 Social movements and civil society

Civil society is “the self-organized section of society” which lies outside state structures. In its larger definition, it includes “all voluntary or free associations not only in the popular sector but also the private corporate sector.” In its narrow sense, it may be limited to the politically active popular sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), people’s organizations (POs), and other cause-oriented groups and political organizations.” Collectively, they form “the organized base of citizens’ movements pushing a reform agenda into the mainstream of public policy or reorganizing society around a radical vision.”

The likelihood, barring a return to authoritarianism and a crackdown on all political movements, is that the forces of civil society will strengthen themselves vis-a-vis the state. All over the world, there is a trend for self-organized associations to assert themselves as social movements acting independently, and oftentimes critically of government. In the Philippines, the cause-oriented sections of the women’s movement played an important role in the struggle against the martial law regime. After February 1986, women’s groups continued to emerge, strengthen themselves and exert pressure and influence on government policies and programs. This kind of dynamics is happening not only at the local or community level but also at the national, subnational, regional and international levels. The United Nations system, for example, has had to increasingly contend with NGOs, finding it a necessity to organize parallel NGO fora alongside official government conferences. The forthcoming women’s world conference and NGO forum in Beijing, which will attract an estimated 50,000 women, are just an example.

Social movements in the Philippines and elsewhere in the South are heavily politicized, being rooted in class-based movements for national liberation and social justice. With the EDSA revolt in the Philippines and the collapse of Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe, there is less centralist homogeneity and more pluralist heterogeneity among them. The centrifugal tendencies have sometimes led to acrimonious debates and parting of ways, but somehow, a common general direction is maintained on parallel tracks by many groups on basic issues. Traditional working class and peasant movements are now complemented by ecological, peace, feminist and human rights movements that are pushing for more democracy and pluralism not only within the state but also among themselves. Lately, there has been a trend among many NGOs towards closer cooperation with government in certain fields of endeavor where officials at the helm exhibit an openness to change. NGO personalities have also ventured into mainstream politics to pursue their reform agenda. The effort to work with and influence government, however, does not mean losing the critical sense which NGOs and POs are known for.

Within civil society, women’s movements are playing an important and crucial role in facilitating a shift to a development paradigm which is human-centered and

not merely growth-oriented, gender-responsive and not adrocentric, sustainable and not environmentally destructive, holistic rather than fragmented and alienated. In the Philippines, sustained advocacy by women's groups on gender issues and women's empowerment is resulting in positive changes in the value systems of both women and men. There is an increasing acceptance of the need for gender equality and equity and more concrete action for their realization in practice.

The PPGD vision rests on democratic, participatory and empowering processes of effecting social changes towards human-centered development. The strengthening of civil society, in general, and women's movement, in particular, are consistent with this vision.

1.10 Erosion of nation-states and retribalization

The physical environment is but one of the fragile elements of the future. Also at risk is the integrity of nation-states as a result of the emergence of global markets. It globalized the bureaucracy and led to the emergence of international institutions which operate outside the boundaries of nation-states. These institutions range from multinational business conglomerates and industrial corporations to multilateral aid institutions and international private voluntary organizations. The trend is likely to intensify at the turn of the century onwards. It is safe to assume that by the year 2025, the intrusion of these international institutions into the turf of the nation-states will even become more manifest. Already present is the weakening of state control in trade with the establishment of the WTO. In most parts of the South, development activities have created much dependence on foreign policy conditionalities and has limited the policy options of many governments. The combination of trade liberalization and foreign-driven development activities, when taken the context of societies which are influenced by neocological culture and further homogenized by modern technologies of mass communication, will undoubtedly create limits for state action.

The resistance to global homogenization, surprisingly, is not coming from states, as seen from the frenzy with which Southern governments readily ratified the most recent GATT. Most state institutions are already buying, or are already deep in their adherence to, a global discourse for development. They become effective mechanisms for this global homogenization. Meanwhile, the remnants of the movement from the radical left is struggling to define for itself a new politics. This has effectively weakened the prospect of the left as the major anchor from which resistance to globalization can be waged. The site of resistance to the globalization and the devaluation of difference is now found in the movement of nations and marginality groups -- ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, untouchables, Islamic groups. What is characteristic about these movements is that they are being waged by groups which have been assaulted by state-building processes and are also threatened by global homogenization.

In the Philippines, the increasing politicization of indigenous peoples against the onslaught of aggressive development is symptomatic of a trend. The resistance of the Ata-Manobos in Mindanao against the government-sponsored forestry project is but one instance of the increasing assertiveness of marginalized groups. In the event that State power becomes an active agent of globalization, state-

sponsored development activities are no longer manifestations of autonomous state power but merely sad footnotes of a weakening state. Retribalization -- or the movement to define political boundaries not as reflections of colonially drawn countries but of culturally deemed communities -- becomes a logical reaction of marginalized groups to this dualism of weakening of state autonomy and strengthening of globalization. In the face of a politicized "tribal consciousness," attempts of State structures to regain dominance, or when one particular ethnic group would like to establish domination, ethnocide becomes a possible scenario. Thus, we now see the explosion of ethnic wars in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, and there are other stress points in the world where potential tribal or ethnic conflict exists. In Southern Philippines, Islamic fundamentalism, now assisted by an Islamic sense of community drawn from the Middle Eastern struggles, is again emerging as a serious challenge against the Philippine state.

The PPGD vision of women's empowerment and self-determination rests on an active women's movement. The trend of global homogenization from the top and outside, and retribalization from within, which is likely to intensify in the future, allows for the creation of spaces by which women's movements can flourish.

2. Scanning the Effects of Development Strategies on People

In seeking to stake a place for the Philippines in the global village of the future, the government intends to transform the Philippine economy into one of the world's NICs. To this end, it has chosen a multipronged strategy, including: investment in education and in building human capacities, promotion of international competitiveness and industrialization. Capping these is the centerpiece strategy of eliciting people's participation in governance as well as development.

The planned development, along with the expected changes around the world, could exacerbate present problems such as uneven growth within the country, continuing rural-urban migration and exportation of labor to other areas of the world, erosion of the environment, closing down or transformation of small and light industries and initial displacement of labor (see Figure 1.2). The effects on women are likely to take on specific form -- informalization of work and devaluation of women's work, gender stereotyping of employment opportunities, increasing burden for women, marginalization of women, violence against women, and objectification and/or commodification of women.

