



Proceedings of the 5th National Women's Summit

March 5-6, 2020 | Miriam College, Quezon City

The 5th National Women's Summit celebrated the 25th anniversary of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) with the theme "*Remembering What Was, Examining What Is, and Forging Ahead*". The summit brought together individuals, professionals, and representatives from various civil society organizations, the academe, the youth sector, from government agencies in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, and rural and urban-based community women.

With Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute (MC-WAGI) taking the lead, the summit was made possible in partnership with the University of the Philippines Center for Women and Gender Studies (UP-CWGS), the University of the Philippines College of Social Work and Community Development (UP-CSWCD), and the Women's Studies Association of the Philippines (WSAP). Oxfam sa Pilipinas, meanwhile, provided financial support to the event.

Flow of Proceedings

The proceedings of the 5th National Women's Summit is composed of the ff. parts:

Day 1

- Introduction to the Opening Keynote Speaker;
- Opening Keynote Speaker;
- About the National Women's Summit;
- Plenary: Thematic Issues Panel;
- Launch of WAGI Publication *Quilted Sightings: Spark Talk, Ignite Change!*
- Parallel Sessions on the 12 Critical Areas of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)

Day 2

- Parallel Sessions on the 12 Critical Areas of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) (*Continuation*);
- Closing Keynote Speaker;
- Annex 1. Program.

Day 1

Introduction to the Opening Keynote Speaker



Tesa de Vela, Executive Director, Miriam College - Women and Gender Institute (MC-WAGI).

Ms. De Vela, Executive Director of the Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute (MC-WAGI) introduced the opening keynote speaker of the 5th National Women's Summit, Patricia B. Licuanan.

Opening Keynote Speaker



Patricia B. Licuanan, Former Chairperson of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UN-CSW) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), 1995.

Ms. Licuanan shared her story about the long and grueling process that led to the consensus

at the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing China in 1995. She also shared the equally difficult road from 1995 to the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) based on her experiences as former Chair of the UN-CSW.

She presented accomplishments at the FWCW, recalled its consultative and negotiating processes, and outlined the controversial issues then. She also highlighted the promises that were both kept and broken by governments in their implementation of the BPfA, and mentioned the existing threats and opportunities 25 years later.

Ms. Licuanan ended her speech with feminist ways forward that include recognizing old friends who are still forging ahead and welcoming young women to keep the spirit alive. She emphasized the need for renewed tenacity and steadfastness and the need to recommit to the values of equality, development, and peace towards a better world for women.

About the National Women's Summit



Aurora "Oyie" Javate-De Dios, Convener and Senior Project Director, MC-WAGI.

Ms. De Dios presented the history of the National Women's Summit (NWS) with MC-WAGI hosting it since 2008. She paid tribute to the late Sen. Leticia Ramos Shahani, former Senator and College Dean of Miriam College, who developed the concept of a national women's summit with Professors Oyie de Dios and Gigi Francisco of the as a platform to discuss and debate on women's issues not just in the country but also globally.

She shared some of the highlights of the NWS over the years especially featuring as a special guest of Chilean President Michelle Bachelet at the Third National Women's Summit in 2015, and the first Regional ASEAN Summit in 2017 that brought together participants and resource speakers from the ASEAN region. Ms. De Dios emphasized the importance of the BPfA and the role of young feminists to know, embrace, and defend the political legacy of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Plenary: Thematic Issues Panel

The thematic issues for this plenary session are as follows:

- Poverty, Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services;
- Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation;
- Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes;
- Peaceful and Inclusive Societies; and
- Participation, Accountability and Gender Responsive Institutions.

The session was moderated by Tesa Casal de Vela, Executive Director, MC-WAGI.

Poverty Eradication, Social Protection, and Social Services



Rosalinda "Inday" Pineda-Ofreneo Former Dean and Professor Emeritus, UP College of Social Work and Community Development (UP-CSWCD) Regional Director, HomeNet Southeast Asia.

Ms. Ofreneo discussed types of inequalities that women, young and old, experience in the country that cause greater poverty. These include unpaid care work, poor housing conditions, the extra-judicial killings (EJKs) against individuals affecting families and communities, and among many others.

According to Ms. Ofreneo, the government's development strategy, such as the Rice Tariffication Law and the Train Law, has hit rural women the hardest. Ms. Ofreneo discussed new frameworks to address the issues of women's poverty, social protection, and social services. These frameworks must be inclusive of every sector in society, must uphold feminist solidarity economy, and promote gender equality, intersectional feminism, and human rights. The new frameworks must promote work-life balance in the formal economy and security in the workplace.

Environmental Conservation, Protection, and Rehabilitation



Marie Aubrey J. Villaceran, Assistant Professor at the UP College of Arts and Letters, Department of English and Comparative Literature, and the Deputy Director for Research and Publication at the UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies.

Ms. Villaceran said that the Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, ranking third because of its geographic location. The gender dimension of climate change is manifested in increased cases of violence against women in the aftermath of disasters.

She maintained that government is weak in implementing laws involving environmental sustainability and protection. With the lack of clear and aggressive government-led initiatives, Ms. Villaceran said that civil society organizations (CSO) have taken up the responsibility expected of the government. CSOs are doing their best despite the lack of resources and support to help protect the environment.

