<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPfA</td>
<td>Beijing Platform for Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPGD</td>
<td>Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development PPGD</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPW</td>
<td>Framework Plan for Women</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTPDP</td>
<td>Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan</td>
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<td>LGUs</td>
<td>Local Government Units</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRR</td>
<td>Rules and Regulations</td>
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<td>AVAWCA</td>
<td>The Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act</td>
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<td>BWS</td>
<td>Battered Woman Syndrome</td>
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<td>CSC</td>
<td>Civil Service Commission</td>
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<td>ECCD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Care and Development</td>
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<td>PSDP</td>
<td>Philippine Statistical Development Plan</td>
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<td>NCRFW</td>
<td>National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women</td>
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<td>MOVE</td>
<td>Men Opposed to VAW Everywhere</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GREAT Women</td>
<td>Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
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<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
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<td>DepEd</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<td>BEIS</td>
<td>Basic Education Information System</td>
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<td>DOH</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
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<td>F1</td>
<td>Fourmula One</td>
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EmOC - Emergency Obstetric Services
MNCHN - Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health and Nutrition
CGA - Country Gender Assessment
DOJ-NPS - Department of Justice National Prosecution Service
IACAT - Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking
DOJ - Department of Justice
DSWD - Department of Social Welfare and Development
TIP - Trafficking in Persons
IACVAWC - Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children
RIACATVAWC - Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Trafficking and VAWC
PIACATVAWC - Provincial Inter-Agency Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children
CIACATVAWC - City Inter-Agency Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women
MIACATVAWC - Municipal Inter-Agency Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children
DILG - Department of Interior and Local Government
PNP - Philippine National Police
NBI - National Bureau of Investigation
OPAPP - Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
DDR - Disarmament-Demobilization-Reintegration
SIP - Social Integration Program
PHRC - Presidential Human Rights Committee
ARMM - Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
PSL - Personal Safety Lessons
CPTCSA - Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse
FLEMMS - Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey
LFS - Labor Force Survey
LFPR - Labor Force Participation Rate
ERP - Economic Resiliency Plan
GFI - Government Financial Institutions
SSI - Social Security Institutions
GRCs - GAD Resource Centers
GRN - Gender Resource Network
GST - Gender Sensitivity Training
PCW - Philippine Commission on Women
UNIFEM - United Nations Fund for Women
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
NGAs - National Government Agencies
GAD - Gender and Development
NEDA - National Economic Development Authority
DBM - Department of Budget and Management
GMEF - Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework
M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation
ODA-GAD - Official Development Assistance Gender and Development
PEM - Public Expenditure Management
IACGS - Inter Agency Committee on Gender Statistics
NSCB - National Statistical Coordination Board
A. The Framework Plan for Women and GAD Budget Policy: Mechanisms to Implement the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA)

1. National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), the national machinery for the advancement of women, remains steadfast in its commitment to implement the international policies on women which include among others, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). The pursuit of the commitments are in line with its vision of making government work for gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender mainstreaming.

2. From the general policy on gender equality articulated in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, concrete expressions of the policy have been formulated and are being implemented through plans of action. The plans of action included measures to carry out the provisions in the international as well as national laws and policies.

3. As a key Plan of Action, the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) 1995-2025, the 30-year strategic plan that fleshed out the BPFA, was further translated into an operational plan. In 2001, the NCRFW, in collaboration with government agencies, NGOs and academe formulated the Framework Plan for Women (FPW), a time-slice of the PPGD.

4. Aside from outlining specific and results-focused programs and projects, the FPW provides standards and mechanisms to fulfill Philippine commitments to international agreements such as the CEDAW, BPFA and Beijing + 5 Outcome Document. The interventions are grouped along 3 major areas of concern, namely: (a) promotion of economic empowerment; (b) protection and fulfillment of women’s human rights; and (c) promotion of gender-responsive governance.

5. As in the PPGD, the FPW is implemented through a gender mainstreaming strategy for which agencies work on the comprehensive integration of gender principles and concepts in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs. The mainstreaming strategy is to be done in accordance with existing guidelines for the preparation of agency-specific agenda and GAD budget. NCRFW takes the lead in coordinating the integration of the objectives of the CEDAW, BPFA, PPGD and the FPW in the policies, programs, projects as well as systems and process of the agencies.

6. Using the GAD Budget Policy as its handle, NCRFW tracks the actions of the agencies in their preparation and implementation of specific programs and allocation of resources to carry out the interventions outlined in the FPW.
B. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as Framework for Development

7. As a signatory to the Millennium Declaration, the Philippine government has adopted the MDGs as a guide for setting national targets. The MDGs are considered benchmarks for tracking the government’s performance in achieving international commitments to the global development agenda and particularly the Medium-term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) goals and targets. The government also recognizes that meeting the requirements of the MDGs will entail collaborative efforts of both the national and local government units (LGUs) as well as the private sector through related interventions geared toward mainstreaming the MDGs in the local development agenda. The *MDG Localization Program* led by the Department of Interior and Local Government was implemented towards that end.

8. The NCRFW has been advocating for the integration of gender equality and women’s concerns across all the other MDGs and expansion of the list of gender indicators to Goal 3. As a result, the government has paid close attention to responding to the needs and concerns of women and girl children in the implementation of the MDG in a) education, b) poverty eradication, c) health and d) gender equality.

C. Legislative and Policy-Making Achievements

9. Much progress has been achieved in the institution of policies to address discrimination, particularly violence against women and exploitation in the last ten years. Landmark laws on addressing sexual harassment (RA 7877), rape, including marital rape (RA 8353), trafficking in persons, especially women and children (RA 9208), and violence against women and their children (RA 9262) have been formulated. Government agencies are strengthening their coordination to provide more effective implementation of the laws.

9.1 *The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act* was passed in 2003 and defines as criminal, acts of trafficking and acts to promote trafficking in persons. It also redefines prostitution from a crime committed by women only to any act, transaction or design involving the use of a person by another for sexual intercourse or lascivious conduct in exchange for money or profit. It also stipulates penalties for various types of offenses with or without consent including “users” or customers of trafficked women in prostitution. To facilitate the implementation of the law, a set of Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) has been drafted.

9.2 *The Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (AVAWCA)*- Passed in the first quarter of 2004, this law aims to stem the high incidence of violence against women in intimate relationships and criminalize perpetrators. It also protects women and children in the context of marital, dating or common law relationship. The law also recognizes the “battered woman syndrome” (BWS) as a legal defense for women who have suffered cumulative abuse and have been driven to defend themselves. The law provides for issuance of “protection orders” to stop violence and prevent recurrence of future violence.

8.1 Judicial Reforms – The Supreme Court initiated reforms in the judicial doctrines and court procedures. After the law on the reinstatement of family courts was passed, new rules to facilitate the filing of cases on domestic violence and issuance of protection orders were put in place.
Solo Parents Welfare Act

9. The rising incidence of single parents and the need to respond to their welfare concerns paved the way for the enactment of the Solo Parents Welfare Act in 2000. The statute provides for a non-discriminatory policy on employment opportunities for single parents. It also includes a comprehensive program of social development and welfare for single parents and their children such as livelihood development services, parental leave, educational and housing benefits and medical assistance. As a policy support to this law, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) amended its rule on maternity leave to allow unmarried women in government service to avail of it.

Optional Protocol of CEDAW

10. At the international level, the Philippines ratified the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW in August 2003. This provides opportunities for Filipino women to file complaints and seek redress for violations of their rights through the assistance of the UN Committee on CEDAW. With the accession to the Optional Protocol of CEDAW in 2003, NGOs have used it on two cases – one a rape case where the perpetrator was acquitted and the other on an executive order made by a former mayor restricting the use of artificial contraceptives in the city’s government health centers.

Briefs and Advocacy Materials for Policy and Legislative Discussions

11. NCRFW participated in policy discussions and congressional hearings, providing gender perspectives in discourses by way of position papers and other advocacy materials. Topics include the widely debated bills on the Reproductive Health, Magna Carta of Women, Marital Infidelity, Kasambahay (Household Workers), Anti-Prostitution, Raising the Age of Statutory Rape from 12 to 16 years, and Establishment of Women’s Development and Crisis Centers at local government units.

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Act

12. The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Act of 2000 defines the ECCD System as the full range of health, nutrition, early education and social services programs that provide for the basic holistic needs of young children from birth to age six (6), to promote their optimum growth and development. It encourages the active involvement of parents and communities. The implementation of this system shall be the responsibility of the national government, local government units, non-government organizations and private organizations. The rearing of a child is traditional role of mothers. With the enactment and implementation of this law, raising a child is no longer solely the responsibility of mothers. The community, the national and local government and other institutions are now to assist in providing for the basic holistic needs of young children.
**Gender Sensitive Information Campaign**

13. Administrative Order 249, issued on 10 December 2008, orders the further strengthening of government policies, plans, and programs for the effective promotion and protection of human rights. It also directs the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women to lead a gender-sensitive information campaign for the provision of gender-sensitive public services by local government units and other frontline government agencies involve in addressing violence against women.

**Gender Statistics**

14. The government’s Philippine Statistical Development Plan (PSDP) for 2005-2010 included a separate chapter on Social Needs and Gender and Development. Considered a major breakthrough in addressing gender data gaps of identified Core GAD indicators, Framework Plan for Women, Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW, the chapter contains provisions on the problems and plans for the collection of sex-disaggregated data and statistics on priority gender issues, which shall be addressed by the government in the next five years. The PSDP serves as a companion document addressing the statistical requirements of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-2010.