The Philippine development plan for 1993 to 1998, however, is also likely to usher in several positive changes. First, industrial and non-agricultural activities will be encouraged in some areas. This will create new employment opportunities, at least for some sections of the population. Communications and other infrastructure outside the population centers like Metro Manila and Cebu will be improved, making life easier not only for businesses but also for households. These will provide incentives for domestic and foreign investors. Moreover, the development strategy could bring about increased production and productivity. But more importantly, opportunities will be created for people's participation in

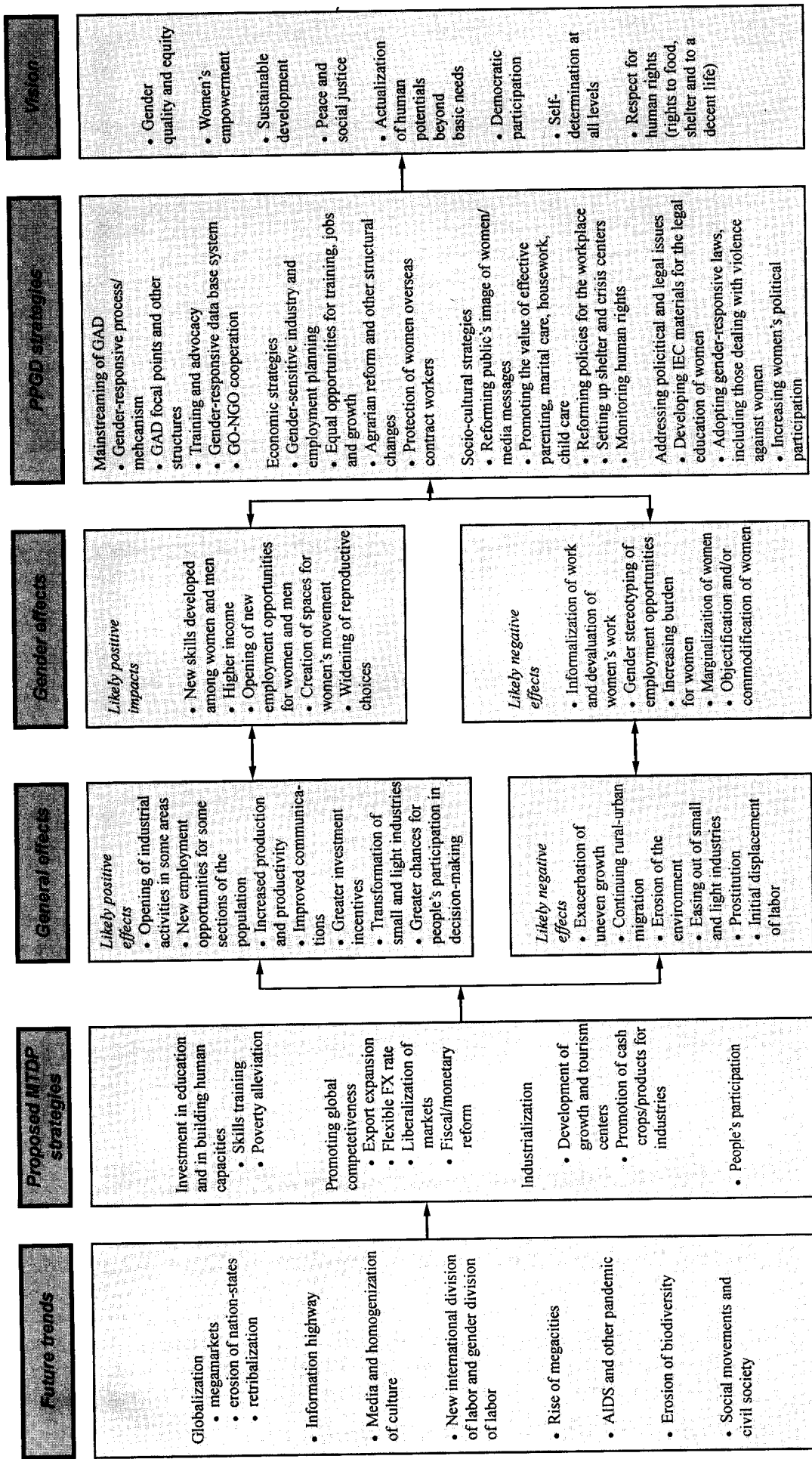


Figure 1.2. Summary of trends, effects, strategies and PPGD vision

decision making. The planned development and the foreseeable global changes are expected to exert positive effects on women. These include new skills to be developed among women (and men), new employment opportunities for women and men, spaces for women's movements and widening of reproductive choices. But all these expected positive effects depend on mechanisms or processes that would ensure that the general population -- not just the investors or particular sectors -- will participate in, and benefit from, development. The PPGD promises to serve as a mechanism that will remind the government that development should also serve the interest of women.

3. A Vision of the Future and How to Get There

As a counterpoint to present realities and prospects, the PPGD seeks to help bring about a future that is peaceful and just, unmarked by gender and other biases, respectful of human rights and democratic processes. Women, like men, are empowered to act on their own and to realize their potentials. Unity is sought while respecting the right of ethnic and other disadvantaged groups to self-determination. Moreover, development is people-centered, sensitive to the needs and concerns of women and men.

In 1987, the government took the initial steps toward attaining the vision when, in concert with different women's groups, it began drafting the *Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW), 1989-1992*, the precursor document to the PPGD. Adopted in 1989, the PDPW guided the efforts of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and other advocates to create a planning environment that is sensitive to gender concerns, and to promote greater participation of women in politics and decision-making, as well as in economic and social development and its benefits. It likewise committed the government to the following goals: widening the prospective roles for women; ensuring equity in access to basic welfare and social services, making services responsive to the special needs and concerns of women, and mitigating the difficulties faced by women associated with migration, prostitution and violence. To support gender-responsive planning and implementation, the PDPW also called for the development of statistical indicators relevant to the involvement of women in programs and projects.

By 1995, or six years after the adoption of the PDPW, the government has listed several achievements. Sex-disaggregated database has been established in a number of agencies and programs. Gender training and advocacy activities have been conducted in most departments and attached offices. Stronger legal mandates for gender advocacy in government have been secured, including Republic Act No. 7192 (otherwise known as the *Women in Development and Nation-Building Act*), which protects women's interests and participation in development; and the General Appropriations Act for 1995, which instructs government agencies to set aside a portion of their budgets for women/gender and development activities. Moreover, focal points have been formed in various government offices and the regional implementation of the PDPW has been tried out in three pilot regions. Lastly, a systematic monitoring scheme for PDPW Implementation has been installed.

However, most of these gains are shaky and may not be sustained without further support. Performance of government agencies on the different points varies dramatically, with only a handful of said agencies appearing to be truly committed to promoting gender equity and responding to other gender issues. In addition, the gender concerns of women workers in the private sector have yet to be addressed in a more comprehensive manner.

The PPGD is designed to continue PDPW initiatives and to push other issues more aggressively so as to attain its multi-faceted vision.