Freedom from Violence, Stigma, and Stereotypes



Aurora "Oyie" Javate-De Dios, Convener and Senior Project Director, MC-WAGI.

Ms. De Dios explained that stigmatization and gender stereotypes exist in the context of unequal power relations that result in the disapproval, rejection, exclusion, discrimination, and violence against women. According to her, these issues will remain a huge challenge particularly in the post-Duterte regime.

Ms. De Dios highlighted women's groups, like EveryWoman and Gabriela, dedicated to call out, resist, and hold the Duterte administration accountable for its misogyny and discrimination against women. Ms. De Dios also urged everyone to fight the culture of violence, stigma, and stereotyping.

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies



Karen Tanada, Executive Director of the Gaston Z. Ortigas (GZO) Peace Institute.

Ms. Tanada presented the country's achievements in building peaceful and inclusive societies. These achievements include the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2017-2022) and the signing of R.A. 11188 or the "Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act" of 2019, and among others. She highlighted the appointment of Miriam Coronel-Ferrer as Chief Peace Negotiator and the first woman to sign for a peace agreement.

She cited existing challenges in building peaceful and inclusive societies amidst shrinking democratic spaces. Other challenges include discrediting women leaders by demeaning them, violating their dignity and rights, and invisibilizing them in the implementation of the peace agreement, in the process of transitional justice and in reconciliation with relevant groups in the peace process. To address these, Ms. Tanada recommended supporting the strengthening of women's leadership in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim

Mindanao (BARMM), to continue to work for the protection of women and girls, and to continue to engage the duty bearers and other stakeholders on the National Action Plan-Women Peace and Security (NAP-WPS) towards more effective implementation at various levels.

Participation, Accountability and Gender Responsive Institutions



Melanie Reyes, Chairperson of the Department of International Studies of Miriam College and the Gender and Development (GAD) Program Head of MC-WAGI.

Ms. Reyes presented a consolidated report on Women in Power and Decision-Making and the shadow report on Institutional Mechanism.

She reiterated the challenges in women's political participation and the barriers in gaining elective positions. She mentioned that many CSOs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are, however, doing the work in capacitating women for public office.

Ms. Reyes recommended that gender mainstreaming should be beyond budget and compliance. While the GAD budget should be utilized responsibly, the overall institutional mechanism for GAD mainstreaming must be strengthened. She also recommended a reform

in the electoral system to be more inclusive of women.

Launch of WAGI Publication Quilted Sightings: Spark Talk, Ignite Change!



Ms. Lalaine P. Viado is the Research Director of Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute. She is also one of the editors of *Quilted Sightings: Spark Talk, Ignite Change!* She introduced the book as WAGI's feminist academic journal. She then gave a background on *Spark Talk, Ignite Change!* an intermovement, intergenerational feminist interchange that was held last March 21-22, 2019. The presentations at the event were collected and published at this special edition of *Quilted Sightings*.

Some of the authors of the book delivered short messages at the launch. They gave a background of their article and extended their

gratitude to the people who helped them. Mr. Ted Bonpin, the Senior Manager for Partnership Support and Operations of Oxfam Pilipinas gave a message of thanks to MC-WAGI for the numerous successful partnerships between the two organizations.

Parallel Sessions on the 12 Critical Areas of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)

After the launch of *Quilted Sightings* over lunch, the summit proceeded with parallel sessions on the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action and special sessions on cross-cutting issues. The conference participants flocked to the first 7 sessions of their choosing, as follows:

- Women and Poverty;
- Education and Training of Women;
- Women and Health;
- Violence Against Women;
- Women and Armed Conflict;
- Women and the Economy; and
- Special Session on Muslim and IP Women.

Women and Poverty

Moderator: Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo from the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD), UP Diliman and Homenet Philippines.

Speakers:

Bernadette Zeena Manglinong, Freedom from Debt Coalition

Mylene Hega, Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) or the National Rural Women Coalition

Rowena Laguilles-Timog, Department of Women and Development Studies, College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD), UP Diliman

Zonia Narito, Homenet Philippines

Teresita V. Barrameda, College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD), UP Diliman

Arlen Sandino V. Barrameda, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP), UP Diliman

Alyssa Joy Balite, Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) or the National Rural Women Coalition

Ms. Manglinong, the first speaker of the session, said that not much has changed in the last 70 years, since 1946 to the present, in the area of women and poverty. She shared statistics supporting her claim of rising income inequalities. She mentioned that there are numerous reasons why many Filipinos are poor, however, one of the major reasons is the neo-liberal economic policy that opened the door of the economy to foreign businesses and capital.

The second speaker, Ms. Hega shared the results of focused group discussions (FGDs) with different sectors in society and the results were not positive. The situation of rural women in the last five years got worse; there is no valuing of women's reproductive work as well as of women in productive work. She cited other labor issues faced by women that include contractualization and poor working conditions that are not women-friendly.



Ms. Hega cited some national laws that address women's labor issues, such as the Magna Carta of Women, however implementation remains weak.