**D. Participation of Men in the Promotion of Gender Equality**

**Men’s Advocacy Against VAW**

15. In terms of initiatives to engage men and boys in addressing violence against women, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), helped organize the Men Opposed to VAW Everywhere (MOVE). MOVE is an organization of men who committed themselves to be actively involved in the elimination of VAW.

16. MOVE specifically seeks to: a) speak out against VAW; b) examine, propose and formulate total male involvement and actions in the elimination of VAW; c) form partnerships and linkages with similar groups working on VAW, locally and internationally; d) organize and conduct researches, studies and fora in recognition of the social effects of VAW for policy and program development; and e) establish resource network on VAW.

17. MOVE has developed its By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation, and is registered in the Securities and Exchange Commission. MOVE has also successfully expanded into several chapters in the national agencies, local government units and non-government organizations nationwide. The MOVE held its first National Congress with a nationwide coverage and General Assembly successively. It has conducted several awareness raising activities on the elimination of violence against women and was represented in a panel discussion on the male involvement in the elimination of violence against women to the 2009 UN Committee on the Status of Women in New York.
E. Progress in Specific Priority Areas

Achievements in Education for Girls and Women

18. The increased investment in female children’s education by parents, coupled by parental appreciation of educating daughters, has led to high literacy and educational achievements of women, both absolutely and relative to men.

Employment in New Workplaces

19. In 2005, enterprises in the 30 private economic zones, 4 public economic zones, and the 4 ICT parks and buildings together employed about 1.1 million workers, or 3% of the total number of workers in the Philippines. About 80% of them are young women.

Gainful Employment and Skills Training

20. Women benefited from skills training programs and were eventually absorbed in the labor force. Disadvantaged women were trained and became gainfully employed through open, self-employed, subcontracted trainers and other types of jobs.

Part II:

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

A. Women and Poverty

21. With a population of 88.6 million in the 2007 census, the Philippines is the 12th most populous country in the world. Despite strong economic growth performance in recent years, the official poverty incidence increased from 30% in 2003 to 33% of the population in 2006. The big picture shows a poverty incidence that has fallen over the last 18 years, but population growth means that the poverty magnitude—the number of poor people—has increased. In 1988, there were 25 million poor individuals; in 2006, there were 27.6 million. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was $1,345 in 2006, but inequality was high; the income of the richest decile of the population was about 19 times that of the poorest decile. The 2007 Philippines Midterm Progress Report on the Millennium Development Goals reports a low probability of achieving the targets for universal primary education, improving maternal mortality, and increasing access to reproductive health care by 2015.

Policy and Program Developments

22. In 2008, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo dedicated 10-billion pesos towards poverty eradication. The country has pursued an integrated and comprehensive national anti-poverty strategy called the Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan. (Linking
Arms against Poverty), which focuses on asset reform, human-development services, employment and livelihood, social protection and participatory governance.

23. Women benefited from skills training programs and were eventually absorbed in the labor force. Disadvantaged women were trained and became gainfully employed through open, self-employed, subcontracted trainers and other types of jobs.

24. NCRFW is currently implementing the Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project. This is a 5-year project with funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Under the project, NCRFW works with identified national government agencies and local government units and seeks to enhance the enabling environment (i.e. policies, institutional mechanisms, technical capabilities of officials, programs and services) to promote the growth of women in micro-enterprises.

25. The 2006-2007 the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor noted that gender is the least hindrance in entrepreneurship. Only in the Philippines are women found to be more active in starting a business than men. Professionals and entrepreneurs even cited social and cultural norms as one of the most contributing factors to entrepreneurship, recognizing gender equality and the role of women in supplementing the family income.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Prevalence of Poverty Among Women in Rural Areas

26. Despite efforts by government to alleviate the plight of the rural poor, poverty remains a major issue confronting women especially those in the rural areas.

27. The imbalance in the distribution of resources between urban and rural areas creates a wide disparity in the development of the two areas in favor of cities. A more realistic and more comprehensive approach to the problem, one that gives women a greater share in decision-making, and the necessary tools and resources to help them break away from destitution is recommended.

28. To address the imbalance in development of rural and urban areas, more viable agricultural industries, livelihood and job opportunities for rural women that harness the resources in the area while ensuring food security and protecting the environment must be created.

29. Local government units and devolved government agencies are encouraged to deliver basic/social services that respond to specific needs of women particularly those in rural areas. The programs and services to be delivered for rural women should be anchored on a comprehensive collection and analysis of socio-economic data on women’s needs and concerns in the locality.
Safety Nets for Small and Medium Enterprises

30. Women in small and medium enterprises need safety nets, as they face stiff competition from cheap products from other countries. Like other local industries, they require reasonable protection to shield them from too cheap imported goods and services. Women entrepreneurs need technical or capital assistance, particularly if they are to go beyond micro-enterprises.

Poor conditions of women microentrepreneurs

31. For women microentrepreneurs, low capitalization of their enterprises sometimes results from their preference for keeping operations small-scale, so as not to interfere with the care of home and family.

32. Microfinance programs are often divorced from a wider strategy of promoting women’s human rights and a broader agenda that covers economic, social, and political empowerment. The narrow focus on credit of some microfinance programs, coupled with low loan levels, poses obstacles to growth for many microenterprises.

33. A lengthy application process for microfinance loans also increases the cost of acquiring this type of financing, resulting in women seeking out more readily accessible informal credit, even if interest rate is higher.

34. Home responsibilities tend to constrain women from participating in trade fairs, organizations, and networks that could open up new business opportunities outside the immediate community. For the same reason, it may also be difficult for microenterprises to handle bulk orders.

B. Education and Training of Women

35. RA 9155 or the Basic Education Act of 2001 mandated the Department of Education (DepEd) to provide the overall framework for: (a) school head empowerment by strengthening their leadership roles; and (b) school-based management within the context of transparency and local accountability. This law also serves as the anchor of the DepED’s mission to provide quality basic education that is equitably accessible to all and lays the foundation for life-long learning and service for the common good.

Policy and Program Developments

GAD Exemplars in Basic Education

36. The DepEd has developed Gender and Development or GAD exemplars which serve as a guide on how to integrate gender in all subject areas in elementary and secondary levels. Its utilization was complemented by the conduct of gender sensitivity training in the division and school levels, organization of GAD focal points in the regional and division levels as well as the integration of gender issues in classroom activities.
37. A GAD trainers’ manual was also formulated to complement the exemplar. This manual hopes to aid in capacitating the DepEd’s staff and personnel, particularly those using the exemplar.

38. The integration of GAD, VAW and adolescent reproductive health issues including life skills in revised basic education curriculum in three subjects areas in elementary level, namely, science, character education and home economics as well as in all subjects in secondary level was also undertaken.

Basic Education Information System

39. The Department also established the Basic Education Information System (BEIS). This system disaggregates, among others, the sexes of students and pupils up to the classroom level nationwide.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Integrating appropriate GAD Core messages in education materials

40. There is a need to review and revisit integration of GAD core messages in textbooks and education materials. The availability of GAD evaluation instrument for books is a major leap in influencing the DepED’s prescribed educational materials. With the current developments, however, particularly in the curriculum, it may again be necessary to review and revisit this instrument to make it relevant and consistent to the present agency efforts. The capacity of the evaluators is also a major consideration for the effective utilization of this document. It is also important to note that the evaluation process only holds true for the prescribed educational materials for public schools, the private schools’ materials on the other hand do not undergo review and evaluation process. This is also an important concern that needs to be addressed.

Opposition in the implementation of Basic Education Curriculum with VAW and ARH Core Messages

41. The NCRFW and the education department with support form the UNFPA developed a module on integrating gender-responsive adolescent reproductive health in the basic curriculum. This enhanced basic education curriculum wherein VAW and ARH core messages are integrated is yet to be fully implemented nationally. The influence of the Roman Catholic Church caused delays in its full adoption and implementation.

C. Women and Health

42. Life expectancy is one of the indicators of human development. Current female expectancy at birth rose by 1.5 years from the 2000-2005 projections. The current
projected female life expectancy remains higher at 71.64 years compared to men at 66.11 years (2005-2010 projection, NSO).

43. Statistics show a steady decline in maternal mortality, from 209 per 100,000 live births in 1993 (National Demographic Survey), 172 in 1998 (National Demographic and Health Survey), to 162 in 2006 (Family Planning Survey).

44. Fertility levels in the Philippines declined gradually in the last 15 years. The 2008 NDHS survey results show that a woman in the Philippines would bear an average of 3.3 children in her lifetime, down from 4.1 children in 1993. It should be noted that the declines in total fertility rates from the 1998, 2003 and 2008 survey registered at 3.7, 3.5 at 3.3 respectively were insignificant.

45. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the adult population (15-49 years old) is still low at less than 0.1% of the population. From 1984 to 2007, the number of registered cases stands at 3,061; of these, 2,754 are still living. Of the total number of cases, 52% were registered in just the last seven years (2001-2007). More than half (2,027) of people living with HIV and AIDS are males; 1,023 are females, and 11 had unreported sex. More than half (1,838) of recorded cases were transmitted through heterosexual contact.