- (a) To promote gender equity and equality and to help women and men actualize their potentials, the PPGD pursues efforts to mainstream gender and development (GAD) in government and foster cooperation between government and NGOs; encourage gender-sensitive industry and employment planning, including equal opportunities for training in informatics and other fields ; adopt gender-sensitive laws; and promote the value of effective parenting and shared roles.
- (b) Its advocacy for democratic participation, women's empowerment and self-determination is supported by strategies to protect women's rights under and participation in, agrarian reform and other structural changes for rural development; increase women's political involvement; promote women's legal and political education; and reform media messages and public's image of women.
- (c) Respect for human rights and desire for peace and social justice underlie the strategies of protecting women overseas contract workers, setting up shelters and crisis center for women, adopting laws dealing with violence against women and the like, and monitoring human rights violations.
- (d) Sustainable development that equally benefits women and men rests on a sustainable environment, which constitutes part of the strategy for rural structural changes.

In addition, the PPGD relates the gender issues and strategies to macro forces and trends -- globalization, trade and market liberalization and the international division of labor, information revolution and interactive TV and the like -- the promise misery as they do a good life. Thus, it likewise posits broad courses of action, such as: adherence to a type of economic development that is less dependent on foreign debt, and one that recognizes both the positive effects of economic liberalization and the need to protect vulnerable groups, such as women workers and small farmers; streaming women into innovative high-technology levels of knowledge and employment; gaining some control over key aspects of both computer software and hardware development, thus generating employment for women and men not only in the lower-end but also in the better-paying end of the informatics job market, and creating an environment within which women could control their fertility and sexuality with informed choice and minimum health problems, achieve safe motherhood; and gain access to health services. The PPGD recognizes that development strategies can exacerbate both the benefits and the ill effects of macro and supranational forces. In response, it offers an alternative view of development, one that is gender-responsive and revolves around a humane and people-centered definition and practice of development.

BASIC SOCIO-CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. INTRODUCTION

The Philippine Development Plan for Women 1989-1992, (PDPW), which served as the government blueprint for integrating women in the development process, was a significant accomplishment. As a companion volume to the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), 1987-1992, the PDPW was the major vehicle for mainstreaming women's concern into the planning and implementation process.

The PDPW, as a stage in the struggle for women to overcome centuries of inequity, must be situated within an on-going history that traces its roots from the initiatives and victories of the women's movement in general, which are formally reflected in various international treaties and conventions, as well as in Philippine law. Particularly significant were the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN-CEDAW), on the international level. The explicit stipulations on the fundamental equality between men and women and other sections of the Philippine Constitution, the New Family Code of the Philippines, and the single statement in the MTPDP ("Women, who constitute half of the nation's population, shall be effectively mobilized") provided the base upon which the PDPW could spring.

Since the signing of Executive Order 348, which approved and adopted the PDPW, steady strides have been taken, building upon previous gains, towards institutionalizing gender concerns. Republic Act 7192, the Women in Development and Nation-Building Act, and its corresponding implementing Rules and Regulations, specifically mandated the formulation of a Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025.

2. THE STRUCTURAL AND HISTORICAL DETERMINANTS OF THE STATUS OF FILIPINO WOMEN TODAY

Filipino women, like their sisters all over the world, share essentially the same burden. Women are confronted by a legacy of structures of inequality which are reinforced by structures and perceptions that produce a seemingly unending cycle. This situation retards the pace of their own personal development, relegates them

largely to the reproductive sphere of life, affords them minimal chances or fails to harness their full potential for national development. This cycle must be broken if women are to be effectively mobilized for development.

It is undeniable that development plans, programs and projects - both those that specifically target women as well as those that do not - affect the lives of women and, in turn, are affected by the nature of gender relations that prevail in Philippine society. To mobilize women for development, therefore, requires a thorough understanding of the roles of both women and men, the societal structures and processes that reinforce unequal gender relations and relegate women's contributions to society to a largely invisible level, and the changes that are taking place as a result of developments in various spheres of society.

Perhaps the most pervasive perspective that has resulted in the marginalization of women is biological determinism. It upholds the belief that because the reproductive system is by nature a characteristic of the female sex, women's physical make-up is consequently more delicate. Women are, therefore, viewed as being too weak to take on strenuous activities unlike men who have sturdier physiques and are thus able to take on heavier tasks. The masculine/feminine personality and role divisions, which emerged from the perspective of biological determinism, are reified and transmitted from one generation to another, thereby reproducing a societal system that discriminates against women and subsists on the basis of a double standard.

Thus, from childhood, human beings are socialized into stereotypical roles and personality traits. Daughters imbibe an entire view of culture and society, aspirations are bound by motherhood functions, and dispositions are moulded in accordance with the masculine/feminine dichotomy and, as such, these operate as the very determinants of women's roles in the public arena.

Because women possess the sole capacity to bear children, they are considered as the natural persons to take on childcare and child-rearing functions. This makes them the logical caretakers of the home, producing the "woman's place is in the domestic sphere while men dominate the public arena" perception, a distinction that has an immense impact on the overall development of women and men.

As the presumed sole caretakers of the home, with feminine traits of personalistic, particularistic and concrete concerns, women take on the jobs of nurses, teachers, secretaries, midwives, social workers, salesgirls, entertainers and housemaids. The career paths of women, which are largely extensions of the workplace of their domestic roles in the home, perhaps also accounts for the comparatively low status and compensation that such occupations enjoy.

And yet, for women who work outside the home, household chores are still their responsibility even if these are at times passed on to other women, like housemaids, who take on surrogate housewife roles. This dual immersion is what is commonly referred to as a woman's double burden. The double burden not only extends the daily working hours of women but invariably hampers the sharpening of their intellectual and creative potential as well as limits their own career options.

The public/domestic dichotomy serves to maintain the division of production and reproduction functions in the economy. It is in the public sphere where productive value is acknowledged. Goods and services in this sector are fully recognized, remunerated and reflected in official statistics. However, outputs in the domestic arena are classified as purely of reproductive value, merely sustaining the requirements of the so-called productive sector.

Since the distinction exists between the productive and the reproductive spheres, those whose main responsibility lies in the former, usually the men, are perceived to have a primacy in society because they perform what are accepted as major functions. On the other hand, women, who because of their biologically determined make-up necessarily take on reproductive functions, are assumed to be less capable in the productive arena and are relegated to the reproductive sphere and its extensions, thereby confining them to what are considered to be secondary pursuits.

What this means is that since the family is the unit of reproduction, it follows women, as household caretakers, are instrumental in ensuring the survival of economic production even as production itself is assumed to be the more important aspect of society. With women managing the homes, male workers are relieved domestic tasks to take on income-earning activities. Men are, therefore, better to fully participate in economic, political and cultural endeavors in which productive value is recognized. Their exposure in the public sector results in their being acknowledged as the dominant gender in all spheres of life.

Meanwhile, the women - both the housewives and those who shoulder the double burden - are perceived to have minimal social and economic contributions, even as they perform a broad range of activities in the home and even as they earn a living outside the home. In both instances, women are perceived as being merely supportive and, therefore, secondary or even marginal.