The third speaker, Ms. Laguilles-Timog, similarly cited existing pro-women laws but questions its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. She also highlighted missed opportunities at the national level, the bills at the Senate and the House of Representatives that should have been passed yet missed, such as House Bill No. 4444 or the Security of Tenure Bill and Senate Bill No. 1221 or the Magna Carta of Workers in the Informal Economy (MACWIE) among others.

To end on a brighter note, she enumerated initiatives by the local governments units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and civil society groups. These include the Quezon City local government that passed the Informal Economy Ordinance and the Gender-Fair Ordinance, and the local government in Salcedo, Eastern Samar that also passed the Women's Economic Empowerment and Care Ordinance.

The next speaker, Ms. Narito, focused her presentation on micro-financing, how money is cycled and spent within the home and community, and whether micro-financing is beneficial for women.

Ms. Narito raise the issue of whether micro-financing by itself has truly helped alleviate poverty or is it merely a temporary solution to poverty. This question has remained unanswered. However, a lesson learned is that micro-finance should be provided along with other services like insurance and training to assist micro-businesses.

Ms. Teresita Barrameda and Mr. Arlen Barrameda's presentations addressed Strategic Objective 4 of the BPfA area of concern on Women and Poverty, which is: Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty. The speakers acknowledged current gaps in data collections on the household level, specifically data based on income levels, and data on food threshold developed by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI). The latter looks at the food intake of a family and their income in relation to poverty.



The speakers mentioned that non-government organizations use different methodologies in collecting data on poverty and have a different definition of poverty from that of the government.

The last speaker, Ms. Balite, shared the story of *Tikog and Basey Association for Native Industry Growth*. Tikog is an endemic plant in Samar used as weaving material by women. Weaving

Tikog dates back to pre-colonial times and World War II wherein its products were traded for food and other necessities. The women of Basey, together with the local leaders and the Pambansang Koalisyon of Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK), formed BANIG (Basey Association for Native Industry Growth), as a social enterprise to support the livelihoods of the weavers. BANIG members are from 23 barangays in Basey, Samar.



Education and Training of Women

Moderator: Ma. Paz Consolacion A. Manaligod, College of Education, Miriam College.

Speakers:

Enrique Niño Leviste, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Ateneo de Manila University

Czarina Saloma-Akpedonu, Women's Studies Association in the Philippines (WSAP), Ateneo de Manila University

Mr. Leviste said that institutional reform in education is needed for students to truly understand issues on gender. He maintained that gender disparity in education is still present and recommended that gender must be

continuously mainstreamed in Philippine educational system.

He emphasized that one must take note of the intersectional issues present in society, such as the intersections between gender, race, status, among many others, to further understand existing inequalities in education.

The second speaker, Ms. Saloma, enumerated documents, conventions, and guidelines where women's rights are outlined. She highlighted the achievements in the areas of women and girls' access to education, and women constituting a bigger percentage of enrollees and graduates. There are, however, persisting barriers that include their responsibilities at home and care work.



Ms. Saloma concluded her presentation by stating that the Philippine government is not just responsible in achieving quality education for all, it also plays a major role in implementing policies and in mobilizing social, economic, and political resources towards quality education.

Women and Health

Moderator: Lalaine P. Viado Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute MC-WAGI) and

Department of International Studies, Miriam College.

Speakers:

Maritess Cruz, Feminist Media Lab

Luz Francess Chua, Catholics for Reproductive Health

Junice Demeterio-Melgar, Likhaan Center for Women's Health Inc.

Ms. Cruz presented the shadow report on women and health in line with the BPfA objectives 2, 4, and 5. Strategic objective 2 highlights the need to strengthen preventive programs on women's health. Strategic objective 4 focuses on the promotion of research on women's health, yet a gap remains for research on women and mental health, women with HIV/AIDS, and SRHR of lesbians and bisexual women. Strategic objective 5 discusses increase of resources to monitor follow-ups for women's health, particularly the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 (RPRH Law).

Ms. Cruz mentioned the difficulty of disseminating SRHR information and education among the Moro and IP sector.



Ms. Chua, the next speaker, presented the role that the conservative religious sector is playing

in pursuit of reproductive health in the country. Reproductive health is a slippery slope, according to her, but women must have a voice especially in decision-making processes. She promptly reminded everyone that the Church as an institution is made up of its people, thus continuous engagement with religious institutions on reproductive health rights should continue.



Finally, Ms. Melgar’s presentation focused on how women should be incorporated in the healthcare system of the Philippines. She explained the “triple burden of disease” that affect women the most, particularly communicable infections, cancer, and new emerging diseases that aggravate the first and second burden.



Ms. Melgar recommended that the Universal Health Care Act” should be monitored to ensure that its mandates and provisions are embodied by the public healthcare system, to

have a gender and rights analysis in the healthcare system, and an agency to monitor women in healthcare.

Violence Against Women

Moderator: Jean Enriquez from the Coalition Against Trafficking In Women – Asia Pacific (CATW-AP)

Speakers:

Jean Enriquez, Coalition Against Trafficking In Women – Asia Pacific (CATW-AP)

Rhodora Abano, Center for Migrant Advocacy

Ms. Enriquez enumerated various human rights instruments in relation to violence against women (VAW), thereafter outlining strategic objectives 1, 2, and 3 of the shadow report on violence against women. Strategic Objective 1 is on integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women. Ms. Enriquez emphasized that the President himself has publicly and repeatedly defended and reinforced his own acts of harassment against women while trivializing VAW.