Policy and Program Developments

Health Reform

46. The Department of Health (DOH) chartered a clear road map for the health sector called the Fourmula One for Health (F1), which specified clear targets and identified priority projects and activities of the DOH for the medium and long term, emphasizing the needs to focus attention toward the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and the National Objectives for Health for 2005-2010.

47. The health of mothers and children were placed at the center of health sector reform, consistent with the advocacy that all women have the right to safe and quality emergency obstetric services (EmOC) to prevent maternal and newborn deaths, and the goal to cut maternal and child deaths by 2015.

48. With pregnancy and childbirth posing serious risks to Filipino mothers and their newborn, the country recognizes the need to accelerate the reduction in maternal and child mortality. In response to this need, the Department of Health (DOH) has initiated key health reforms for the rapid reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality through the DOH Administrative No. 2008-0029 (dated September 2008). This mandates the implementation of an integrated Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health and Nutrition (MNCHN) strategy within the framework of the F1. The MNCHN adopts a unified strategic framework for maternal and newborn health that is linked with child survival strategies, maximizing the delivery of service packages, and ensuring a continuum of care across the life cycle stages. Under this strategy, all pregnancies are considered at risk. Likewise, it takes into consideration the three major pillars in reducing maternal mortality and morbidity, namely, emergency obstetric care, skilled birth attendants and family planning.
49. Other maternal and child health and nutrition programs and projects being implemented by the government in partnership with LGUs, NGOs and private sector are:

49.1 Women’s Health and Safe Motherhood Project of the DOH which aims to provide access to quality basic and emergency obstetric and newborn care.

49.2 The Family Planning Program which is anchored on responsible parenthood, respect for life, birth spacing, and informed choice.

49.3 Nutrition in Essential Maternal and Child Health Services which include delivery of essential maternal and child health and nutrition package of services that will ensure the right of the child to survival, development protection and participation;

Health Insurance

50. Also part of the health reform agenda is increasing PhilHealth’s social relevance through enhanced benefits such as the Expanded Maternity Package, Newborn Benefits Package, and the Outpatient Packages for HIV/AIDS (to cover antiretroviral medications), Tuberculosis and Malaria.

HIV/AIDS

51. To avert the possibility of having a full-blown HIV epidemic at hand, the Philippines has already adopted and instituted measures in three key areas: governance; prevention; and treatment, care and support. This is made possible through the concerted efforts of government agencies, civil society groups and donor agencies. Plans, policies and programs developed include the AIDS Medium-term Plan for 2005-2010; AIDS Policies in the workplace; AIDS modules for school curricula; and the guidelines, standards, and protocols for HIV case reporting, media reporting, treatment, care and support, including provision of antiretroviral drugs.

Men’s Participation in Family Planning and Responsible Parenthood Programs

52. Recognizing the need to involve men in promoting reproductive health of women as well as their own, the Department of Health issued the National Policy and Strategic Framework on Male Involvement in Reproductive Health (Administrative Order No. 2006-0035). Most of the activities aimed to tap the potentials of men as partners of women in achieving their fertility and reproductive health goals through the provision of education and information that enable them to transform their values and behaviors towards women’s empowerment. Small groups of men called ‘Mr GAD’ and ‘GADFATHERS’ have been formed in Davao City to highlight men’s important role in reproductive health.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Addressing Maternal Mortality
53. While there is a steady decline in maternal mortality in the last decade, the decline remains slow, considering that the Philippines must reduce its maternal mortality ratio to 52 deaths per 100,000 live births (at least 7.5% annually) by 2015 to achieve the Millennium Development Goals target. The Philippines is yet to see the results of the recent policy on implementing the MNCH strategy to assess if it addresses the problem on maternal mortality.

*Mitigating the Threat of an AIDS Epidemic*

54. While the Philippines’ HIV/AIDS situation is yet to reach the critical level, the ingredients for an epidemic are reported to be widely present in the country. All the known modes of HIV transmission have been recorded, and more than half of the recorded cases were registered within 2001-2007. The 2008 Joint Country Gender Assessment (CGA)¹ states that it is likely that the figures on HIV infections rates are incomplete and that a lot of information on the ground may be undocumented due to a lack of systematic reporting. The recently established national AIDS monitoring and evaluation system could address this, but its roll out to the local level is still in its early stages of operation. The CGA also noted that despite official commitment to providing respectful and gender-sensitive services, there are reports of discriminatory treatment in hospitals. It also noted the lack of trained staff who can care for and support people with HIV/AIDS while respecting their privacy, especially in temporary health care facilities.

*Passing a National Law on Reproductive Health*

55. The passage of a national law to address the reproductive health care needs of women still remains a major challenge. The devolution of health services, alongside the present administration’s policy of leaving the responsibility of providing reproductive health services to local government units (LGU), resulted to major disparities in access to reproductive health services. While some LGUs already have their own reproductive health ordinances, there were recorded cases of local public health facilities denying women of information and services on the full range of contraceptive methods in other LGUs.

*Involving Men in Family Planning*

56. While there have been encouraging efforts on involving men in reproductive health, there remains the challenge of sustaining and expanding these efforts to reach more people. Generally, males continue to exhibit low participation in family planning as indicated by the low prevalence of vasectomy and condom use. They play a critical role in the spread of STIs and HIV/AIDS endangering not only their own health but also the well-being of their partners.

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¹ "Paradox and Promise in the Philippines: A Joint Country Gender Assessment, 2008 was initiated by the ADB and joined by the CIDA, EU, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA and the NCRFW."
D. Violence Against Women

57. The number of cases classified as Violence Against Women and their Children or RA 9262 (domestic violence) continues to increase from 218 in 2004 to 3,599 cases in 2008. Massive information campaign on the law and its strict implementation has caused more police officers to classify wife battering cases as violation of RA 9262. With the total VAWC cases of 3,780 reported in 2007, a total of 718 Barangay Protection orders (BPOs) were issued. For 2008, 372 BPOs were issued from the total 5,403 cases reported from the regions. This shows the downward trend of the issuance of BPOs from the year 2007 with 19% to only 7% as of 2008.

58. Reported rape cases accounted for about 14.7% percent of total reported VAW cases from 2004 to 2008. There is a downward trend on reported rape cases – from 997 in 2004 to 811 in 2008. For incestuous rape, 160 cases were reported within the 5-year period. On trafficking, a total of 102 cases were reported from 2004 to 2008 which includes cases of sex trafficking, white slavery and violation of RA 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking of Persons Act of 2003.

59. For 2008, a total of one hundred sixty (160) complaints for trafficking in persons (TIP) were filed with the Department of Justice National Prosecution Service (DOJ-NPS) and Local Prosecution Offices. Eighty (80) of these cases is pending resolution, 37 were filed in court as TIP cases, 16 cases were filed in court as violation of other related penal laws, while 27 were either dismissed/dropped/withdrawn. To date, there are thirteen (13) convictions for violation of RA 9208.

Policy and Program Developments

Establishment and Operationalization of Inter-Agency Mechanisms to address VAW

60. With the enactment of RA 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 and RA 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004, the government immediately created and established the following mechanisms to address and monitor the implementation of said acts:

60.1 Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT). Created under Section 20 of RA 9208, the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) is composed of eight (8) national government agencies and three (3) representatives from non-government organizations coming from women, children and OFW sectors. The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) acts as chair and co-chair, respectively. The IACAT serves as the coordinating and monitoring mechanism on all anti-human trafficking efforts of the government. It is also tasked to formulate a comprehensive and integrated programs as well as

\[2\] Under the Violence Against Women and their Children Act or RA 9262, only women are protected from physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. Village or barangay heads are mandated to issue Barangay Protection Orders (BPOs) to perpetrators of physically abused women who seek their help. The BPO is valid for 15 days.
harmonize all government initiatives to address the issues of trafficking in persons (TIP).

60.2 *Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children (IACVAWC)*. Created under Section 39 of Republic Act No. 9262. The IACVAWC is composed of twelve (12) national government agencies tasked to formulate programs and projects to eliminate VAW based on their mandates as well as develop capability building programs for their employees to become more sensitive to the needs of their clients. It also served as the monitoring body on VAWC initiatives. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) acts as the chair while the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) serves as the Secretariat of the Council.

61. To combat human trafficking and violence against women and their children at the sub-regional and local levels, the two national Inter-Agency Councils issued the guidelines on the creation of a local joint mechanism/structure on trafficking and VAWC. As of December 2008, the following regional and local mechanisms have been established:

61.1 Seventeen (17) Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Trafficking and VAWC (RIACATVAWC) has been set-up and operational in 17 regions all over the country;

61.2 Twenty two (22) Provincial Inter-Agency Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children (PIACATVAWC);

61.3 Sixteen (16) City Inter-Agency Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women (CIACATVAWC); and

61.4 Sixty Three (63) Municipal Inter-Agency Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children (MIACATVAWC) were also organized.