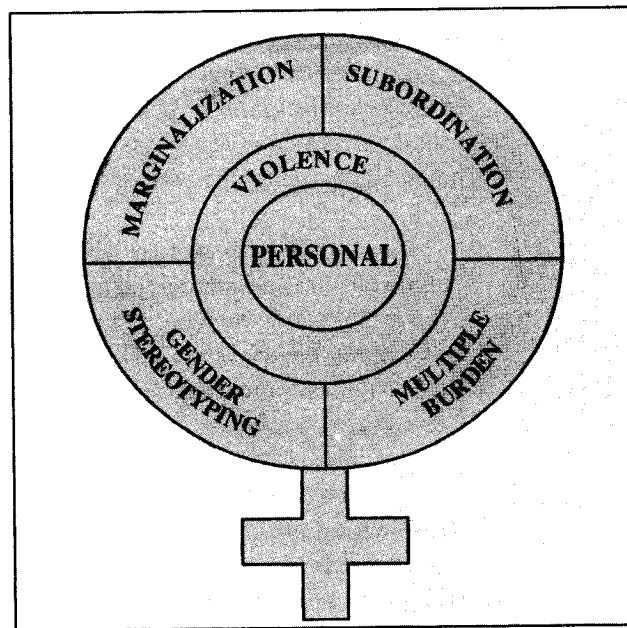
Because women's contributions have remained both largely invisible to the public eye as well as merely secondary in perceived functions, women's active participation in public life has not been as extensive as that of men. At the same time, it is this very subordination that also accounts for the lack of support systems and social benefits for women, the limited access and control that women have over resources, and the comparatively minor roles that women play in the national drama of development.

This prevailing system inevitably provides the context for the creation of any nation's laws. The essence of the production/reproduction dichotomy clearly permeated the nature of the legal system. An analysis of the substance of laws, although there have been significant breakthroughs, merely reflects the subordination of women in Philippine culture. For example, many of the revisions that were incorporated into the New Family Code are indicative of significant attempts to revise old laws that were based on traditional assumptions regarding the role and status of women. The advocacy in recent years on the laws regarding issues like rape and sexual harassment are also testimonies to the necessity to revise a legal system that was largely based on traditional concepts of women.

The pursuit of equality and parallel development between the sexes is not and should not be motivated by anti-male sentiments and reverse sexual domination. Neither should an urgent concern for women be governed by a competitive stance. In the final analysis, the compelling reason for gender-responsive development is premised on the genuine realization of the Constitutional provision that envisions a society that recognizes women as equal citizens of the nation and as full partners in national development.

While Filipino women do not suffer from the more glaring practices of gender inequality in other countries like the dowry system, genital mutilation, wife burning, female infanticide, vaginal sewing, etc., they nevertheless are victims of a host of interrelated and interpenetrating factors which produce and reinforce inequality. Such unequal and even oppressive relations which spring from the society's gender bias are manifested in various interpenetrating levels. For heuristic purposes, six spheres of discrimination can be identified as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1
MANIFESTATIONS OF GENDER BIAS



2.1 Economic Marginalization

As mentioned above, the division of society into the spheres of production and reproduction has led to the under- or even non-valuation of women's work. The tasks that are related to housework, child rearing and family care are largely taken for granted and perceived as minor functions that are once in a while given patronizing importance but are generally seen as "natural" functions that have no direct contributions to societal development.

This situation is carried over to the public economic domain where women are the last to be hired and the first to be fired while at the same time receiving unequal pay for work of equal value. In the private sector, a Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) study shows a disparity of more than a thousand pesos per month between male and female workers, the gap increasing significantly from

unskilled to managerial and supervisory levels (DOLE-Institute of Labor Studies, 1991). In the rural areas, agricultural and fisheries work are automatically considered to be male occupations even as women perform a host of functions in the entire process. Even in the bureaucracy of government where salary scales are pegged to positions and ranks, female-dominated professions start off at a lower scale. For example, the positions of Nurse 1, Teacher 1, and Pharmacist 1 are pegged at salary grade 10 level 2 while Sociologist 1, Zoologist 1, Agriculturist 1, Economist 1, Planning Officer 1, to name a few, all start at salary grade 11 level 2. All these positions require a four-year college degree, eligibility and no previous work experience.

Unequal pay is further aggravated by differential access to opportunities. Studies have shown that females tend to be given limited access, relative to males, to training opportunities and concomitantly to promotions. A DOLE-ILS study in 1991 found out that male workers receive training more frequently, have more fringe benefits, and are promoted more often than female workers.

Finally, apart from these glaring inequalities is the reality of sexual harassment at work that women have to face. Exacting sexual favors in exchange for economic benefits, either to get hired, receive a promotion, retain one's job, or simply as an "occupational hazard," is a reality many women are forced to accept. This issue will be further discussed in a later section.

2.2 Political Subordination

Politics is an issue of power, at whichever arena a person participates in. Because the productive sphere is given pre-eminence in society, because women are viewed as the "weaker sex," because their capabilities, whether in the home or in the public sphere, are not recognized, because men are traditionally assumed to be the heads of households and organizations, women do not share the same power and prestige, status and societal position as men. Whether in the home, the community, the workplace or society at large, women are generally expected to play supportive roles to men and to accept a subordinate status, in all spheres of social life. Such a reality limits women's participation in decision-making and the assumption of leadership positions, retards their full development, and is expressed even in legal and extra-legal discrimination.

Subordination is manifested in a variety of spheres. In the home, the authority structure is generally based on male dominance where major decisions are male prerogatives. Commonly accepted descriptions of males like "haligi ng tahanan" or head of household, bear witness to the ascendant role of the male sex in family life. Even the phrase "under the saya," negatively attached to a man, emphasizes the assumed subordination of women.

In the community, a woman's status is also largely subordinate. Leadership in organizations and major decisions are largely in the hands of men. The same is true in the workplace. In 1992, women constituted 46.5 percent of the 115,889 total members of registered public sector unions. While women still are a minority in leadership positions, there were 65 women union presidents and 1,536 women union officers in the same year. In the private sector in 1993, 41.4

percent of union members were women, a decrease in percentage from 52.31 percent in 1990 even if the total number of female members increased by more than 86,000.

It is significant to note that in 1991, 58 percent of career service employees in government were women. However, in third level positions in government, women only accounted for 30.3 percent. The majority of women in the career service, 68.5 percent, are found in second level positions.

Although there is a perceptible trend towards greater participation of women both in elective and appointive positions, women are still very much in the minority. From 1946 to 1992, the highest percentage of women in the House of Representatives was 12.5 percent in 1946 and in the Senate, 25 percent in 1967. For the entire period 1946-1992, the average number of elected women was only about 6 percent. Among local elected officials, the ratios remain essentially the same. In the 1995 elections, the percentage of elected women officials ranged from a low of 6.2 percent for city mayors to a high of 17.10 percent for vice-governors.

