

Book Notes:
GENDER AND GOVERNANCE

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The National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women (NCRFW) documented the experiences and insights of national agencies, local government units (LGUs), the academe, and women's groups in Gender and Development (GAD) mainstreaming and published them in five different books in 2001 and 2002. They are summarized below.

Breaking New Grounds for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Experiences and insights in implementing the GAD budget policy edited by Ermelita V. Valdeavilla and Fe C. Manapat (2001).

Like household chores, budgeting is such a daily task women do. But it is not so easy a job, especially when resources are scarce and this is done to pursue GAD mainstreaming. This book illustrates the winding path GAD advocates have to go through in order to set concrete amounts of money corresponding to GAD policies, programs and activities. Twelve (12) case studies give readers first hand experiences to better understand the purpose of and processes involved in GAD budgeting, budget policy, accountability and participatory consultation.

The valiant pioneers who shared their insights in the case

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studies discuss the hindrances to GAD mainstreaming: resistance from decision makers; lack of information and clear guidelines of GAD mandates; absence of clear plans and purposes for expenditures; weak absorption and technical capabilities of women; lack of knowledge and skills for participating in the regular planning and budgeting systems of government; and difficulty in dealing with political maneuverings of public officials.

But hopeful as ever, they also realized they could rely on three significant partners: *organized and active women's groups* that unrelentingly put pressure to incorporate GAD as a mission, raise GAD awareness; build local mainstreaming capacities; *women and men in decision-making positions* acting as powerful champions for women's interests in policy debates; and *top officials* who make public pronouncements for GAD.

A Guidebook on Gender Mainstreaming: How Far Have We Gone? Books 1-3, edited by Elena Masilungan. (2001).

This training kit, divided into three booklets creatively packaged in a folder, instructs the reader how to track and assess the progress and status of GAD mainstreaming in any setting. **Book 1** orients the reader on Gender and Development concepts and the mainstreaming process including those of development, sex and gender, manifestations of gender bias, and GAD mandates.

Book 2 focuses on the Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF), a planning, monitoring and assessment instrument of four (4) basic mainstreaming stages, namely, in forming the GAD foundation; in installing strategic mechanisms; in applying GAD; and in enhancing institutional commitment. In brief, it "*shows how far agencies have moved forward, stepped backward, or remained basically in the same stage as they go about*

their mainstreaming work,” whether the entry point used is either through *Policy; People; Enabling mechanisms;* or *Programs, Projects and Activities* or a combination of these.

Book 3 presents “best practices” in GAD mainstreaming by three government agencies. Showcased are the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE); Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); and the Philippine National Police (PNP) under the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). As the Focal Points in these agencies, they surface the multifaceted challenges. With support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), these agencies were the NCRFW partners in its Institutional Strengthening Project carried out in 1995-1999 aimed to develop tools and mechanisms to facilitate gender mainstreaming in their organizations. The GMEF was among them and was eventually adopted in their own organizational systems.

The training pack would be useful to planners, analysts, monitors and evaluators especially GAD Focal Points, technical working groups and related GAD committees in various government agencies.

Making LGUs Gender-Responsive: A Primer for Local Chief Executives. (2002).

The primer addresses four issues often asked about GAD mainstreaming in local governments. It reiterates the need for a local **GAD Plan** as prescribed by the DILG, DBM and NCRFW in Joint Memorandum Circular 2001-01 urging LGUs to formulate “*a set of programs, projects and activities (PPAs) systematically designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated by the LGU over a given period of time to address gender issues in the locality*” consistent with the LGU mandate.

Question No. 1 is Why does gender matter in local governance and development?

Local government has resources at its command. It is duty-bound to implement the law as prescribed, and if it intends to practice good governance, it will have to be gender-responsive in addition to being transparent, participatory and equitable. Being gender-responsive makes LGUs more **effective** since they are made better able to identify and respond to particular needs of men and women; more **efficient** since they become better able to mobilize and involve women in deciding local policies and implement local programs and projects; and more **equitable** as they could better provide women and men equal access to development benefits and opportunities.

Question No. 2 is How can LGUs be gender –responsive?

The booklet identifies some governance dimensions where gender-related beliefs and behavior must be considered. These are: (1) equitable and responsive distribution of the benefits of development; (2) effective cooperation between government and civil society; (3) freedom of expression/right to information; (4) rule of law and independent judiciary; (5) effectiveness and efficiency; (6) accountability and decision making; and (7) strategic vision. LGU gender-responsiveness is reflected in concrete terms such as: in the *types of services it provides* to address the specific needs of women and men, be it shelter and housing; protective services; community leadership training; environmental protection; infrastructure, and economic activities; the *processes and mechanisms in place* for the delivery of the above services in the form of representation and participation of women in planning and project implementation; installing a sex-disag-

gregated information system; allocation of resources for gender PPAs; and issuance of executive orders and ordinance enactment; and the *capability and attitudes of its officials and employees* shown in being able to identify GAD champions; creating a critical mass of GAD champions and focal points, and forging cooperation between LGU and civil society.

Question No. 3 is **What is the role of the LCE in making a local government unit gender-responsive?**

The chief executive plays a significant role in creating a gender-responsive LGU environment. He/She is the foremost GAD champion/advocate; defines the GAD vision and over-all direction of local governance and therefore able to identify GAD concerns and issues; determines programs targets, generates and mobilizes resources for GAD PPAs; and directs the GAD Plan implementation.

Question No. 4 is **Where can LGUs get assistance?**

The booklet provides a list of institutions that LGUs may contact for services that they need in GAD mainstreaming that includes eight (8) University-based GAD Resource Centers distributed in seven regions; six (6) Regional Focal Points based in various agencies, as well as the concerned offices at the DILG, Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and the NCRFW.

Gender and Development Code. (2002).

The first three (3) GAD Local Codes ever produced in the country, namely, that of the City of Davao (City Ordinance No. 5004, Series of 1997), and the provinces of Cotabato (Pro-

vincial Ordinance No. 202 Series of 2000) and Misamis Occidental (Provincial Ordinance No. 26, 2000) are published in this book.

To introduce the three Codes, NCRFW explains the basic elements of a GAD Code, which are as follows: the Legal Basis, Statement of Policy, Declaration of Principles, Rationale of the Code, Definition of Terms; the main provisions containing GAD issues and concerns and GAD PPAs for local implementation; Penalties; Mechanisms for implementation; and Funding.

Integrating Gender and Development in Local Legislation and Policy Formulation. NCRFW and DILG, 2002.

Because formulating local mandates for GAD needs the initiative and support of local legislators, it is imperative that they themselves become aware of basic gender issues, the tools, skills and motivation to advance it. Thus, seven (7) education modules were compiled for them in this book. This training manual consists of modules to cover various topics spread into a total of 24 Training Activities. There is a complete set of introduction, rationale and the objectives, methodology, instructions, list of materials needed, and core messages and discussion points for each of the modules. On the other hand, the Modules include: Gender Sensitivity; Gender-responsive Legislation and Policy Formulation Framework; Women and Governance; Legal Mandates for Gender and Development; Tools for Gender Analysis; Ordinance and Executive Issuances; and Action Planning. The methodologies come in the forms of games, lecture discussion, film showing, individual reflection session, drafting and planning exercises and small group workshops for discussion of caselets.