

GREAT Women Project



Revitalizing GAD and WEE Promotion *Leyte's First-Year Implementation of the GREAT Women Project*



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on Women



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Introducing Leyte



Leyte is a first-class province with a total land area of 5,712 square kilometers or 571,280 hectares, representing 26.7% of the total land area of the Eastern Visayas region. Tacloban City is the seat of the provincial government.

Leyte had a budget of P935 million in 2008, with 90.9 percent of the budget coming from its Internal Revenue Allotment. Population in 2008 was 2,005,487, spread across 1,393 barangays, 41 municipalities and three cities.

With 345,067 hectares (60.4%) deemed as agricultural land, Leyte is largely agricultural in its economy. The Province sought to ensure sustainable support to agriculture and to provide local conditions for sustainable local economic growth and development. Among its targets for the planned period was the provision of small-scale livelihood projects to community-based organizations and to individuals. Its Annual Investment Plan for 2009 allotted 48.3% of the annual fund to the province's economic services.

Leyte has investment promotion and development in their priority list. In 2007, the Technology Business Incubator for SMEs was launched to assist entrepreneurs through business development and technical services. October was designated also as the Leyte Province Business Month, featuring trade and investment forums, trade fairs exhibits, technology and business development trainings, job fairs and other similar activities. The province had already established an investment promotion center, known as the Small and Medium Enterprise Development (SMED) Center.

To address gender and development issues, Leyte Province created the Provincial Gender and Development Council (PGADC) through a Sanguniang Panlalawigan Resolution. The Council was composed of the Provincial Governor as the Chairperson overseeing different line agencies and the Chairperson on Women of the Sanguniang Panlalawigan as members. The Provincial Health Officer was designated as the GAD Focal Person.

The province also issued Provincial Ordinance No. 06-06 Series of 2006 providing for a Gender and Development Code of the Province of Leyte. However, since this resolution was issued and until GREAT Women Project partnership, the Province did not have other major activities and events to create gender-awareness in Leyte Province. ¹

With GREAT Women Project partnership, Leyte has an annual provincial workplan to achieve several immediate outcomes.

Footnote

¹ Inception Report August to December 2008 by GWP Local Area Coordinator Henry Abawag.

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Toward the immediate outcome of increasing knowledge and skills of key LGU staff to apply GAD and WEE in policymaking, planning and budgeting for economic plans, programs and services, Leyte conducted several key capacity development activities. Leyte conducted GST++, a Writeshop to Formulate GAD Code Ordinance IRR, 2010 GAD Planning and Budgeting and Conduct of a Baseline Study.

Building LGU Capacities for Gender and WEE-responsive Governance

The Province of Leyte conducted first conducted GST++ for the GAD Council on February 19-20, 2009 at the PHO Conference Hall in Palo, Leyte. GST++ merged two other activities including reorganization of the GAD Council and Secretariat, and the GAD Planning and Budgeting Workshop. As a result of GST++, the Leyte GAD Council prepared the LED/WEE Roadmap for 2009-2012 and presented to the Local Chief Executive, board members and department heads.²



Participants in the initial GST++ were offices under the Provincial GAD Council created in 2006.³ Academe and women's organizations sectors sectors represented in PGAD Council. During the GST++, Leyte participants realized that provincial women's groups are hindered by numerous requirements and deliberation procedures when securing accreditation.

Meanwhile, the second batch of GST++ engaged agencies of the Provincial Technical Working Group to enhance the LED/WEE Roadmap. The second GST++ was held in Naval, Biliran. Some 23 participants included the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI), Philhealth, Department of Labor & Employment (DOLE), Runggiyan, provincial government department heads, local chief executives and provincial legislators, and women's organizations. The LGU tapped a team from the University of the Philippines (Tacloban) to document proceedings of the GST++ conducted with the LGUs in September 2009.⁴ At the onset, the LGU was already committed to accomplishing planned trainings and activities on schedule.

Footnotes

² Interview with Ms. Melchora Cawile, GREAT Women Project Focal Person for the Province of Leyte, July 9, 2010, Provincial Population Office, Leyte Provincial Capitol.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Documentation of Witeshop to Formulate GAD Code Ordinance IRRs, GREAT WOMEN PROJECT – PROVINCE OF LEYTE, Ormoc Villa Hotel, July 30 – 31, 2009.