2.3 Gender Stereotyping

The economic marginalization and political subordination of women are reinforced and created by a host of institutions. The socialization process in the family, the educational system including the career options for women, the portrayal of women in media, the blindness of government programs and the legal system to women's needs, the teachings of various religions, all contribute to the further discrimination against women.

Women are stereotyped from birth. Societal perceptions and value systems ingrain an image of women as weak, dependent, subordinate, indecisive, emotional, and submissive. Women's roles, functions, and abilities are seen to be primarily tied to the home. Training and work opportunities are extensions of reproductive functions. There are two very vivid pictures of women -- the virgin and the vamp. These apparently contradictory models are interchangeably used wherein women are expected to be pure and chaste while at the same time women are treated as sex objects. In a very real sense, women are trapped within these stereotypes which severely limit their opportunities to development, bare them to innumerable hurdles, and consign them to a fate that robs them of the right to be equal human beings.

2.4 Multiple Burden

Women, even as they are viewed as having primarily reproductive functions, actually participate in a host of other activities. Women are part of the labor force, not only because housework and child care are productive activities, but also because women work in agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing, service occupations, the informal sector, industry, and the various professions. And yet, no matter that women put in essentially the same working hours as men outside the home, housework and child care are still primarily a woman's concern. As a result, women carry a double burden in terms of longer hours of work and a wider breadth of responsibility.

Apart from these, women also participate in socio-cultural and political activities in community affairs, church-related functions, civic activities, and political involvements. This produces a multiple burden because they almost single-handedly have to carry the burden of housework and child care. The multiple burden necessarily limits every woman's capacity to develop herself while affording men the luxury of concentrating on concerns of their own in the public sphere.

2.5 Violence Against Women

The four manifestations of gender bias mentioned above provide the bases upon which violence against women occurs while being at the same time violations of human rights. Women are actual and potential victims of specific kinds of violence that are distinctly different because these acts are born out of the status of women in society. There is a web of verbal, psychological and physical abuse that all women are exposed to. Because of their low status in society, many women experience a variety of verbal abuse. This, coupled with psychological assaults -- insults, threats, emotional blackmail especially in relation to children, economic dependence, etc. -- violate a woman's dignity.

In addition to, and further aggravating the effects of verbal and psychological abuse, is physical violence against women. Sexual harassment is a reality all women are potential victims of. From the childhood "games" of boys peeping at girls to various acts of lasciviousness, from seduction to abduction, from molestation to wife beating, from prostitution to rape -- all these are crimes that specifically apply only to women, with very few exceptions.

Special mention must also be made of the corruption of minors and the abuse of children that have a direct effect on women because they, after all, feel a deeper sense of responsibility for the young.

2.6 Obstacles to Personhood Development

All the above-mentioned manifestations of gender bias have a direct negative effect on the personhood of every woman. Growing up and living in a world which limits a woman's very right to be human, which operates on a double standard that applies to the sexes, which diminishes an individual's dignity, hits at the very core of each woman's personhood. As a result, females generally possess lower levels of self-esteem and confidence compared to males.

Coupled with the obstacles that women have to confront in developing a sense of self-worth is the reality that gender discrimination does not only occur in arenas external to women -- the workplace, the community, social institutions like the family, media, etc. -- but also with regard to their own bodies. Reproductive rights and the services that they deserve, and even women's sexuality are severely constrained. Within the context of women's subordination within the family, for instance, sexuality is often repressed because traditional perceptions dictate a submissive role for women. In fact, in the entire process of socialization, sexuality is rarely viewed as an issue women should be concerned about. In terms of women's health, services are largely limited to maternal concerns with little emphasis on other ailments like urinary tract infections, psychological health and

sexually transmitted diseases. Even in the issue of reproductive health and family planning, although recent years have accomplished much, information and services still can be improved and the participation of women in deciding on population policies still needs to be enhanced.

These manifestations of gender bias are further aggravated by national realities. The disparity in wealth and power, elite democracy, economic policies and development priorities, all contribute to the further marginalization of women and the feminization of poverty. In the international arena, women reel from structural adjustment programs, the international division of labor and the manner in which the international economic order is structured

3. ASSESSMENT OF PAST DEVELOPMENTS, PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

The United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) focused the world's attention on the situation of women. This period brought to surface the various problems and issues confronting women in countries of various stages of development and gave rise, in most instances, to measures intended to improve their situation.

The Philippine response to the Women's Decade and the worldwide concern for women has been encouraging. The government ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and has committed itself to the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, two of the most important documents that resulted from the Decade.

National policy provides a relatively favorable atmosphere for women's development. For the first time, the Philippine Constitution (1987) explicitly stipulates the fundamental equality between women and men and cites the women's role in nation-building (Art. II, Sec 14), recognizes women's maternal and economic role (Art. XIII, Sec. 14) and women's special health needs (Art. XIII, Sec 11), declares natural-born those children born of Filipino mothers before the January 17, 1973 Constitution and those who elect Philippine citizenship at the age of majority, and allows Filipino women married to aliens to retain their citizenship if they chose to do so (Art. IV), thereby correcting the inequitous provisions in earlier laws. Closely following the ratification of the Constitution in 1987 was the signing on July 17, 1987 of Executive Order 227 entitled "The New Family Code of the Philippines," a product of some eight years of work by eminent lawyers, jurists and legal scholars. The new Code eliminates many of the discriminatory provisions in the Spanish colonial law-based Civil Code of the Philippines.

The legislature has also taken significant strides with the creation in the Senate of a Committee on Women and Family Relations which is in charge of legislation concerning women. In the House of Representatives, one of the standing committees is the Committee on Women with subcommittees on Domestic Working Women, Migrant Women Workers, Disadvantaged Women and Marginalized Women. In addition, the allocation of a seat in the House of Representatives for women is a significant recognition of the work that needs to be done on gender issues.

In addition to RA 7192 and RA 6725, the passage of the following legislation is a testimony to the growing concern for the improvement in the status of women:

- RA 7877 declares sexual harassment unlawful in the employment, education and training environment;
- RA 6949 declares March 8 of every year as a working holiday to be known as National Women's Day;
- RA 6972 mandates the establishment of day care centers in every barangay;
- RA 7322 increases the maternity benefits of women in the private sector;
- RA 7655 increases the minimum wage of domestic helpers;
- RA 6955 outlaws the practice of matching Filipino women for marriage to foreign nationals on a mail-order basis;
- RA 7688 gives representation to women in the Social Security Commission;
- RA 7600 provides incentives to all government and private health institutions with rooming-in and breastfeeding practices;

The government created the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) in 1975 also as a response to International Women's Year. Its mandate is to work towards the full integration of women for social, economic, political and cultural development at national, regional and international levels on a basis of equality with men. With the reorganization of the government in 1986, the NCRFW was assigned a new set of officials who immediately undertook a review of its mandate and functions. Other government agencies with women's programs such as the Bureau of Women and Young Workers of the Department of Labor and Employment and the Bureau of Agricultural Extension of the Department of Agriculture were similarly revitalized. A new Bureau of Women's Welfare was created in the Department of Social Welfare and Development. In addition, Presidential Proclamation No. 227 provides for the observance of the month of March as Women's History Month and Proclamation No. 224 declares the first week of March of every year as Women's Week and March 8 and every year thereafter as Women's Month.