**Issuance of Protocols, Standards and Guidelines**

62. In 2006, the NCRFW in partnership with DSWD, DILG, DOH, DOJ and PNP developed the Performance Standards and Assessment Tools for Services Addressing VAW in the Philippines. It provides for the standard procedures of work particularly ensuring that these are gender-sensitive and responsive to the needs of VAW victims-survivors. VAW Performance Standards Information Package consists of five sets of documents for each of the five service categories, as follows: Philippine National Police (PNP) for investigatory services or procedures; Department of Health (DOH) for medical or hospital-based services; Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for psychosocial services; Department of Justice (DOJ) for legal/ prosecution services; Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Local Government Units (LGUs) for Anti-VAW services at the barangay (village), municipal, city and provincial levels.
63. To strengthen efforts in the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking cases, the justice department through the IACAT developed the *Manual on Law Enforcement and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons Cases*. The Manual is a step-by-step guide from the surveillance of suspected trafficking activities and offenders to the prosecution of cases. It incorporates a practical interview guide on the proper conduct of interviews of trafficking victims, relevant administrative issuances to expedite the disposition of cases and a directory of relevant government agencies that provide assistance to trafficking victims.

64. The NCRFW under the IACVAWC also developed the *Guidelines in the Establishment and Management of a Referral System on Violence Against Women at the LGU level*. The need for coordination is highlighted by the fact that women and children who are victims-survivors of violence have various needs. Rarely can a single facility, individual or agency/organization provide all the services to meet these needs. Meeting these needs such as physical health, psychosocial well-being, economic security and legal protection, requires the coordinated efforts of several agencies through the establishment of an efficient and effective referral system.

*Search for Outstanding VAW Responsive LGUs and the Gender Justice Awards II*

65. The kick-off program of the 2008 18-Day Campaign to End VAW launched the *Search for Outstanding VAW-Responsive LGUs* and the *Gender Justice Awards II*. The Search for the Outstanding VAW-Responsive LGUs aims to recognize innovative programs and methods of LGUs in addressing VAW. The Gender Justice Awards II will recognize six Gender Sensitive Judges from the NCR, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, who have rendered gender-sensitive decision on a VAW case. Both searches will take place in 2009 and the awarding ceremony will be done during the 2009 18-Day Campaign to End VAW.

*Database on Trafficking in Persons*

66. The IACAT, with the support of UNICEF, has commenced the development of a comprehensive database that will unify all the data maintained by different government agencies. A standard reporting format was developed using the forms currently used by the DSWD, Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Department of Justice (DOJ). The database for law enforcers (PNP & NBI) and prosecution (DOJ) is designed to be linked to the existing database of the DSWD, which is already on its pilot testing stage. It is expected to be fully implemented by June 2009.

*VAW Documentation System*

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3 In the Philippines, Presidential Proclamation no 1172 designates November 25 to Dec 12 as the 18-day Campaign to End VAW – 2 days longer than the usual 16-days of activism ending on Dec 10. Dec 12 marks Anti-Trafficking Day, the day the Palermo protocol was signed.
67. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), under the direction and guidance of the IACVAWC is set to pilot test this year the National VAW Documentation and Reporting System Project. The end goal of this project is to come up with a functional VAW Documentation System Software and Database to facilitate the efficient and appropriate collection of VAW data. This system will link other documentation systems being developed such as those discussed above.

2008 National Demographic and Health Survey

68. In 2008, the National Statistics Office conducted the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) which covered a nationally representative sample of almost 14,000 households. One major area covered in the survey is on the extent of violence against women (or personal safety) in the Philippines. The NCRFW was able to have this new section included. The NDHS also gathered information on population, family planning and health which included family planning methods, fertility preferences, utilization of health facilities, childhood mortality, maternal and child health, knowledge on HIV/AIDS and HIV prevention. The information gained from the activity is to assist policy makers and program managers in evaluating and designing programs and strategies for improving health and family planning services in the country.

Free shelters for women victim of violence and their children

69. Forty five (45) residential care unit/ temporary shelters are maintained by the DSWD for the Victims-Survivors of VAWC that are accessible in different regions of the Philippines. Among others, these includes the following:

69.1 The Haven - is a Substitute Home care for Women that provide direct interventions to women victims of gender-based violence or those vulnerable to abuse and exploitation whose ages are from 18-59 years old, who need protective service as well as other services that will promote healing and recovery.

69.2 Home/Center for Girls - A child-caring facility that provides protection, care, treatment and rehabilitation services to abused and exploited girls below 18 years old.

69.3 Marillac Hills (Also known as National Training School for Girls) - A child caring facility that provides care and rehabilitation to female children in conflict with the law, abused and exploited girls below 18 years old.

69.4 Reception and Study Center for Children - A child-caring facility that provides psychosocial services to children 0 to 6 years of age. The RSCC aims to help the child achieve child survival, development and protection.

VAW Centers
70. “One-Stop-Shops” and “Women and Child Friendly” investigation studios have been established by the NBI in their district and regional offices. To date, NBI have five (5) operational One-Stop-Shops (NBI-VAWCD, Taft Avenue, Manila; NBI-CAR, Baguio City; NBI-CAVRO, Tuguegarao City; NBI-NEMRO, Cagayan De Oro City; and NBI-WEVRO, Ilo-ilo City) and twelve (12) operational Woman and Child Investigation Rooms (NBI-BRO, Naga City; NBI-CABDO, Cabanatuan City; NBI-BATRO, Batangas City; NBI-PEURDO, Palawan; NBI-CELRO, Angeles City; NBI-CEVRO, Cebu City; NBI-VIDO, Vigan City; NBI-LAGDO, Santa Rosa City, Laguna; NBI-IRO, San Fernando City, La Union; NBI-TARDO, Tarlac City; NBI-OLDO, Olongapo City; and NBI-DIPDO, Dipolog City).

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Adoption and institutionalization of a National VAW Documentation and Reporting System

71. Although the human trafficking and VAW documentation systems are still in the piloting stages, there is a need to ensure that lessons learned and improvements in the systems will be consolidated and inputted into the National VAW Documentation and Reporting System.

MOVE Capacity Development

72. There is a need to continuously build the capacities of MOVE Philippines to equip them with necessary skills in providing technical assistance and sustain its efforts to eliminate violence against women. Given that MOVE is now an NGO, financial support from the government is minimized and in order for this men’s group to be strengthened, there is a need for the organization to source out additional funds to sustain the programs, projects and other activities.

Strengthening of Regional and Local IACATVAWC mechanisms

73. Regional and local IACATVAWC mechanisms should be strengthened and made functional to continuously monitor and oversee the strict implementation of RA 9208, RA 9262, other related laws for the protection of women and children, and of the IACAT and IACVAWC national plans of action.

Setting-up of functional VAW Referral Systems

74. While advocacy and awareness raising campaigns on the laws and services protecting the victims have led to more women reporting abuses committed against them, there are still legal, social and cultural factors, which impede the women’s access to justice and social services. Particularly at the local level, there is still a need to establish an integrated, multidisciplinary approach and standard procedures of work with VAW victims through the setting up of a VAW referral system.
E. Women and Armed Conflict

Policy and Program Developments

75. A number of key positions in Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) are occupied by women. The Government Peace Negotiating Panel with the CPP-NPA-NDF\(^4\) is chaired by a woman, with 2 women panel members, and a woman secretariat head and the Government Peace Negotiating Panel with the MILF panel has 2 women members.

76. The Philippine comprehensive peace process provides for the participation of women’s organizations at the local and grassroots levels through consensus-building and consultation processes leading to the formulation of area-based peace and development agenda. The women’s peace agenda is integrated in these peace building programs.

77. Administrative order No. 172 issued on March 23, 2007 launched the government’s Disarmament-Demobilization-Reintegration (DDR) program for former rebels. This DDR program is also known as the Social Integration Program (SIP). The SIP provides for special measures/services for women and children former rebels.

78. The NCRFW and the OPAPP, together with partner civil society groups in the gender and peace network, are currently developing a National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325, on Women Peace and Security and UN SCR 1820 on ending sexual violence in armed conflict situations.

79. The NCRFW and World Bank conducted the National and Regional Workshops on Building Partnerships for Gender-Responsive Peace-building on 27-28 November 2006 and 16 January 2007, respectively. These workshops served as venue for gender and peace advocates to share their initiatives in addressing issues and concerns of women affected by armed conflict. Said initiatives, which were mostly conducted by non-government organizations and international development organizations, include the following:

79.1 Promoting women’s participation and representation in peace bodies and processes through advocacy for inclusion of women in peace bodies and panels, conduct of young women leaders forum as successor generation, and capacity building activities such as conflict prevention and management trainings and leadership-related trainings for women; and

79.2 Promoting a gender perspective in peace-building through development of women’s agenda for peace, engagement in community-based ceasefire monitoring such as the Bantay Ceasefire (Ceasefire Watch), development of gender and peace modules and gender sensitive school materials, conduct of gender-sensitive peacebuilding training, employment of gender-sensitive analysis of community needs and programs, gender mainstreaming concerns in peace plans and programs, and conduct of research, surveys and media campaigns supporting women’s advocacies.

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\(^4\) Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front-New People’s Army
80. The Mindanao Commission on Women, Inc, an NGO has developed a multistakeholder strategy for peace and development that includes active roles for women in conflict resolution in Mindanao. They have successfully launched a ‘Mothers for Peace’ campaign.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

81. Given the rate at which peace processes are failing, it is apparent that peace and security policy should not be left to the military alone- or to male-oriented ways of resolving conflicts.

82. There is need for stronger implementation and localization of UNSCR 1325 and 1820 as well as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts.

83. Attention should be given to addressing the special needs of children, women and the vulnerable groups, such as indigenous communities, and include them in relief and rehabilitation process.