⁶ Ibid.

Following GST++, the LGU arranged to have a writeshop to formulate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the GAD Code. The actual writeshop produced a review and amendments to the GAD Code to ensure its WEE responsiveness but stopped short of formulating the IRR. The DILG participant argued that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan needed to approve amendments to the GAD Code, before the implementing rules and regulations could be formulated.⁵ The DILG participant mentioned that it would be a waste of time writing down an IRR whose law would surely be amended.⁶

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Unveiling Leyte's GAD Plan and Budget



The Writeshop enhanced the LGU capacity to apply GAD and WEE principles and perspectives to local policies. Fifteen participants from the Province's GAD Council participated in the writeshop held in Ormoc City in July 2009.

In August 2009, the Province of Leyte set on drafting its first-ever 2010 Province of Leyte GAD Plan and Budget. A two-day GAD and Planning Session gathered the GAD Council, Technical Working Group, LGU department heads and Runggiyan Foundation to the GAD Planning and Budgeting Session conducted on August 13-14, 2009 in Tacloban City. The workshop allowed each department to submit inputs that will be integrated into a Provincial GAD Plan and later for Sangguniang Panlalawigan approval. A total budget amounting to P63,739 was reallocated from the previously identified activities.⁷

Previously, when the province did not have a separate GAD Plan, the Provincial Planning and Development Office or the Provincial Budget Office, issued an order that the Province's GAD program and activities had to be mainstreamed for their compliance in offices and departments of the Province.⁸ The commitment and participation of PGAD Council members can be largely credited for enhancing both GAD Code and GAD Plan.⁹

Finalizing the Plan had been hindered by delays in submission of some department inputs and needed Secretariat support.¹⁰ In PTWG/MTWG Meeting in July 2010, the TWGs resolved to increase the number of Secretariat members and to provide training on Project Management including skills in Secretariat documentation.¹¹

In July 2009, the Province of Leyte embarked on preliminary work activities for the conduct of the Baseline Study in Leyte Province, with an Local Research Institution Orientation and Area Updating and Strategizing on 6-7 July 2009 at the SMED, Tacloban City. Prospective LRIs for the baseline study included the Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU), Visayas State University (VSU), Visayas Cooperative Development Center (VICTO) and the Runggiyan Social Development Foundation. These LRIs were oriented on the nature of the GREAT Women Project and the bidding process of the Provincial Government of Leyte.¹²

After the Orientation, the activity was followed by the issuance of the Invitation to Bid by the Provincial Bids and Awards Committee (BAC). Only one bidder, a private entity, submitted its application to bid for the study.

Footnotes

⁷ Province of Leyte, Year 1 Work and Financial Plan; GREAT Women Project Status of Implementation (Province of Leyte), January 2009 to February 2010.

⁸ Interview with Ms. Melchora Cawile, GREAT Women Project Focal Person for the Province of Leyte, July 9, 2010, Provincial Population Office, Leyte Provincial Capitol.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² GREAT Women Project Status of Implementation – Province of Leyte, January 2009 to February 2010.

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Provincial General Services Office (PGSO) wanted to ensure that the requirements and processes for bidding of consultative services were observed carefully. In November 2009, four TWG members, four BAC members and the LAC carefully assessed as a team the technical requirements of the lone bidder. The lone bidder lacked the organizational machinery to supervise and conduct the study. It also did not have enough human resources to conduct the study, only intending to hire additional human resources when the contract was awarded. The lone bidder also lacked similar experience in bidding.

Taking A Baseline Study on WEE

The team proposed that a second round of bidding be undertaken. Should there be another failure in bidding, a negotiated bid would be employed in December and would be awarded immediately to the chosen LRI by early January 2010.¹³

The Provincial BAC conducted a second round of bidding, with EVSU and VSU as two responding LRIs. The contract to conduct the baseline study was automatically awarded to EVSU, which had complete requirements. VSU lacked a Mayor's Permit, a documentary requirement for the bidding.¹⁴ An inception meeting with EVSU was conducted in March 2010 in Tacloban to formally commence the Baseline Study on March 15, 2010. The study would be entitled "Study on Women Micro-entrepreneurs (WME) and Women Workers in the Micro Enterprise (WWME)." With available funds, the baseline study should be completed within the prescribed 12-week period.