There have been positive indications of an improving situation for women in the country not only during the Decade but also in the recent past. More than ever, women have figured prominently in the political affairs of the country and, gradually, they have been entering new fields. Deliberate efforts have been taken both by government and non-governmental organization to accelerate women's development.

However, much remains to be done. Women continue to suffer some disadvantages as women and as poor women because of the prevalence of sex-role stereotyping and other biases against them which have been attributed to the kind of socialization that women and men are subjected to from childhood and which shape their attitudes and perceptions in adulthood. A related factor is the low level of consciousness of women's issues in almost all sectors -- public, government bureaucracy, private -- which is aggravated by the lack of sex-disaggregated data in many government agencies.

These biases are evident in almost all spheres particularly in employment, education, health and public affairs.

In employment, for 1993, only 48 percent of the female population 15 years and over are in the labor force as contrasted to 80 percent of men, leaving out some 10.9 million women outside the labor force and who are considered economically nonproductive. Latest estimates indicate that 74 percent of these women are housekeepers or those who enable other members of the family to engage in productive work outside the home but whose contributions remain unrecognized.

Women comprise a low 37 percent of all employed persons and 43 percent of all unemployed. As workers, they tend to occupy the lower positions. In 1991, they represented only 30 percent of those holding managerial and executive jobs.

Women generally get lower pay. Quarterly earnings of both men and women indicate a large disparity. Women's earnings were slightly more than one-half of men's income in 1989. This situation has often been attributed to women's employment in lower- skill job categories, shorter work hours because of multiple responsibility and possession of lower levels of skills, training and experience. And yet, as of 1990, women workers were better educated than men with 26.3 percent of women having a college education as contrasted to only 17 percent for men.

The phenomenon of overseas employment exposes women to greater dangers such as sexual exploitation and physical abuse. It also presents a serious threat to their own well-being, dignity and status and image before the world, to the family as an institution, and to national self-respect. In 1991, women formed 40.6 percent of outbound land-based workers and estimates in 1993 show that this has gone up to 55 percent.

Rural women, who comprise 51 percent of all women in the country, deserve particular attention. While they perform various productive agricultural activities, they remain invisible farmers. They tend to be displaced by mechanization and have very limited access to credit, agricultural services, training and technology.

Various other concerns affect various groups of women workers, such as child care support for working mothers, hazardous working conditions of those engaged in manufacturing (e.g. export processing zones) industries, sexual abuse and exploitation of women especially in service types of work (prostitution, tourism and entertainment, domestic service) and those in the informal economy.

The economic crisis in the late 1970s and in the early 1980s followed by the turbulent political situation resulting from the assassination of former Senator Benigno Aquino Jr., triggered many changes in the employment situation and the economy itself. Among others, the acute foreign exchange shortage which resulted from serious balance of payment problems, restricted the flow of imported material inputs to many industries causing numerous firms to cut back on production, lay off workers or simply close shop. This crisis is very much evident in the upsurge of the unemployment rate which rose from 4.6 percent (average from 1976 to 1980) to 10.3 percent (1981-1985). Furthermore, largely because of natural calamities, the average employment rate remained at two-digit level (average of 12.5 percent) for the second half of the 1980s.

Meanwhile, more and more women entered the labor market. The reduction in the value of earnings of households due to increases in the prices of basic commodities during the period exerted pressure on the household members, particularly the housewives who are the family treasurers, to raise household income to cope with the financial crisis. This trend is reflected in the increase in the female labor force participation rate from an average of 41 percent from 1975 to 1980, to 45 percent for 1981-1985, to 48 percent for 1986-1990.

Meanwhile, employed women appeared to have suffered most from the impact of business retrenchments and shutdowns in the manufacturing sectors as their proportion to total workforce decreased between 1978 to 1983. The trends toward economic take-off in the 1990s, however, have increased women's participation in the labor force.

In the field of education, women are relatively at par with men. Literacy rates do not differ greatly by sex (93.34 percent for women with men showing a very slightly higher rate at 93.7 percent). The disparity is in the urban-rural rates which largely favor urban men and women (97 percent vs 89.6 percent for women and 97.4 percent vs. 90.2 percent for men). Enrolment figures for boys and girls in the elementary and secondary levels are likewise comparable, and the women slightly outnumber the men in the tertiary level.

However, the problem is gender-tracking or stereotyping of professions according to sex which severely limits the choice of women to a few lower-paying and less challenging jobs. Thus, they enrol in food and nutrition, teacher education and social work while the men enter the more lucrative professions such as law, engineering and architecture. Even in vocational/technical courses, women enrol in dressmaking and embroidery and avoid such courses as automechanics, electricity, welding.

Another serious problem noted in formal education is the widespread gender-bias in textbooks, curricula and instructional materials and even among teachers themselves.

In the informal education such as media, women are usually portrayed as sex objects, housewives or domestics or persons whose main goal is to attract men. They are likewise seen as victims of violence as battered wives, as sexually abused single/married women or young girls and as prostitutes.

While the Philippines had a woman president, women's participation in decision-making is still largely taken for granted. Women continue to remain mainly as a strong voting population, with a voting turnout average of 79.31 percent for women as against 78.57 percent for men in the elections from 1947-1992. They are yet to demonstrate their strength as political candidates and as a voting bloc even as the percentage of women elected officials has steadily risen through the years.

The health of women in a poor country like the Philippines is affected most seriously by their crucial roles as child-bearers and child-rearers. Women get trapped in the vicious cycle of pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, malnutrition, infections, fatigue and stress in the course of their performance of their multiple roles as mothers, workers and health providers. Thus, they generally suffer from poor health, with a maternal mortality rate of 0.8 in 1990, already a decline from previous years. Anemia and iodine deficiency continue to have a high prevalence rate among pregnant and lactating mothers whose condition is aggravated by the inadequacy of the health care delivery system and the lack of trained health personnel to attend to them and to their children. Women are the target consumers of food, drug and cosmetic manufacturers which recently have been criticized for their production of non-essential drugs and other products which pose a serious threat to women's and their families' health.

The formulation of a Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW) which addressed these problems and Issues was another positive indication of the government's commitment to women's development. For the first time, a systematic effort was undertaken to analyze and surface women's position as both agents and beneficiaries of development. Appropriate policies, strategies and programs have likewise been formulated, addressing each particular problem area.