84. The documentation of experiences of women, children and indigenous peoples in ongoing conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction efforts remains a priority concern.

F. Women in Power and Decision Making

Policy and Program Developments

85. There have been significant inroads into making governance institutions more accessible to women. The number of elected women, particularly in the House of Representatives, has markedly increased. The number of women mayors has also consistently increased since 1995. However, while on the surface these developments are positive, politics is still a male domain. The presence of women in electoral politics frequently has more to do with political dynasty. In 2004, the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism found that 70% of the women in the House of Representatives in 2001 were members of political clans. The judiciary is also male dominated, though this dominance is slowly easing. In 1997, 80% of the judges were male. By 2006, 30% of the judges were female. In 2008, 6 of the 15 Supreme Court justices are women. Majority of those in the civil service are women, but they tend to be at the second level, or the rank-and-file positions, while the men occupy the executive or the managerial jobs.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

86. One of the most serious gender issues in the country is the very wide gap in participation rates of men and women in decision making. Although Filipino women had claimed the right of suffrage and the right to stand for election as early as 1939, very few (i.e. an annual average of ten percent of all elective posts) had been able to assume political and governance roles. Across the different elective positions in government, only 8-20 percent are women. The leadership of the organizations of
farmers, fishers, workers and indigenous peoples continues to be male dominated. Some of the manifestations of gender bias in politics and governance include the:

86.1 Persistence of sexist beliefs and practices that make it very difficult for women to get elected into office and perform their work effectively; and

86.2 Lack of support for women who wish to assume leadership roles in the community.

G. Human Rights of Women

Policy and Program Developments

National Human Rights Action Plan

87. The Philippine government is developing the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) for 2009-2014. The NHRAP aims to mainstream the eight International human rights treaties ratified by the Philippines into the plans, programs and actions of government. Guided by the Rights Based Approach (RBA), the plan aims to capacitate the State as duty bearer that will respect, protect and fulfill human rights, and to empower citizens to assert their rights claimholders. A Presidential Human Rights Committee (PRHC) chaired by the Executive Secretary was created to coordinate the development and monitor the implementation of the NHRAP.

Amending Discriminatory Provisions in Laws

88. The enactment of a measure addressing the system of prostitution is one of the priority legislative agenda of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women. It recognizes that women and children are systematically victimized by and in the system of prostitution and must therefore be protected by the State. It recognizes that the existing law on vagrancy (Article 202 of the Revised Penal Code) has outlived its usefulness and that persons caught in this system should be looked upon not as criminals but as victims of their circumstances.

89. The Marital Infidelity bill currently pending in the 14th Congress seeks to correct the gender inequality contents of Article 33 and 334 or Adultery and Concubinage, respectively of the Revised Penal Code. The proposed measure adheres to the provisions of the CEDAW which seeks to abolish discriminatory laws and practices against women.

Promoting the rights of Muslim Women

90. To facilitate the integration of rights, gender and VAW related concerns in the practices and culture of the Muslim communities in the Philippines, the NCRFW under the UNFPA 6th CP project and with support from the Spanish international cooperation and development agency (AECID), collaborated with Muslim women’s group in Mindanao and some Muslim Religious Leaders to develop IEC materials.
and tools like the Khutbas (or Friday Sermons) with a gender perspective. Rights-based capacity building modules to ensure that Muslim women are empowered and are enjoying fundamental human rights are also being developed.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Revision of the Code of Muslim Personal Laws

91. While a proposal for the amendment of the Code of Muslim Personal Laws has been developed, an amendatory bill has yet to be filed in Congress. There is also a need to intensify advocacy efforts among Muslim women themselves to support the debates and deliberations of said measure.

92. Gender bias in the delivery of justice and law enforcement still prevails. While there has been significant progress in raising public awareness about the pervasiveness of domestic violence in the country and in establishing counseling and shelter facilities for victims, there are problems in the processing of cases once they reach the courts. Many women are not able to seek justice for the crimes committed against them because of tedious litigation procedures and lack of gender sensitivity among court personnel.

93. Among the legislative measures that have to be passed as soon as possible are those that will ensure women's right of access to reproductive health information, technology, and care and legal protection of women and children in case of the breakdown of married relations.

H. The Girl Child

94. The Philippine government translation of its commitment to international instruments protecting and promoting children’s rights is concretized in the enactment of legislation and issuance of policies, and in the implementation of programs and delivery of services for children.

Policy and Program Developments

Enactment of RA 9344 or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006

95. The Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2004 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) aims to keep youth offenders below 15 years old out of jail. This long-awaited law also mandates the creation of a welfare council that will coordinate and oversee its implementation. A Rights-based Framework for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency in Philippine communities was developed for the local governments, to guide the planning and implementation of a comprehensive agenda for the prevention of delinquency at the level of local government and barangays. (Report on the Status of Girl Child, 2007)
Programs and Services to Eliminate Discrimination against Girl-Child

96. Programs and services aimed at eliminating girl-child discrimination have been set in place by government agencies and non-government organizations. These range from advocacy and capability building using the rights-based approach, education and emergency preparedness for indigenous people and children, programs for IP children in armed conflict areas, healing and renewal, redistributive justice, parent effectiveness, family therapy and counseling, awareness building on girl child issues, girl child involvement in various fora on socio-cultural and political issues, consciousness raising on sexual harassment. How-to manuals have been developed and disseminated, in order to effect program implementation.

Child Pornography

97. Several bills on child pornography are filed in both houses of Congress. The first local anti-child pornography ordinance, which is aimed at curbing the distribution of child pornography through the internet, DVDs, CDs and cellular phones, was filed in the province of Benguet in September 2007. Comparable bills in both houses of Congress seek to raise the minimum age of sexual consent to determine statutory rape from 12 to 16 years of age. These amend or repeal the other provisions of the Penal Code, as well as special laws, with the attempt to address the disparity in the treatment of those persons who are below 12 years old and those 12 years but below 18 years of age (NGO Alternative Report, 2008)

Personal Safety Lesson for Children

98. The Personal Safety Lessons (PSL) which aim to give information, develop skills, and build self-esteem in children to increase their ability to resist sexual offenders was piloted in 14 schools in the NCR, Luzon, Northern and Eastern Visayas regions through the partnership of the Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (CPTCSA) with the Department of Education (DepEd) from 2002-2008. In each area where PSL is implemented, a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) is set up to support the schools in case of abuse. MDTs are composed of representatives from the DepEd, DSWD, PNP and other related institutions and are trained by CPTCSA in order to ably handle child sexual abuse disclosures in schools. In 2006, CPTCSA and the DepED worked on the expansion of the programme. A department memorandum is in the works to mandate the institutionalization of the PSL and its corresponding mechanisms in all schools.

Girl Child Labor

99. Philippine actions on eliminating child exploitation in the labor sector are reflective in both legislation passed and programs implemented. The enactment of RA 9231 or the Anti-Child Labor Law (2003) which amended RA 7610 by providing for elimination of the worst forms of child labor is considered a model legislation reflective of the widely ratified ILO Convention 182. The conduct of the Stakeholders’ National Policy Conference resulted in raising awareness on child labor and its related issues among sugar planters associations, and pushed activation of councils for the welfare of children among participating LGUs. Sagip Bata Manggagawa (Child Labor Rescue) efforts successfully closed down
establishments hiring children. Noteworthy is growing private sector interest and involvement in promoting children’s rights as evidenced by a major chain of malls’ engagement in children’s rights education to develop child-friendly policies both as an establishment popularly accessed by children and young people, and as a workplace with a large workforce constantly relating with children and young people.

Remaining Issues and Challenges

100. In 2006, about 36 million were estimated to be children under 18 years old, accounting for 41.73 percent of the total population at the time (around 86.264 million) who need support or are dependent on the adult population.

Increase budget allocation and spending on education, health and social services

101. The prioritization of government of debt servicing was done at the expense of public spending on education, health and social services. The inadequate funding support contributed to the rising costs of education, which have pushed children out of schools. Data from the 2003 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) revealed that out-of-school children and youth cited employment or looking for work as the top reason for not attending school. Employment data show that 36 million of the 55.4 million population 15 years old and over have entered the labor force in April 2006. This inadequate prioritization on education and health may contribute to the reasons why the Philippines may not reach the Millennium Development Goals that focus on universal access to basic education and maternal health.

Protecting children caught in armed-conflict

102. There is a critical need to replicate efforts in promoting children as zones of peace, particularly in armed conflict areas. There is imperative need for the integration of child protection to be non-negotiable in peace negotiations. There is urgent need for gender-fair policy and action to address violence against children in the home (i.e., the girl child domestic in home situations), for local governments to take on accountability for violence against children within their communities. There is vital need for government agencies, budget and finance in particular, to come out with policy guides for LGUs to mainstream girl and boy children in their budget plans. Key is the immediate need for more and continuing advocacy work with LGUs, with armed groups and communities in armed conflict; for relevant agencies to take on responsibility for further building up capacities of the five pillars of the judicial system to enable them to enforce child protection legislation. Essential is the need to focus on the continuing violence occurring against the girl-child: is she violated because she is a girl? Essential too is the need to study the extent to which Philippine laws are able to protect indigenous and Muslim girl children from violence.