She presented Strategic Objective 2 that prescribes studying the causes and consequences of violence against women and

the effectiveness of preventive measures. She shared a CATW-AP study entitled “Responding to the Contracting Civil Space through Advocacy and Response to Violence Against Women” that sought to know the general situation in Extra-Judicial Killings (EJKs), understand the challenges of women in these situations, identify their concrete needs and aspirations as survivors, and appreciate the economic, psychological, and psycho-social underpinnings of involvement in the drug trade. Another study by Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (SENTRO) and International Union of Food Agricultural Hotel Restaurant Catering Tobacco and Allied Workers Association (IUF) looked into VAW cases in the labor industry, particularly among those working in a tuna factory in Calumpang, General Santos City.

Finally, she presented Strategic Objective 3 focusing on eliminating trafficking in women and assisting victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking. Ms. Enriquez said government has turned a blind eye to women survivors.

Ms. Abano’s presentation, on the other hand, revolved around cases of violence against women migrant workers (WMW). She introduced Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA) and presented statistics on violence against WMW.



She highlighted CMA’s own responses to WMW who experienced gender-based violence (GBV). Ms. Abano presented three case studies where CMA provided assistance to WMW in distress leading to repatriation.

Women and Armed Conflict

Moderator: Karen Tanada, Gaston Z. Ortigas (GZO) Peace Institute

Speakers:

Beverly Orozco, Gaston Z. Ortigas (GZO) Peace Institute

Yasmin Busran-Lao, Al Mujudillah Development Foundation (AMDF) and PILIPINA

Bianca E. Pabotoy, Center for Peace Education, Miriam College

Ms. Orozco presented a summary of the shadow report on women and armed conflict prepared by Women Engaged in Action 1325 (WEAct1325) network and in collaboration with the Gaston Z. Ortigas (GZO) Peace Institute and MC-WAGI.



She presented the root causes of conflict in Mindanao and emphasized the historical and systematic marginalization of Moro people in their own homeland. She gave a short history of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL), recalling significant developments and challenges such as the Marawi siege of 2017 where Marawi City was attacked by ISIS-allied militants. In addition, she enumerated what had been done to increase the participation of women in conflict resolution and decision making, and to promote women's contribution in fostering a culture of peace.

Ms. Orozco presented the recommendations of the report: support women's overall empowerment with mentoring and training, support the implementation of women and gender provisions in the Bangsamoro Organic Law, ensure the protection of human rights and dignity of women, and resist misogyny as key principles of the National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security (NAP-WPS).

The next speaker, Ms. Busran-Lao, shared the perspectives of the Bangsamoro and her involvement in the peace process. She reiterated that understanding conflict and peace is complex and multi-faceted. The Bangsamoro conflict and struggle, in particular, comes from the deeply rooted historical injustices that are still felt to this day.



Ms. Busran-Lao recalled the long and difficult journey from Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) to BOL. She also shared personal stories of how her family was directly affected by the Marawi siege of 2017, and expressed her disappointment at how the government has handled Marawi.

To end, Ms. Busran-Lao maintained that women peacebuilders can and should be more active, that the government's military budget could be allocated towards social services, and everyone should support the success of the new Bangsamoro government to lessen the chances of creating another generation of rebels.

The last speaker, Ms. Pabotoy, shared her projects about women as peacekeepers. She introduced a study in 2016, in partnership with the Center for Peace Education (CPE), citing armed conflict, mass evacuations and displacement, lawlessness, crimes, family feuds, and the proliferation of firearms as main threats to peace and security issues.

Focusing on the youth, Ms. Pabotoy explained that one of the challenges faced by youth in their participation in peace processes is the fear that the parents have for their children's security. To resolve this, it is necessary to educate parents and communities on why it is necessary for women and the youth to have a

meaningful participation in the peace processes.

Women and the Economy

Moderator: Excelsa C. Tongson, Center for Women and Gender Studies (UPCWGs), UP Diliman

Speakers:

Kristine Calleja, Freedom from Debt Coalition

Daryl Leyesa, Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) or the National Rural Women Coalition

Nathalie Africa-Verceles, Center for Women's and Gender Studies, UP Diliman

The first speaker, Ms. Calleja, mentioned that her presentation is in relation to Strategic Objective 1: Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.



She discussed the lack of laws in the informal economy, why micro entrepreneurs fail, and why more women than men do not use banks. She also shed some light on the reality of women working abroad, and their care work.

Ms. Calleja recommended a magna carta for workers in the informal economy.

The next presenter, Ms. Leyesa, mentioned that her presentation is in relation to Strategic Objective 2: Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets, and trade. She discussed the shrinking spaces for agriculture, climate change and land conversion as obstacles to women owning farm land.

She recommended taking out laws that limit women's access to opportunities, and recognized that women who are part of organizations have a greater chance of their claims to be heard.

Finally, Ms. Verceles-Africa's presentation talked about strategic objective 5: Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination, and strategic objective 6: Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

Ms. Verceles-Africa began with the gains of women in the economy, followed by citing persisting challenges such as unequal pay, discriminatory and sexist treatment in the workplace, and automation which will leave thousands of women unemployed.