Since the PDPW, some significant strides have been made. Although problems of prioritization and institutionalization of programs still leave much to be desired, there are structures and mechanisms that have been put in place. The most crucial among these are the Women In Development (WID)/Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Points, who with support from the NCRFW take charge of setting up the basic machinery in each government agency for integrating gender concerns into the policies, programs, and projects of such entities. Also crucial was the support of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) not only in integrating portions of the PDPW into the 1990-1992 update of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), but also in putting the NCRFW into the planning sub-committees for Development Planning as well as mainstreaming the Country Program for Women through various mechanisms that expand access to resources. The 1993-1998 MTPDP, through the membership of the NCRFW in the planning technical subcommittees, has also resulted in the incorporation of gender-related policy statements in the Plan. At the same time, existing mechanisms within specific government units have been strengthened.

In addition to the above, the NCRFW has undertaken resource mobilization for GAD, most significant of which is the inclusion of a provision in the 1995 General Appropriations Act (GAA) directing line agencies to allocate from their regular budget funds for GAD programme/activities. A document formulated by the NCRFW and NEDA called "Guidelines for Developing and Implementing Gender-Responsive Programs and Projects" provides a step-by-step guidelines for planners, evaluators, monitors and implementors in integrating gender concerns in every phase of a project cycle. Other significant developments are spelled out in the chapter on Plan implementation.

Other initiatives were generated in other agencies notably the Civil Service Commission's Equality Advocates (EQUADS), the organization of women councillors, conscious efforts to increase the number of women holding responsible positions in technical areas especially in agriculture/agrarian reform and in infrastructure (irrigation, waterworks, etc.) agencies.

In the field of policy, there were many gains among which were RA 6725 which strengthens the prohibition of discrimination against women workers with respect to terms and conditions of employment, RA 7192 or the Women in Development and Nation-Building Act, various other bills on maternity/paternity benefits, day care centers in work-places, sexual harassment, rape, etc. Apart from laws, Memorandum Circular #14 series of 1989 of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) enabled government workers, especially women, to adopt flexible working hours, a response to the multiple burden of women, among others. CSC Resolution No. 94-2954 and a DOLE Administrative Order have significantly addressed the issue of sexual harassment.

Government agencies also went through a review of their mandate, policies and plans with the end in view of assessing how gender concerns have been integrated. This review resulted in greater awareness as well as specific programs/projects. In the economic sector, projects covered income generation, credit programs, human resource development, information-education, technological innovations, skills enhancement, etc. In the social sector, projects that promoted greater participation, women's welfare, health, housing, support services for women were strengthened and/or launched.

One of the most critical factors that affect gender advocacy is the invisibility of women in data and information systems. While some agencies have already set up gender-disaggregated data systems, a lot still has to be done. But the process is well on-its way, not only at the agency level but also through making available sex-disaggregated data to support planning and target-setting activities of agencies, the formulation of the Philippine Statistical Development Plan, the NCRFW Clearinghouse and Information Center on Women, the development of a Database System on Gender and Development, the formulation of the National Gender-Disaggregated Indicator System and the publication by the National Statistics Office of a brochure entitled "Statistics on the Filipino Women."

Because the integration of gender concerns cannot be accomplished simply via formal mechanisms and executive orders, much effort was placed on sensitizing the bureaucracy to the issues of gender. From gender sensitivity trainings to newsletters, thousands of government personnel were reached. While the obstacles to gender equality are deeply rooted, the bureaucratic terrain is no longer an inhospitable desert to gender concerns.

These developments went hand in hand with activities conducted by non-government organizations (NGOs) and women's organization which ran a wide gamut of concerns from consciousness-raising to crisis centers, from research to advocacy, from reproductive rights to violence against women. It is also significant to note that while coordination can still stand improvement, GO-NGO relations have come a long way if compared to the past decade.

4. BASIC GOALS, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

The task of integrating women's concerns at all levels of development planning and implementation requires a multi-sided approach which rests heavily on national commitment and political will, relevant and effective policies and programs, the provision of adequate resources, efficient monitoring and women's participation.

The PPGD must address the concerns of women for equality and development across six major spheres: individual, family, socio-cultural, economic and political and legal. But across each of these spheres, three basic goals must cut through.

First is the establishment of mechanisms/structures for gender-responsive policy and program formulation and implementation. This would include coordination across government agencies and with NGOs, institutionalizing sex-disaggregated data bases, mainstreaming of gender issues in all aspects of government concerns.

Second, special attention must be placed on women in special circumstances and the manner in which their circumstances are aggravated by other national policies and programs. Specifically, this would refer to victims/survivors of violence and armed conflict, as well as special sectors of women namely prostituted populations, adolescents, women with disabilities, indigenous women and migrant women.

The third goal is continuing consciousness-raising, advocacy and affirmative action. These would entail training and other educational programs, information dissemination, research and documentation, and a concrete plan for revision or creation of gender-responsive laws.

4.1 Individual

Precisely because of the role differentiations between women and men that developed as a result of historical circumstances, most women have learned to view their own self-worth as being lower than that of their male counterparts. This is especially true among the poorer sectors of the population. Thus, a primary task must be to ensure each woman's individual personal development.

The PPGD must aim to alter the traditional concept of a woman's self-worth as being subordinate to men. Such a transformation requires a commitment to one's own personal growth, both intellectually and creatively. This includes the motivation to care for one's self, especially among poor women whose usual practice is to put their own health concerns as a last priority. This results in women going for medical care only when illness is no longer preventable. Because of the huge percentage of poor women in the country, it is of primary importance to provide training programs that women can use for preventive medicine as well as to gain some degree of control over their own bodies.

Since women have remained largely uncritical of their subordinate role in society, much emphasis will be placed on consciousness-raising which should be aimed at enhancing their own self-concept and enabling them to actively participate in local and national development. Every increase in awareness should also be translated into the strength and capacity to assert one's rights. Such a process will result in women who are able to define their own problems, determine feasible solutions and affect the direction of their own future, neither as self-serving individuals nor as mere extensions of their reproductive roles but as whole human beings.

To attain the goal of personal development, three main thrusts are necessary. First, sufficient support mechanisms, such as child care support systems, must be provided to free women's time and to enable them to acknowledge their own self-worth. Second, programs must be created to enhance the capacity of women to develop their full potentials. Third, concrete manifestations of attainable goals must also be given. These must take the form of propagating women role models, making certain, however, that these do not degenerate into token examples of women's equality. At the same time, there must be a conscious advocacy for a modification of the qualities and characteristics that are emphasized in projecting model women like mothers, martyrs and other achievers.

4.2 Family

At the base of all the goals that relate to women within the sphere of the family is the necessity for Filipinos to recognize and acknowledge childbearing and rearing as vital societal functions. For as long as reproduction is viewed as being of secondary importance to production, women will continue to be subordinate to men. A genuine realization of the value of the reproductive sphere will naturally engender more ideal and more equal relations within the family. Concretely, the goal is to encourage the formation of families that are characterized by a sharing of responsibilities, from parenting to breadwinning to domestic work.