Passage of Batas Kasambahay (Household Workers) bills
103. Action recommended to eliminate child labor economic exploitation and to protect working young girls, calls for passage of pending bills on the Kasambahay (domestic or household worker). There is need to build up a mass base that can strengthen the lobby for this bill, generate information and inputs to support passage of the bill, and to contribute to developing key messages for advocacy. Advocacy with LGUs needs to be stepped up for child labor issues to be addressed in their local development plans as a sustainability measure considering the phase-in / phase-out nature of NGO work in serving communities.

Ensure gender sensitivity of all duty bearers from policymakers and enforcers to frontline service providers.

104. While a tremendous amount of work has been undertaken in gender sensitizing the workforce both in and out of government, gender discrimination cases continue to be reported particularly among girl children situated in difficult circumstances. There is need to expand the reach, to ensure the quality, and assess the impact of gender sensitizing efforts by all stakeholders.

I. Women and the Environment

Policy and Program Developments

105. In the Philippines, women’s skills and efforts are being recognized as a considerable social force in mitigating the effects of natural disasters. Women regularly lead efforts toward natural disaster risk reduction, whether governmental or in civil society. The environmental movement and women’s agency groups largely cooperate and form a strong force in the environmental movement. They promote sustainable development, support reforestation, lobby for policy reforms to prevent disasters cause by aggressive industries (such as mining and logging), conduct research on climate change, and disseminate information through the media.

106. The Government has a number of gender-responsive disaster management programs. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources runs an education campaign called Engendering Geohazard Assessment and Mapping. The project provides women and men in access to geohazard susceptibility maps that show the vulnerability of various communities to natural disasters. This helps show them which parts of their community are susceptible to geohazard, giving them the capacity to plan for hazards (Or mitigate their effects by avoiding building in unstable areas, for example).

Remaining Issues and Challenges

Limited Participation in Decision-Making on Environment Concerns
107. There is limited involvement of women in decision making especially at the grassroots level and also in government’s efforts to protect and preserve the environment. There is a tendency to limit women in traditional and non-confrontational positions in forest preservation and management. Lack of awareness-raising on the role of women in decision-making in environment issues should also be addressed.

*Evaluation of Impact on Environment Projects on Women*

108. There is lack of information on effects of environmental degradation and health hazards. Thus, there is a need to conduct more researches to validate the impact of environmental projects on women and to learn more about women’s initiatives in natural resource management. More mechanisms should be established to assess the impact of development and environment activities on women, including gender-responsive database, information and monitoring system, participatory research methodologies and policy analysis.

*Lack of Efforts for Concerns of Indigenous Women*

109. Both government and NGOs still lack efforts to involve indigenous women in gender and environment concerns. There is also a lack of political will in implementation and support for indigenous and community groups, especially against illegal loggers, commercial fishers, foreign mining corporations, developers, polluting industries, energy and other infrastructure projects.

**J. Women and Media**

*Policy and Program Developments*

110. There is an incessant effort to create awareness on women’s rights, issues and concerns in Philippine media. A number of prominent women journalists and media advocates continue to take center stage to articulate gender issues and concerns. Women have notably carved their own careers in the media profession and hold distinguished positions in various media entities previously enjoyed by men. Women advocates in advertising firms have also begun portraying women in a more positive light and tried to break the sex stereotyping in some commercials. The NCRFW partnered with the Advertising Board of the Philippines for the Araw Awards recognizing advertisements portraying positive images of women and promoting women’s empowerment.

111. In partnership with the government’s Philippine Broadcasting System, the NCRFW began airing a weekly radio program in July 2009 called ‘Tinig ng Kababaihan’ (Voices of Women) tackling various issues and concerns on gender equality and women’s empowerment. The service is charged against the station’s GAD budget.
112. The Philippine Information Agency coordinates the review and enhancement of the Code of Ethics and Media Guidelines so that women’s rights are protected when they become subject of news reports on radio and television. The Videogram Regulatory Board (VRB) made a policy eradicating the showing of pornographic video of women in public transportation. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) developed and disseminated appropriate materials for media use, and convened a forum on the portrayal of children in media during the Girl Child Week celebrations.

113. Media practitioners in academe, government and private sector bonded together to raise public consciousness against gender stereotyping and negative portrayal of women in media. Women NGOs and alternative media groups coalesced to strengthen their advocacy work in the media industry. Many women’s groups have embarked on grassroots approach in delivering information to people regarding empowerment of young women and girls.

**Remaining Issues and Challenges**

*Gender stereotyping and pornography*

114. Despite efforts to address the issue, gender stereotyping has not been eradicated. The mass media continue to marginalize issues on gender inequality and discrimination while some media practitioners remain unaware of the sexist language that they use in their programs. The absence of lead government agency to monitor and address gender issues in the media has affected the government’s ability to address gender issues in the industry.

115. Meanwhile, the campaign to eliminate pornography has suffered due to the absence of specific government agency tasked to combat print as well as internet pornography. The proliferation of pornographic materials, replication of gender-insensitive information, images and ideologies and the use of information and communication technologies for trafficking perpetuate a range of violence.

116. In addition, there is still no law on Cybercrimes as proposed bills are still pending in both Senate and Congress.

**K. Women and the Economy**

117. The result of the October 2007 Labor Force Survey (LFS) showed a slight decrease from the 2006 Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) both for females at 48.2% from 48.8%, and males at 78.3% from 79.1%.

118. The number of employed and unemployed Filipinos in 2007 were estimated at 33.7 million and 2.2 million respectively. Female unemployment rate for the same year was relatively lower at 6.0% which is equivalent to 821 thousand compare to male at 6.4% which is estimated at 1.4 million.
119. The October 2006 LFS estimated a total of 33.2 million employed and 2.6 million unemployed population, 15 years old and over. Employed women were estimated at 12.8 million while unemployed women were estimated at 936 thousand.

120. The number of employed and unemployed men in 2006 were consistently higher over the past years at an estimated 20.4 million and 1.7 million respectively. In terms of Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), female and male LFPR were estimated at 48.8 percent and 79.1 percent respectively.

121. From the same survey period in 2005, female LFPR was estimated at 49.8 percent; slightly higher than the 2006 estimate. The same is true with male LFPR which is higher than the 2006 estimate at 79.8 percent. Although the 2005 LFPR was higher for both female and male population; the 2005 estimates indicated a slightly lower employment both for female and male at 12.7 million and 20.2 million respectively compared to the 2006 figures.

122. Of the total 12.8 million employed women in October 2006, around 3.5 million (27.7%) were single; 7.9 million (61.6%) were married; and 1.4 million (10.7%) were widowed/divorced/separated. As to the 20.4 million employed men, 6 million (29.3%) were single; 13.8 million (67.8%) were married; and 590 thousand (2.9%) were widowed/divorced/ separated.

123. Contrary to the standard, not all employed women and men were paid. There is, in fact, an increasing trend of unpaid workers over the past years. In October 2006, unpaid family workers in own family business or enterprise were estimated at 4.3 million in the agriculture, industry and services sectors from 3.7 million in 2003. Of the total figures, 2.4 million (55.8%) were unpaid women workers while only 1.9 million (44.2%) were unpaid male workers. A large fraction of the unpaid workers, both women and men, were laborers and unskilled workers (78.4%) in the agriculture sector (73.7%).

124. To lessen the impact of the financial crisis on the marginalized and poorest of the poor, (majority of whom are women and children), the government has developed an "Economic Resiliency Plan (ERP)". The ERP aims to stimulate the economy through a mix of government spending, tax cuts and public-private sector projects.

125. Different NGAs are directed to enroll programs/projects under the ERP geared towards: (1) ensuring sustainable growth and attaining the higher end of the growth targets; (2) saving and creating as many jobs as possible; (3) protecting the most vulnerable sectors – poorest of the poor, returning overseas Filipino workers, and workers in export industries; (4) ensuring low and stable prices; and (5) improve competitiveness in preparation for the global economic rebound.

126. To achieve these objectives, the ERP adopts these strategies:

127. Implement budget interventions - budget will be set aside for fiscal stimulus. It gives priority to infrastructure, agriculture, social protection, education and health. These are key public services that will shelter the people and economy from the global economic turmoil and provide the foundation for greater competitiveness in the long run.
127.2 **Accelerate spending for small infrastructure projects** - Agencies will front-load resources for full and quick spending, focusing on projects that are quick-disbursing, high impact and labor intensive.

127.3 **Expand social protection programs** – the 2009 budget has a higher allocation for social protection. Conditional cash transfers for the poorest of the poor were put in place to address high rice prices and rising hunger.

127.4 **Save and create jobs** – the strategy covers returning overseas Filipino workers and locally employed. Interventions include the implementation of a comprehensive livelihood and emergency employment programs to support job generation.

127.5 **Implement off-budget interventions** - these interventions include tapping the resources of government owned and controlled corporations and government financial institutions (GFI) for large infrastructure projects. These projects are critical in case the global crisis extends to a few more years. Social security institutions (SSI) are also encouraged to enhance benefits to members.

### Part III: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

#### A. The National Machinery, Its Role, Partners and Sources of Assistance

127. Since its inception in 1975, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) has been at the forefront in the promotion of women’s empowerment and gender equality. Aside from serving as an advisory body to the President, it is mandated to review, evaluate and recommend measures to ensure the full integration of women in various areas of development. It guides national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) in their gender mainstreaming efforts.