To change the reality for these women, Ms. Verceles-Africa recommended a change in company culture to accommodate and give equal pay to women, increase the number of maternity leaves, and the passage of the Telecommuting Act that will allow telecommuting as an alternative work arrangement, especially for women.

Special Session on Muslim and IP Women

Moderator: Pacita Fortin, Department of Social Work, Miriam College

Speakers:

Samira Gutoc-Tomawis, Former Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC) Member

Amina Rasul-Bernardo, Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID)

Macrina A. Morados, Institute of Islamic Studies, UP Diliman

Ms. Gutoc first introduced the different debates surrounding Bangsamoro. She clarified that Muslim and indigenous women are more empowered than most people believe. Contrary to common misconceptions that say ethnic laws devalue women's dignity, these laws actually exist to grant women more privileges and protection.



She shared Muslim women's roles as mediators and peacemakers in the region, citing the Maranao women's and the royal groups' efforts to stop conflicts. She recognized that the inclusion of the cultural system of IPs and Muslims in Mindanao into the modern system of governance and laws remains a challenge,

prompting her to ask *"how will our national laws cater to these cultural laws?"*

Meanwhile, Ms. Rasul-Bernardo established that the focus of the Philippine government on conflict is always with the Muslims in Mindanao, which further links Muslims to terrorism. She also spoke about the Marawi Siege and how it has resulted to gender-based violence against women and girls over 14 years of age. She said that during the siege, there were reported incidents of sexual violence, and early forced marriages of underage girls to older perpetrators.



Ms. Rasul urged everyone, especially the government, to continue addressing violent extremism and its effects in Mindanao. She recommended literacy as the foundational aspect to achieve development and gender equality in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). She also recommended promoting culture-based livelihoods, teaching human rights and Islam, and supporting women as peacebuilders to prevent violent extremism.

The last speaker, Ms. Morados, introduced her study on Muslim women in jails as part of the Philippines' vulnerable sectors. She said that the issues of women in jails encompass issues of poverty, cycles of violence, and illegal drugs

in Mindanao. She also cites the lack of Islamic education as the cause.



Ms. Morados believes that women in vulnerable sectors, like women in jails, need to be included in crafting policies. With her study, she wishes to inform policy makers and the academe about the need for more interventions for Muslim women, and likewise suggests literacy programs and livelihood training in jails.

Day 2

Day 2 opened straight into the continuation of the parallel sessions, namely:

- Special Session on Women and Aging;
- Special Session on LGBTIQ;
- Special Session on Migration;
- Women in Power and Decision Making;
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women;
- Human Rights of Women;
- Women and the Media;
- Women and the Environment; and
- Girl Child.

Special Session on Women and Aging

Moderator: Ma. Margarita Alvina-Acosta,
College of Arts and Sciences, Miriam College

Speakers:

Socorro Reyes, Center for Legislative
Development International

Ronaldo A. Motilla, Department of
Psychology, Miriam College

Dr. Reyes began with a global profile of aging women and the feminization of poverty. She highlighted that the BPfA recognizes age discrimination as one of the barriers to women's empowerment and advancement. She also talked about aging and the deeply rooted gender-based inequality in multiple spheres, most commonly in the household, in unequal access to health services, education, and issues of domestic violence.



Dr. Reyes recommended care work become paid, to extend pension to those who don't qualify for it, require governments to collect sex-disaggregated data, and create laws and policies and programs for older women to address issues of the elderly, among others. She emphasized that older women continue to disprove negative stereotypes, and remain at the forefront of social change as "activist

grandmas”. Finally, she reminded everyone that aging women are not a monolithic group and that the intersectionality of age, class, education has to be recognized.

The second speaker, Dr. Motilla, presented several studies and recommendations on how one can age positively. The studies he presented suggested a range of factors and techniques, such as regular exercise and healthy habits, adaptive coping mechanisms, socialization, and finding purpose. He also presented local studies that take into account social and cultural correlations with well-being, such as power, collectivism, and spirituality.

Dr. Motilla also presented his own study done in 2005 entitled “Successful Aging: A Gay Perspective” that focused on positive aging for gay individuals. The factors for positive aging of gay individuals are affirmative gay identity, creativity and productivity, financial security, living a dignified life (not being in a relationship with minors), and making positive difference in the life of other gays.

Special Session on LGBTIQ

Moderator: Excelsa C. Tongson, Center for Women and Gender Studies, UP Diliman (UP-CWGs)

Speakers:

Kristine S. Calleja, Freedom from Debt Coalition

Marie Rose R. Ramos, GALANG Philippines Inc.

Naomi Fontanos, Gender and Development Advocates (GANDA) Filipinas

Ms. Calleja spoke of the gains, achievements, and important highlights of the LGBTIQ in the Philippines. Examples include members of the LGBTIQ community taking leadership roles, the growing tolerance for the members of the LGBTIQ community at large, and having more anti-discrimination ordinances created. She also mentioned gaps and persisting issues such as the absence of a SOGIE law and the invisibility of SOGIESC data.