The Inception Meeting resulted in several agreements for the Baseline Study. Among them are determination of sample size, and determination of the number of enumerators based on the sampling size. On the sample size, the LRI statistician shall be based upon the number of registered and unregistered WMEs in the LGUs. The number of enumerators would be based on the sampling size. All enumerators will be trained by EVSU and they shall come from respective LGUs.

The Provincial BAC is tasked to prepare the Terms of Reference, Contract and Memorandum of Agreement. Payment shall be based upon the terms of the MOA. Bid amount of P677,200 would be broken down to specific budget per detailed activities cited in the project proposal.¹⁵ Ten members of the LRI Team served as supervisors in the area, to fast-track the conduct of the study. EVSU was chosen to conduct the baseline study in March 2010, and awarded the contract in May 2010. Within March to May 2011, preliminary activities such as orienting local enumerators on baseline tools for survey use were conducted.

Footnotes

¹³ Feedback Report on the Bidding Process – Assessment of the Bidder/LRI on technical requirements, November 11, 2009, PPDO Conference Hall, Provincial Capitol Bldg.

¹⁴ Interview with Ms. Melchora Cawile, GREAT Women Project Focal Person for the Province of Leyte, July 9, 2010, Provincial Population Office, Leyte Provincial Capitol.

¹⁵ Feedback Report on the Inception Meeting with the LRI (EVSU) and PTWG, March 9, 2010, Gerry's Grill, Tacloban City.

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Strengthened Partnerships for GAD and WEE Promotion

Another major immediate outcome of project partnership are strengthened partnerships among local partners to facilitate greater access of women microentrepreneurs to gender-responsive and sustainable economic plans, programs and services. Partnership-building has been highly evident since the province's first year of GREAT Women Project implementation. Partnerships were forged with LGU Offices and local offices of national government agencies through membership with the TWG and the Provincial GAD Council.

The Provincial Technical Working Group supports the synergy between the LGU and national government agencies. The PTWG involves offices in the provincial government (such as the SP Committee on Women and Family, Provincial Population Office, Office of the Provincial Agriculture, PENRO, PPDC, PSWDO and the Provincial GAD Focal Person). The Provincial GWP Focal Person was the Provincial Population Officer or the Officer-in-Charge of such office.¹⁶ Membership included national government agencies operating in the province such as DOLE and DTI Provincial Office, and NGOs such the Runggiyan Social Development Foundation, Inc., Coalition of Family Planning Reproductive Health Advocates (COFPRHA-8) and Uplifted Women Association for Rural Development (UPWARD). The PTWG was created through Executive Order No. 08-011, Series of 2008, executed by Leyte Governor Carlos Jericho L. Petilla.

The LGU has benefited with WEE-related support from national government agencies. Barugo was the recipient of product development trainings for WMEs from the DOST. Likewise, DOLE also gave WMEs equipment.¹⁷

In the GST++ for the LGU held in September 2009, the DILG and the Leyte Normal University (LNU) representing the academe were invited. Despite the DILG and Leyte Normal University showing their support and cooperation with the Province relative to the GWP, they declined in formalizing their partnership with the TWG. For these institutions, their cooperation to GWP has led them to WME groups who can be beneficiaries of other projects.

A permanent body that mainstreams gender and is seen to sustain WEE results, the Provincial GAD Council is an active player in implementing the GREAT Women Project. The province reorganized the PGAD Council and includes DOLE, DOST, SSS, Philhealth, LNU, Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters sa Pilipinas (KBP), the Provincial Police Office, in its roster. The PGAD Council was active in GAD Code Review.



Footnotes

¹⁶ Executive Order 08-011, Series of 2008, creating and Organizing the PTWG of the GREAT Women Project in the Province of Leyte.

¹⁷ Interview with Ms. Melchora Cawile, GREAT Women Project Focal Person for the Province of Leyte, July 9, 2010, Provincial Population Office, Leyte Provincial Capitol.

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Local offices and national government agencies manifested their commitment to partnership by joining the Training of Trainers (TOT) on Enterprise Development and Resource Mobilization. The TOT intended to build up the capability of the participants in various aspects of product development, business concepts and fund accessing. Participants became part of a local pool for enterprise development. Four MTWG members from each pilot LGU (including the PESO Manager, C/MSWD, MAO and the GWP Focal Person) were trained in the TOT. The TOT was conducted on 16-18 September 2009 at the Kuting Reef, Macrohon, Southern Leyte.