**Reorganization of NCRFW**

128. The national machinery gained more ground in gender mainstreaming when it was expanded and reorganized in 1997. The reorganization enabled the NCRFW to create additional positions and correspondingly, beef up human resource complement and extend its research.

129. In 2008, the Magna Carta of Women was included in the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council’s priority legislative agenda. The Magna Carta of Women, which Congress very recently passed, and is expected to be signed into law on Aug 14, 2009, seeks to address the disadvantaged position of Filipino Women by providing for a legal framework that prohibits discrimination against women and spells out the rights of all women, especially those in the marginalized
sectors. This landmark piece of legislation on Filipino women is the local translation of the Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

130. With the passage of Magna Carta of Women reorganizing the NCRFW into a **Philippine Commission on Women (PCW)**, with policymaking, technical assistance, and oversight functions, the agency would be more able to support gender mainstreaming efforts at the national and local levels and develop more effective institutional mechanisms, including monitoring systems; place the agency in a strategic position in the government structure; and provide adequate staff and sufficient resources with which to carry out its mandate.

**Support from International Donors**

131. To enable the NCRFW to pursue its program of building its capacity as well as those of key government oversight and implementing agencies and pilot local government units, the Canadian International Development Assistance (CIDA), the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provided financial and technical support to facilitate strengthening institutional capacity of NCRFW to respond to gender mainstreaming needs of its national agencies and local partners.

**Support from Sub-National Partners**

132. Because the NCRFW has no regional offices, oversight agencies’ regional offices play important roles in monitoring the enforcement of the GAD budget policy in the regions. Some NEDA regional offices have integrated GAD advocacy and technical assistance into their functions as they conduct, for example, GAD plan review sessions during regional budget hearings. Some DBM regional offices, on the other hand, ensure that allocations for GAD are included in the budget proposal of local government units that fall under their jurisdictions.

### B. Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

**GAD Focal Points**

133. The GAD focal point mechanism was established by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Women in Development and Nation Building Act of 1992 (RA 7192). Initially referred to as Women in Development focal points, GAD focal points are “catalysts for gender responsive planning/programming” within the agency and/or local government unit. To give legitimacy to the gender mainstreaming agenda of the agency, IRR of RA 7192 specifies that the focal point head should be a relatively high ranking official (not lower than an undersecretary in the case of central offices and not lower than assistant director at the sub-national levels.)

134. GAD focal points are also being established at the regional level. Most regional development councils have created and instituted GAD focal points in their
structures to ensure that regional development thrusts, programs, and activities are infused with a gender perspective.

135. As of 2008, there are 189 GAD focal points established in national government agencies (NGAs) including their attached agencies, state universities and colleges, and government owned and controlled corporations, and 395 GAD focal points in provinces, cities and municipalities as of 2005. Please see attached lists of government institutions with GAD Focal Points.

136. The GAD Focal Point is created through a policy issued by the head of the government institution. Said policy specifies the structure, members and functions of the GAD Focal Point. To perform their functions, the GAD Focal Points are provided with time, funds, training, management support, among others by their respective institutions. The NCRFW, on the other hand, provides technical assistance, tools, information and training to the GAD Focal Points of government institutions.

137. As a GAD mechanism, the GAD Focal Point, in general, serves as a very effective mechanism to ensure that the national and local government institutions mainstream GAD in their policies, plans, programs and services. However, the effectiveness of the GAD focal points varies from one government institution to another. But it is important to note that government institutions which have produced good practices or have shown progress in gender mainstreaming usually have effective GAD focal points.

**Partnership Building**

138. To respond to the increasing demands for gender training and mentoring at the sub-national and local levels, the NCRFW, in partnership with the University of the Philippines Center for Women’s Studies, the Women’s Studies Association of the Philippines, and CIDA has so far established nine Gender Resource Centers (GRCs) hosted by academic institutions in eight regions in the Philippines. The GRCs are composed mostly of faculty, NGOs and active government GAD focal points who were trained in gender-responsive planning and budgeting, transformative leadership and management, feminist research methodologies, and advocacy. Sharing of information among the members of the GRCs are done through an e-group. Campaigns are also launched through these channels. For example, the GRCs were tapped for signature campaigns and petitions to lobby for the passage of new laws.

139. A more loose Gender Resource Network (GRN) composed of individual gender consultants, NGOs, and active government GAD focal points has also been convened as a referral network to meet the demands of agency requests for gender training and technical assistance.

140. Also gender focal persons from multilateral and bilateral agencies and international non-government donor organizations, including representatives from NEDA and NCRFW have organized themselves into an ODA-GAD Network. The group conducts regular meetings to share and discuss women’s and gender programs that each ODA support and how they can probably link and complement each
other’s initiatives. Through the initiative of NEDA, the ODAGAD network has also developed the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines for Project Development, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation which aims to provide donor organizations and proponent/implementing agencies with a common tool to ensure that gender concerns are integrated in the various stages of the project cycle.

141. Tapping private sector support for GAD-related projects is being explored considering government’s very limited resource to pursue women’s empowerment and gender equality. At present, the NCRFW, through the CIDA-supported Gender-Responsive Economic Actions Towards the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project is engaging business groups and organizations to facilitate implementation of programs, activities and projects towards women’s economic empowerment.

**GAD Budget Policy**

142. Financing for women’s empowerment and gender equality in the Philippines took off with the adoption of Republic Act 7192 (1992) or the Women in Development and Nation Building Act and the introduction of the Gender and Development (GAD) Budget Policy in 1995. The GAD budget policy provides for increased resources for national (including all government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations, state universities and colleges) and local government agencies to support programs and projects for women. It mandates all government instrumentalities to utilize at least 5 percent of their budget for gender and development programs and projects that address one or more of the three key themes of the Framework Plan for Women, a time slice of the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (1995-2025): 1) promotion of women’s economic empowerment; 2) protection and fulfillment of women’s human rights; and 3) promotion of gender-responsive governance. The goal is to use the 5% in order to influence the remaining 95% of the agencies’ resources for gender responsive programs.

143. To implement this measure, all government agencies are required yearly to submit a GAD Plan and Budget following the joint guidelines issued by the NCRFW, DBM and the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) for review and endorsement by the NCRFW and submission to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). Agencies are also required to submit GAD Accomplishment Reports, demonstrating that they implemented their GAD plans and spent their gender budget accordingly. The NCRFW monitors the implementation of the GAD budget policy from the national to local level, in coordination with DBM. On the other hand, NEDA is responsible for monitoring implementation of the gender budget provisions of foreign-funded projects.

**Monitoring and Reporting**

144. NCRFW prepares reports on the results of the monitoring of the GAD budget policy. Aside from agency budget allocations, the reports produced include analysis of the kinds of programs, projects and activities pursued to strengthen the capacity of the
agency in addressing gender concerns as well as the projects implemented to directly respond to the gender issues identified for their sector.

C. Mechanism for Capability Building

*Pro Active Technical Assistance Program (PROTAP)*

145. Cognizant of the need of the agencies and GAD Focal Points for continued assistance in building their capacities in GAD, NCRFW and its partners continuously provide technical assistance. It is significant to note NCRFW’s newly developed approach to providing technical assistance, which it has drawn from its extensive experience in its work with agencies in gender mainstreaming. Dubbed as the PROTAP, the mechanism is a systematic and holistic approach that included identification of the needs of the agencies and their GAD Focal Point, the strategies and activities to be carried out. The PROTAP is directed towards influencing all areas of the development planning cycle and establishing the link between gender mainstreaming and its direct impact on improving the lives of women.

*Gender Tools and Materials*

146. In addition, NCRFW has developed the Gender Mainstreaming Resource Kit and all the other tools developed with partners. It consists of tools and materials to guide agencies in honing their knowledge and skills on GAD. Among the notable materials developed is the Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF). It is a self-administered and user-friendly tool for the agency to evaluate the extend of gender mainstreaming in its internal mechanisms and client-focused policies and programs.

147. In 2008, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework called “end-to-end M&E”, which includes standards and indicators to measure GAD performance at the input, output, outcome, and impact levels, was pilot tested.

148. The framework is now undergoing revisions to make it more user-friendly as it will be used to review and assess country compliance with the CEDAW, BPFA, MDGs, and other international commitments, as well as national policies, plans, and programs (including the agency GAD plans and budgets).

149. The Harmonized GAD Guidelines developed by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), NCRFW, Official Development Assistance Gender and Development (ODA-GAD) Network in 2003 and updated in 2008 ensures the integration of GAD in the design and implementation of ODA funded projects. It also ensures the mobilization of ODA resources for gender equality and women’s empowerment.

150. The International Labor Organization has also trained about 50 trainers and consultants, including NCRFW officers on Participatory Gender Audit to enhance their skills in assessing gender mainstreaming efforts of agencies.
151. The GERL Ka Ba Self-Assessment was conceptualized and developed as one of the priority interventions in GAD mainstreaming at the local level. It is a tool to identify the current level of LGU capacity in mainstreaming GAD into local processes and systems. In other words, it is used to determine the current capacity levels of LGUs to make their respective localities gender-responsive.

152. The result is envisioned to give a more concrete picture of the gaps and development areas in mainstreaming GAD at the local level. The results of the assessment shall also serve as one of the bases for LGUs to determine the status of GAD in their localities and in developing their GAD plans. This shall also help the Local Government Academy (LGA), the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and other national agencies in developing technical assistance packages and other interventions for LGUs.