Ms. Calleja also discussed what the community desires to achieve: a comprehensive policy on Anti-Discrimination and SOGIESC Equality that will also be reflected in practice, and an issue-based solidarity among advocates not just for women’s issues, but for the issues of other vulnerable sectors too.

Ms. Ramos began on a positive note by highlighting that more LGUs recognize the need to have an anti-discrimination ordinance despite the lack of the SOGIE Equality Law. She enumerated cities with an anti-discrimination ordinance. She said that LGUs must ensure strict enforcement and implementation of such policies protecting the LGBTIQ community.

Finally, Ms. Fontanos began with an emphasis that not all anti-discrimination ordinances are

created equal. Some ordinances are comprehensive to include ethnicity and socioeconomic status among others, some only focus on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.

She highlighted gains and persisting problems for the LGBTIQ community; these include the growing support from politicians and religious groups for the LGBTIQ community. However, she warns that their support is not always sincere, sometimes it's only to benefit them during elections or within the community.

To end, she shared aspirations for the LGBTIQ community, such as having a representative who could lobby and support anti-discrimination ordinances, a society free from discrimination, and the economic empowerment especially of the poorest members of the LGBTIQ community.

Special Session on Migration

Moderator: Alenah Romero, Center for Migrant Advocacy

Speakers:

Rhodora Abano, Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA)

Jean Encinas-Franco, Department of Political Science, UP Diliman

Carmelita Nuqui, Development Action for Women Network (DAWN)

Ms. Abano presented the general situation of modern Philippine migration and its increasing feminization. She explained that migration is a

complex issue and presented data on Filipino migrants worldwide. She also discussed the various drivers to migration, the push and pull factors that prompt Filipinos to seek better opportunities abroad.



She enumerated measures that protect women migrant workers (WMWs), both locally and in countries of destination, and the existing gaps that need to be addressed such as the inadequate knowledge on government benefits despite pre-departure orientations.

Ms. Abano recommended that gender modules should be integrated in training for OFWs, that a coordination system and networks be established between government agencies and key migrant/migration entities, and a strengthened coordination between the municipal and community levels.

The next speaker, Ms. Encinas-Franco, explored the current literatures on migration, how they apply to the Philippines, and the possible interventions that can be initiated in terms of addressing the plight of women migrant workers. To improve current policies and programs for women, she emphasized the importance of understanding the link between migration, gender relations, and women's rights. For her *'Migration is a cause and consequence of female empowerment'*.

Ms. Encinas-Franco stressed the need for better reintegration programs especially for WMWs who have been away for so long.

The last speaker, Ms. Nuqui, focused on the reintegration experiences of WMWs. She discussed the consequences when WMWs are not given psychosocial and economic support when returning to the Philippines. With support systems in place, returnees will be able to gain confidence, regain self-worth, and able to support their children.

Ms. Nuqui recommended improvements in governmental processes and procedures as they tend to be inefficient, inadequate, and delayed, causing WMWs unable to receive the support and assistance they need.

Women in Power and Decision Making

Moderator: Melanie Reyes, Department of International Studies, Miriam College

Speakers:

Dorothy Ferrer, Department of International Studies, Miriam College

Maya Tamayo, Center for Women's and Gender Studies, UP Diliman

Socorro Reyes, Center for Legislative Development International

Ms. Ferrer started with a brief situationer and shared the country's ranking in various global reports on women. The Philippines ranked 16th in the 2020 Global Gender Gap, ranked 1st in the 2020 Grant Thornton International Women in Business, and ranked 106th in the 2019 Human Development Index. She also presented data on women's political

representation in the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches of the Philippine Government.

She cited the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations and the initiatives of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) being the existing policies and measures of the current administration.

Ms. Tamayo, the next speaker, discussed NGOs and CSO initiatives to increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.



She cited various initiatives and organizations, such as Angat Bayi and MC-WAGI, which have been capacitating women by offering gender-responsive planning and budgeting courses, among other initiatives. She also shared data on female representation, the key female figures, and some women-friendly policies in various political parties such as Akbayan's self-imposed quota on women nominees in electoral seats.

The last speaker, Ms. Reyes, cited various barriers to women's political participation. She stressed the need for strong, stable, institutionalized, and gender-sensitive political parties, for reforms in the electoral system, and

for political parties to ensure gender balance as in the case of Akbayan.

Ms. Reyes recommended that political parties should have a proportional representation of men and women, impose gender quotas, and mandate candidates alternating between male and female in political parties. She reiterated, however, that the issue is not solely about equal numbers but more about advancing the women's/gender agenda. In her words *"Beyond getting the numbers right, get the substance right."*

Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Moderator: Lalaine P. Viado, Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute

Speakers:

Carol Sobritchea, Asian Center, UP Diliman

Helen Dayo, Anthropologist and GAD Specialist, UP Los Banos

Nharleen Santos-Millar, Technical Services and Regional Coordination Division (TSRCD) of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW)

Ms. Sobritchea gave a general overview of the BPfA and the critical area on institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women. She gave a brief history of the BPfA, its areas of concern, and enumerated the gains under strategic objective 1: Create and strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies; strategic objective 2: Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs and projects; and, strategic objective 3: Generate and disseminate gender-

disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.