In the aspect of shared parenting, attention must also be placed on ensuring a non-sexist rearing of children whereby daughters and sons are trained in the same

manner, sex biases in issues like career choices and personality traits are avoided, and equal opportunities are made available by both parents in order to ease the burden of housework, government must ensure promotion of research and development of affordable and efficient technology as well as the provision of basic utilities like water and electricity. The participation of women in housing programs from design to implementation as well as the re-orientation of the entire concept of housing must also be paid attention to.

While all of these are directed towards the strengthening of family foundation, there will always be problem areas. In families which require intervention Institutional support and facilities, like counselling, must be provided both as preventive measures to family breakdown and to resolve family problems.

Special attention must also be given to the real, although hidden, problem of violence in the family. This must start with attitudinal change among women by accepting the appropriateness of external support especially in cases of wife-battering, rape and incest. Many women, because of the stigma that is usually attached to sex crimes as well as because of the tendency to accept this as part of a woman's burden, tend to keep such experiences unknown to others and even refuse external support. In addition to attitudinal change, there is the need to alter conditions that reinforce the refusal of external support. Society must learn to erase the stigma that is usually attached to women involved in crimes against chastity. Ironically, in cases of rape and even incest and wife-battering, the woman who is the victim is not accorded with same compassion as victims of other crimes. Rather, the woman is stigmatized as though she was to be blamed for the crime rather than the victim.

Court proceedings dealing with these crimes require modification such that women are protected from further violence. Concrete programs for institutional support for women victims of violence are urgently needed.

4.3 Socio-Cultural

Since the subordination of women is largely sustained by the values and norms that are prevalent in society, consciousness-raising has to be emphasized. Programs aimed at women must confront the prevalent views that are held by both women and men that serve to reproduce acts of discrimination against women.

The educational system plays a crucial role in this regard. Non-sexist education must be installed. Textbooks and school curricula need to be analyzed and shorn of discriminatory stereotyping, language and career options. Children who are reared in an educational system that recognizes the equality of the sexes will invariably have a tremendous impact on the full development of each human being.

Urgent attention must be given to women's health, nutrition and family planning. Unless these are prioritized, the cause of gender equality will continue to flounder. Women's health programs which usually are targeted only to women of childbearing age manifest the limited perspective that is used for women. Finally, family planning and reproductive health must be viewed primarily as basic

rights of women rather than simply as a requirement that is necessary for national economic development.

The media - print and broadcast - are also very potent instruments for reinforcing or changing the status of women. Stereotyped Images of women which are so prevalent today serve to subjugate women, confine them to traditional sex roles and even provide the Justification for women's subordination. Such a situation is reflected further in the entertainment and advertising industries where women are trivialized and doomed to be portrayed as sex objects. In a very real sense, such a milieu drastically affects women artists because they have to overcome the bias that relegate women to being objects and subjects rather than equally talented creators of art. A strong advocacy for women in media, recognizing especially the degree of Influence it has over society, is a necessary component of any attempt to confront the problems that women face.

There is an urgent need to examine discrimination against women in religious tenets and institutions. Like education and the media, religion is one of the socio-cultural Institutions that have a tremendous impact on national perspectives and their consequent effect on values and behavior. Harnessing the potential of religious institutions is a crucial factor for the cause of equality and development of women.

Finally, hand in hand with changes in the socio-cultural milieu which deal with consciousness and attitude change, are the urgent support systems that need to be instituted to support the development of women toward achieving gender equality. Most important would be childcare support systems like day care centers, without which women are invariably tied down to housework.

4.4 Economic

Economic policies that relate to production, distribution and consumption must be assessed in terms of their gender responsiveness. On the production side, two specific areas are crucial: employment and training/education. With regard to the latter, mechanisms should be created to ensure equal opportunities for both women and men in formal/nonformal education and on-the-job training. The acquisition of non-traditional skills for women must also be given attention. Recognizing the childbearing function of women, training programs for women must be set up in order to ease their re-entry into the labor force after the childbearing/rearing period.

With regard to employment, the primary principle that must be upheld is that of equal pay for work of equal value. Affirmative action programs for women must be instituted especially in the area of conscious goal-setting to change the patterns of sex discrimination in hiring and promotion. In relation to this, a complete understanding and recognition of the biological functions of women in society is necessary in order to ensure that the special needs of women with regard to maternity benefits and the like are shared by the wider society.

A very crucial aspect of the economy relates to the creation of institutional support and programs that will encourage greater participation of women in

production and distribution. One important component of such support is the provision of credit status to women. Similarly, social credit systems will go a long way towards mobilizing the full potential of women.

Women-friendly technology and infrastructure as well as the role of women in environmental protection must be attended to. In the final analysis, women are crucial contributors not only to the economy as a whole but also to the thrust of minimizing environmental degradation.

Finally, since women are largely responsible for consumption in the home, they must be afforded greater participation in decision-making, especially with regard to prices of commodities.

4.5 Political

The empowerment of women through their full participation in political processes and structures is the main political goal for women. The exercise of political rights, the participation in the determination of laws and policies must not be limited to traditional concerns of women. While these will necessarily take on some primacy, as equal human beings, women should participate in issues that are usually associated primarily with men. Special mention must be made of issues like peace and ecology which already occupy women's attention.

Full participation, however, is dependent upon literacy and the provision of popular education for both women and men. As such, attention must be devoted to ensuring that the backbone of popular participation - literacy, information and education - is made available to all.

Finally, as an added impetus to the equality and development of women, government must engage in affirmative action programs as in the case of women's representation in Congress and local governments, the judiciary, unions and the like, as well as the encouragement of the formation and strengthening of women's organizations so as to afford them an equal say in decision-making. In this regard, a specific priority should be voter education and the ultimate creation of a women's vote that can help along policies and laws aimed at gender equality.

4.6 Legal

Since law is the reflection of the goals and aspirations of any society, the concern for women's equality and development must be incorporated into the legal system. Specifically, this would require the formulation of concrete legal basis for the standards set to ensure the equal rights between women and men. This is particularly important in the areas of property rights, citizenship rights, safety standards and equal opportunities.

Legal sanctions must be instituted to promote and to protect equal employment opportunities for women. In addition, protective legislation is necessary for employed women so that the childbearing function of women is given special consideration as, for instance, maternity benefits and non-exposure to harmful chemicals, etc.

To ensure that such laws are implemented, government must provide for legal literacy for both women and men. This condition is a critical component in empowering human beings as well as in creating the conditions for the full implementation of the law.

5. CONCLUSION

The PPGD is a plan that will evolve through the years depending upon breakthroughs that are achieved and obstacles that emerge. In the final analysis, a plan is only as good as its implementation and implementation is only as good as the will, the resources, and the people who choose to undertake the plan in its concrete form. While much have been achieved, much more is left to be done. The purpose of this chapter is only to outline the framework that govern the plan itself. The specific contours are contained in the succeeding chapters.