153. The Gender and Development (GAD) Code Guidelines is a guide for LGUs in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the GAD Code.

154. A GAD Code is a comprehensive piece of local legislation or ordinance that supports the LGU’s efforts in promoting, protecting and fulfilling women’s human rights towards the attainment of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

155. ALL LGUs are encouraged to formulate their respective GAD Codes to concretize all national and international commitments on gender equality, women’s empowerment and women’s human rights such as the 1987 Philippine Constitution; Republic Act (RA) No. 7192, or the Women in Development and Nation Building Act; RA No. 7160 or the Local Government Code; GAD provision in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA); Executive Order No. 273 which approved and adopted the Philippine Plan for Gender-responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025; international treaties and commitments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA), International Conference on Population and Development Program of Action (ICPD POA), and Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

156. The supplemental guidelines for gender-responsive comprehensive development planning are a set of guidelines anchored in the Rationalized Planning System and the Guide to Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) Preparation developed by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

157. It aims to guide LGUs in mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment concerns in the comprehensive development planning process, in line with the international and national commitments on women, and in accordance with the DILG Guide to Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) Preparation. It also follows the synchronized local planning and budgeting calendar.

**Building capacities for Gender Mainstreaming**

158. Capacities for promoting gender mainstreaming may be viewed at the individual, institutional, and system levels.

159. At the individual level, there is relatively high awareness on gender and development (GAD) among employees of government institutions at the national and local levels.
This has been achieved through continuing GAD education, that is, conduct of GAD-related orientations and trainings such as GAD orientation, gender sensitivity training and GAD planning and budgeting, through conduct of women’s month celebration, and through provision of information materials and tools on GAD. However, through the years, the GAD-related trainings of national and local government institutions have been primarily focused on awareness-raising activities and seldom advance to more specialized GAD trainings which focus on making specific functions more gender-responsive. This points to the need to enhance the skills of government employees on utilization of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics, gender analysis and gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

160. At the institutional level, the GAD focal points serve as the primary vehicle for capacitating especially the national government agencies on gender mainstreaming. The GAD focal points spearhead, coordinate and monitor the gender mainstreaming efforts of agencies. At the local level, on the other hand, women non-government organizations serve as the prime movers in making local government units address issues and concerns of women in the localities. Support from top level officials and key personnel such as planning and budget officers of national and local government institutions has also proven very critical and important to turn GAD advocacies initiated by these key groups into realities. Challenges at this level include the strengthening and sustainability of GAD Focal Points; institutionalization of generation and utilization of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics, strengthening of CSO participation in agency/LGU planning and monitoring; improvement of the quality of GAD plans focusing more on client-directed GAD PAPS, and in the submission of GAD accomplishment reports.

161. At the system level, pursuing gender mainstreaming in the entire Philippine bureaucracy has been conducted through integration of GAD concerns in the medium-term development plan, national and local planning, budgeting and auditing policies of the government; through initiating inter-agency mechanisms on gender statistics and on specific gender issues i.e. violence against women, and through influencing regional mechanisms such as the regional development councils; and through setting-up mechanisms for technical assistance on GAD at the national and regional levels. Challenges at this level include the institutionalization of GAD planning and budgeting in the Public Expenditure Management (PEM) reforms; strengthening of the GAD budget policy and its implementation; institutionalization of the gender budget audit; strengthening and expansion of the GAD Resource Network/Centers as technical assistance arm for GAD; full enforcement/ implementation GAD-related laws and policies; and purposive monitoring of implementation of GAD-related laws and policies and their impacts, and GAD mechanisms and PAPs.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation

Gender Indicators

162. A core set of GAD indicators anchored on the 12 areas of BBPFA concerns was developed in 2001. It was expanded later to include the priorities of the government identified in the Framework Plan for Women (FPW).
163. The Inter Agency Committee on Gender Statistics (IACGS), composed of data-producing line departments and agencies including one non-government organization representing users of gender statistics, was tasked through a resolution by the NSCB Executive Board to monitor the implementation of the action plans of the thirteen (13) agencies directed to address data gaps on the GAD indicators and ensure availability of required data and statistics for monitoring the progress on the status of Filipino women and to address data gaps of the Statistical Framework on the GAD Indicator System.

164. Despite various efforts of the Philippine Statistical System led by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) to ensure availability of required gender statistics, data gaps on some GAD indicators related to Economy including valuation of unpaid work, Health, Media, and Environment remain a challenge. The lack of sex-disaggregated data at sub-national level is also a pressing concern that has to be addressed to better achieve BBPFA goals and objectives.

165. Sex-disaggregated data are being utilized in the formulation of the women’s priority legislative agenda which include the Magna Carta of Women Bill, Anti-Prostitution Bill, Kasambahay (household Workers) Bill, Local Sectoral Representation Bill, Marital Infidelity Bill, and the Reproductive Health, Responsible Parenthood and Population Development Bill.

E. Role of Other Stakeholders in the Promotion of Gender Equality

166. Consistent with the practice of democratic governance, NGOs and civil society organizations have been participating in preparation of CEDAW, BPFA and other reports. They have joined briefing sessions and feedback forums on the Women’s Convention; and have been involved in the consultation workshops to validate the comprehensiveness, completeness, and accuracy of the information and analyses presented in the report.

PART IV:
ADVANCING THE GAD AGENDA BEYOND 2009

167. While the Philippine government celebrates the milestones in the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment, it is fully aware of the need to effectively respond to both existing and emerging challenges and issues in order to achieve equitable and sustainable development.

168. The following are some of the broad areas of issues and priorities that the national machinery will pursue to further the implementation of the critical areas of the Platform for Action.

Protection from adverse impacts of global economic crisis and economic liberalization

169. The global economic crisis poses challenges to the Philippine economy especially on the vulnerable sectors such as women and girl children. While economic and trade liberalization policies benefited some sectors, these macroeconomic thrusts adversely
affected the economic situation of women. Flexible work arrangements, lack or absence of social protection, displacement or marginalization of women workers and human and trafficking are some of the negative effects noted.

170. NCRFW will continue to look into and demonstrate the relevance of issues and impacts of globalization on women and the widening gap in the areas of social protection, provision of decent jobs, poverty and changes in agricultural production. The national machinery will systematically investigate the gender impact of globalization with special focus on labor issues and develop a comprehensive and integrative strategy for understanding and addressing the effects of changes in Filipino women labor and migration issues, human and sex trafficking.

**Support for women in the informal sector**

171. Statistics indicate that women comprise 85% of productive labor in the informal sector which include family-based agricultural production who contribute significantly to the economy. However, there is limited understanding of the structure of the informal sector and appropriate interventions that could be developed for women in this economic group.

172. To enable government to identify and formulate relevant measures, NCRFW will study the structure, profile and concerns of women in this economic sector. The Commission will gather data, specifically on the contributions of informal work to the national economy. It will also identify areas for advocacy regarding the rights of the people in this group, particularly women.

**Micro-enterprise and sustainable development**

173. Micro and small enterprises produce items that are among the prime products (e.g. garments, food, giftware) in the export market. These enterprises need more comprehensive and technical assistance to make them viable and globally competitive. They need to be provided with credit and make this accessible to all kinds of poor women. Credit schemes need to be integrated with gender perspective. Further, women’s access to these resources need to be complemented by increased capacities to control the resources and fully participate in economic decision-making.

174. NCRFW will assist in this area by extending its research and policy advocacy to ensure that economic opportunities reach women who are most in need and reduce poverty. This will be done through sharing of good practices of the GREAT Women Project.

**Women and peace-building**

175. The continuing peace and order problem and terrorist threats displace women and children. Women should be enabled to participate in peace building and in the rehabilitation of their communities.

176. The national machinery participates in government efforts in peace process that aims to examine the varied implications of the aspects of conflict such as militarization, terrorism and religious fundamentalism and their impacts on women. In addition, NCRFW will heighten the awareness of women’s vital role in peace building and explore
innovative and effective strategies for their participation in it through the National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325 on Women Peace and UNSCR 1820 on ending sexual violence in armed conflict situations.

**Correcting Discriminatory Laws on Women**

177. The national machinery has included in its priority legislative agenda the revision of remaining discriminatory laws on women such as the Revised Penal Code. It will also endeavor to influence the revision of the Code of Muslim Personal Laws which still discriminate against women.

**Women and Media**

178. Stronger partnership with members of the media has resulted in the increasing airing of women’s concerns and gender issues in the national and local media, production of materials for print and broadcast media in support of GAD campaigns (especially on VAW), and efforts of government (principally NCRFW and the Philippine Information Agency), NGO and the private sector (private media companies and advertising firms) to make media practitioners aware of gender issues in the media and to help them produce more gender-sensitive materials and shows.

179. NCRFW will continue to work with its media partners to minimize if not altogether eliminate, sexism and VAW in Philippine media. It will lead in lobbying for the passage of law on cybercrimes.

**Gender-Responsive Disaster Risk Management**

180. The vulnerabilities and capacities of women and men and the gender dynamics of disaster situations are often not given attention. Increasing women’s skills and knowledge in responding to disasters will be given priority by the national machinery by actively participating in local and national forums on this concern and modeling initiatives addressing disaster at the community level.