She emphasized that there is still a need to focus on ensuring that the Gender and Development (GAD) Budgets reduce, if not eliminate, the various gender-based discrimination in the country. Her recommendations include: the need to focus on results-based planning; the need for continuous use of human rights principles and strategies in promoting gender equality; and, a need to condemn the return of fundamentalism, populism, and misogyny in the Philippines and elsewhere.

The second speaker, Ms. Dayo, shared her experience as a GAD advocate. Her advocacy began with the creation of the UPLB Gender Program for Rural Development (UPLB-GPRD) in 1991, the creation of the Office of Anti-Sexual Harassment in different UP campuses in 1998, and then during her time at the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Ms. Dayo shared that one of the biggest challenges encountered by CHED was the resignation of former CHED Commissioner Patricia B. Licuanan. Her resignation left the position of the Chair and the members of the Technical Panel on Gender and Women Studies (TPGWS) floating.

The last speaker was from the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW). Ms. Santos-Millar gave a short history of PCW, their mandate as a commission, past achievements, their current work in the country, and at the ASEAN level with the commission as Head of the Women's Committee.



She enumerated a number of challenges that the commission currently faces, such as elevating the position of the PCW Director to Undersecretary. There are also concerns on the collection of sex-disaggregated data as they also recognize that sex is not binary. Ms. Santos-Millar concluded by stating that PCW may be a coordinating body on gender mainstreaming; but gender mainstreaming is not just the work of PCW, it is the work of everybody.

Human Rights of Women

Moderator: Luz Maria Martinez from Southeast Asia Women's Watch (SEAWWatch)

Speakers:

Aurora Javate-De Dios, Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute (MC-WAGI)

Susan Balindo, Baigani

Ms. De Dios started the presentation by discussing the events during the 5th year anniversary of the Beijing Platform and how, 25 years of the BPfA, human rights remain a very sensitive topic in examining whether human rights and women's rights have been protected. She presented a timeline of the country's adherence to human rights principles before and how there was a significant decrease in adherence to human rights principles and mechanisms under the Duterte administration.



She then presented the challenges to human rights in the Philippines, including *lawfare* wherein the law is used as a weapon against the opposition groups. President Duterte promotes misogyny, hate, and violence against women through his politics of fear as Ms. De Dios explained.

To end, Ms. De Dios urged everyone to: oppose the demonization and persecution of the press, stop misogyny through the collective action of women, campaign for the independence of the judiciary, campaign against the killings and red tagging of organizations and individuals, and restore the rule of law.

The second and last speaker, Ms. Balindo, introduced Baigani as a feminist group that supports and empowers families victimized by extra-judicial killings. She talked about the

Baigani family camps that run for three days holding different sets of activities. The camps are geared towards psychosocial feminist interventions for mothers, elders, widows, and children who are victims and survivors of EJKs.



Ms. Balindo emphasized how these camps provide a safe space for these families to bond, reflect, and heal from their experiences. The speaker also reflected on the need to address the stigma and belief that drug users deserve to die, justifying the government's actions and disuniting the community.

Women and the Media

Moderator: Rina Jimenez-David, Philippine Daily Inquirer

Speakers:

Olive Tripon, Women's Feature Service, Philippines

Liza Garcia, Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA)

Josefina Azarcon-Dela Cruz, Philippine Daily Inquirer

Ms. Tripon began her presentation with two strategic objectives of the NGO report on Media that was included in the 2015 alternative

Philippine report at the CSW -- Objective 1: Increase access of women in media, and Objective 2: To promote a balanced non-stereotype portrayal of women in the media.



Ms. Tripon cited the government initiatives to address fake news and the worsening cases of abuse and violence against women over the last five years. The Media and Gender Equality Committee, for instance, was established, the same body that produced a media guidebook based on the Magna Carta of Women.

Ms. Garcia, meanwhile, focused on digital media. She cited statistics on women's online presence, the challenges they face, and the efforts of CSOs to address such. The challenges include exposure to cybercrime against women and children, commonly in the form of trafficking and exploitation, and resisting normalization of unacceptable behavior on social media.



Ms. Garcia highlighted initiatives by CSOs to promote and protect women from violence in cyberspace, specifically that of FMA's work over the years. She also highlighted the rise of different campaigns initiated by CSOs like the “#BabaeAko” campaign and the “#MeToo” movement.

Meanwhile, Ms. Dela Cruz focused on mainstream media and its blind spots. These blind spots pertain to how media can also limit women's participation. She enumerated three blind spots: 1. increased risk of violence and fear for safety when women act as fact checkers of fake news; 2. inappropriate handling of women's issues like the use of violence between two women in telenovelas; and, 3. the persisting need to empower and provide more opportunities for women to gain access to media and meaningfully participate in decision-making.



Ms. Liza Garcia presented the consolidated recommendations of the speakers, some of which were to call out fake news and historical revisionism, and promote media literacy for marginalized women. To end the session, the speakers emphasized that women and the media in general should work together in equality, peace, truth, courage, and hope.

Women and the Environment

Moderator: Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD), UP Diliman and Homenet Philippines

Speakers:

Marie Aubrey J. Villaceran, Center for Women and Gender Studies (UPCWGs), UP Diliman

Meth H. Jimenez, Sarilaya (Kasarian Kalayaan, Inc.)