As an expression of partnership, the GWP Focal Person of Leyte, has made it a habit to visit officials and department heads, and updated them on the status of GREAT Women Project on-going activities. She also visited pilot sites and in the course of her meetings with certain officials and department heads, they were able to arrive at solutions to certain issues in project implementation.

The first year of project implementation in Leyte focused on building the capacities of the LGU officials, the PTWG and the PGAD Council, to understand GAD relative to LED and WEE and apply such knowledge to the plans and policies of the province. Revival and reorganization of the PGAD Council was the first major step to step up the province's GAD activities and programs. GREAT Women Project capacitated the PGAD Council, the PTWG and key LGU officials with the mindset and skills to continue mainstreaming GAD and WEE in Leyte's plans and policies

"With the GWP, our policies and programs considered the needs of women in microenterprises and our GAD program strengthened," GREAT Women Focal Person for Leyte Mel Cawile said.

The GWP renewed interest in the GAD Program in the province of Leyte. Through the GREAT Women Project, many more learned that its GAD Code needed to be gender and WEE-responsive. The Project became the springboard for the PGAD Council to be reorganized and reactivated.

A certain level of partner convergence among national and local government to promote WEE has been achieved. In fact, NGA partners are already collaborating to implement projects for women microentrepreneurs, such as in the case of Barugo.

Results and Outcomes of Capacity Building and Partnerships



Footnotes

¹⁸ Interview with Ms. Melchora Cawile, GREAT Women Project Focal Person for the Province of Leyte, July 9, 2010, Provincial Population Office, Leyte Provincial Capitol.

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Perception and Behavior Changes in Stakeholders

As Ms. Mel Cawile remarked, "Within the TWG and PGAD Council, member LGU offices and the NGAs would now coordinate and discuss whenever there are concerns about women groups. GAD is no longer an exclusive concern of each office."

This convergence and cooperation of project stakeholders is progressively facilitating delivery of WEE-responsive services to WMEs. With NGA members, the PTWG created a more efficient convergence to discuss and address issues of women's economic empowerment and women microentrepreneurs. Inclusion of NGO partners has paved the way of steering women's economic empowerment towards LED.

Hurdling Issues in Project Implementation

In project implementation of Leyte, LGUs tackled some issues in implementation from inception to project implementation. Inception and planning by the Leyte Province posed as a challenge for the Province of Leyte, as the Project focus was unclear to them in early months. When the focus was clear that it concerned "women who are in microbusiness" and with PMO's help, the Province had obtain a clearer view on project direction. Workplans were refined through a series of meetings. Their GAD activities were infused with WEE perspectives.

During implementation, GWP focal persons at the provincial and municipal LGU levels have heavy workloads and thus, could not attend to project activities and concerns. The province recommended the assignment of an alternate focal person, who is knowledgeable about the project. This was true in the case of Baybay City where the alternate focal person proved to be knowledgeable about the project.

Conduct of the Baseline Study had many requirements that LRIs did not find appealing. Only one private agency bid for the project in the first round of bidding, while only two joined bidding in the second round. Being unable to meet certain requirements disqualified other bidders. Conduct of the Baseline Study was entirely new to the PGSO, which handled bidding of consultative services for the first time. PGSO ensured that all requirements and procedures were carefully reviewed and complied with. Being less familiar with documents needed for consultative services, the BAC also required the assistance of PTWG to review and assess bidders for the study. BAC was careful to meet all procedures for a successful bid. The first bidding process alone took several months, while failure of the first bid compounded the delay.

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The Province of Leyte and the municipal LGUs pursued implementation of workplan activities that were not anchored on baseline study results. While expecting to produce baseline study results, the province would seek PMO's opinion on how to proceed if baseline study results would not be finished with the first year of implementation.

The Province of Leyte also hurdled delays in procurement and processing of payments and liquidations with the BAC, finance and audit offices of the provincial government. The COA's pre-audit and post-audit requirements caused a delay for the province in liquidating the Trust Fund for Year 1 project implementation with the NCRFW (now PCW). There was a similar delay in the release of the first tranche of the GWP Fund, released only on 13 April 2009 while activities were as early as February 2009.

About The Project

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

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

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

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