Alyssa Joy Balite, Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) or the National Rural Women Coalition

Ms. Villaceran's presentation compared the 2014 Philippine alternative report on women and the environment for the 20th year of the BPfA with the current report of 2020.



The comparison made it clear that with the deteriorating environmental situation in the country, along with minimal compliance of the government in its obligations, the Philippines has performed poorly in the area of Women and Environment of the BPfA. This is despite the passage of well-meaning laws over the years. Ms. Villaceran maintained that some policies, which are mostly focused on awareness raising programs, have been

welcome but there are no follow throughs. The gaps in implementation, meanwhile, have been filled up by NGOs, CSOs, and some organizations working on limited budgets.

Ms. Jimenez, the second speaker, outlined numerous ways for women's and gender inclusion in environment and natural resources management.



She highlighted the importance of women's voices and perspectives in sustainable development at both government and community level. To close, Ms. Jimenez recommended the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation efforts on women and the environment and that concerned agencies should be able to integrate gender perspectives in their policies, programs, and projects.

The last speaker, Ms. Balite enumerated the 10 Rural Women's Agenda and introduced Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK), or National Rural Women Coalition. PKK has formed women-led Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) committees, Gender Based Violence (GBV) watch groups, and an alliance called Women in Emergencies Network (WENet).



Ms. Balite shared the future plans of WENet, which include more government engagements; capacity building for women's leadership in emergencies; documentation of women's stories of leadership and resilience; and, resource mobilization.

The Girl Child

Moderator: Excelsa C. Tongson, Center for Women and Gender Studies (UPCWGS), UP Diliman

Speakers:

Magnolia Eva Escobedo, Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Claire Bacong, Women's Legal and Human Rights Bureau

Excelsa C. Tongson, Center for Women and Gender Studies (UPCWGs), UP Diliman

Ms. Escobedo, presented the mandate of the Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. She explained that the shadow report on The Girl Child is concerned with the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in the Philippines and will be submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in

Geneva wherein they'll issue a list of issues that the government needs to address. She cited recommendations that concern children experiencing abuse, with disabilities, in emergency situations, and in conflict with the law.



Ms. Escobado also cited the gains, such as the 5-year Plan of Action to End Violence Against Children (2017-2022), but also expressed her disappointment at its poor implementation. The coalition recommended that LGUs should include programs and services for children in their GAD budget and integrate children's rights in their work to strengthen collaborative actions and improve the situation of the children and their mothers.

Ms. Bacong from the Women's Legal and Human Rights Bureau discussed the results of their research focusing on access to justice of the girl child in cases of sexual violence. The research emphasized on marginalized girl children, such as: girls with disabilities; victims of incest in rural areas; girls from different ethnic backgrounds; migrant children; LBT children; girls in conflict areas; and, those who are victims of state violence. She explained that the research has resurfaced how girls still experience discrimination and suffer victim blaming.



Ms. Bacong cited gaps in the implementation of the anti-rape law and recommended the passage of the Senate Bill No. 1386 or An Act Amending Section 19 And 39 Of Republic Act Number Seven Thousand And Three Hundred And Five (R.A. 7305) Otherwise Known As The Magna Carta Of Public Health Workers And For Other Purposes that calls to establish rape crisis centers. The crisis center must have sufficient budget to be managed by LGUs. Another recommendation is for an improved implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012.

The last speaker, Ms. Tongson, discussed the Strategic Objective 4: Eliminate Discrimination Against Girls in Education, Skills Development and Training. Despite the gaps and challenges already discussed, she highlighted milestones in the last twenty-five years of the BPfA in this area. Some of these include an increase in enrollment of the girl children at all levels per the Department of Education (DepEd), and the improved transition rates of students graduating from Grade 10 to Grade 12.

Ms. Tongson's recommended the following: re-examine approaches towards children, especially girls, vis-a-vis their access to justice; for Congress to strengthen the policy

framework to ensure equal treatment and protection of girls, the LGBTQI, and children with disabilities in accessing services.

Closing Keynote Speaker

Amb. Laura Quiambao-Del Rosario, President, Miriam College



Amb. Laura Quiambao-Del Rosario, President of Miriam College, gave the closing remarks.

In her speech, Ambassador Quiambao-Del Rosario recounted her experience working in the Foreign Service and the academe, particularly the multiple burdens that women face, highlighting how women work harder than their male counterparts, not just in the labor market but in the domestic front as well.

Annex 1. Program

This document was produced by the Miriam College—Women and Gender Institute (MC-WAGI).

Field reports compiled, partially written, and edited by Danica C. Gonzalez, Miriam College-Women and Gender Institute.

HEAD OF DOCUMENTATION TEAM

Excelsa C. Tongson, Center for Women and Gender Studies (UPCWGS), UP Diliman

COPYEDITOR

Lalaine P. Viado

FIELD DOCUMENTERS

Adrienne Maguddayao

Ilene de Jesus, Gina Chan

Beatrix Bakabak

Joyce Dianne Magan

Abiele Bernardo

Jasmine Cruz

Fernand Vincent M. Hermoso

Amberdawn Manaois

Dorothy Ferrer

Kathrina Gonzales



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