

IX. Philippines UDF-PHI-07-184-4005 - Promoting Gender Responsive Governance for Rural, Indigenous and Muslim Women in the Philippines

i. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

a. The project, evaluation objectives, and methodology

The project *Promoting Gender Responsive Governance for Rural, Indigenous, and Muslim Women in the Philippines* was implemented in the Philippines by the implementing agencies Nisa Ul Haqq Fi Bangsamoro Inc. and Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK) from November 2008 to March 2011, including a 3 month extension at no additional cost. The project had a total budget of US \$ 290,000 with a remaining balance of US \$5,418.14.

The project's overarching goal is to promote women's no ro mination of All
compassed interventions in 12

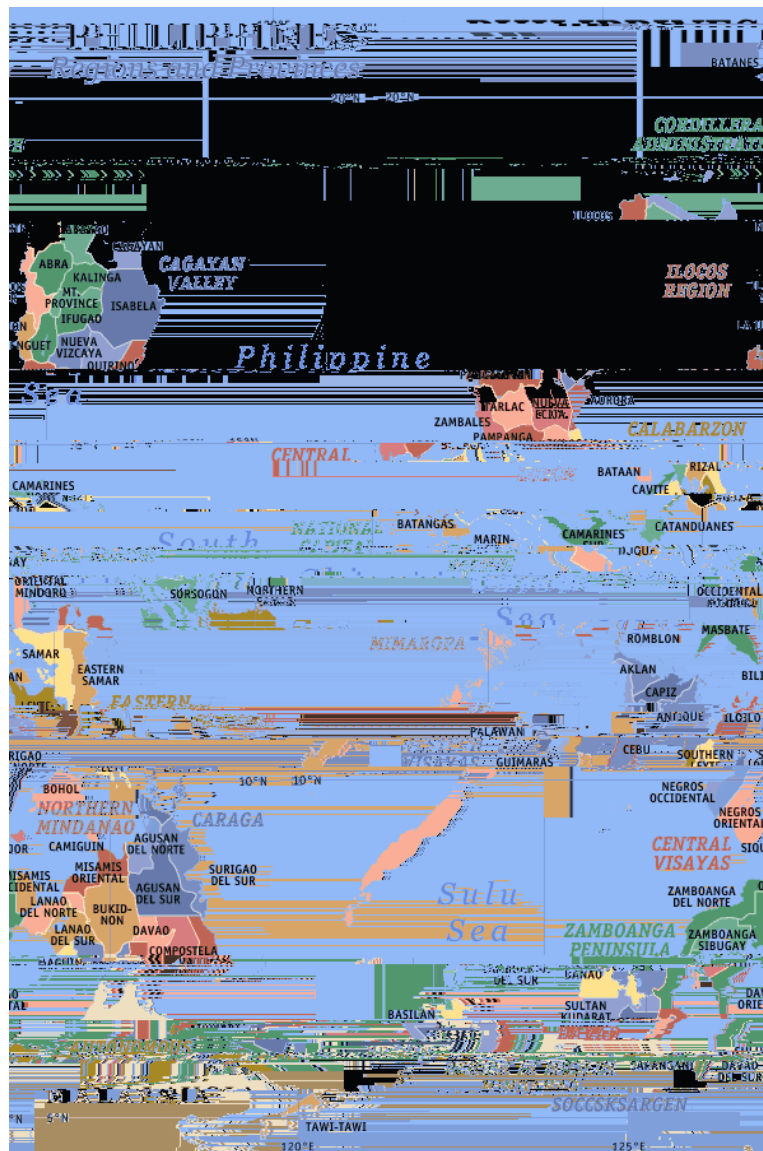
This project implementation encompassed two distinct components: advancement of the rights of the rural and indigenous women, and the rights of the Muslim women in ARMM. The component on rural and indigenous women included: a baseline research and benchmarking of CEDAW implementation with respect to the rural and indigenous women in the Philippines with a particular emphasis on women's property rights to land, natural and coastal resources, etc.; advocacy for adoption of gender responsive policies, programmes, structures and other measures for rural and indigenous women; and capacity building of rural and indigenous women's groups and other stakeholders. This component was implemented in six provinces in the Philippines and included sites for fishing farming and indigenous women sectors.

R 6 provinces of the ARMM. This component facing and capacity building 2 gu

- to capture more systematically contributions being made by UNDEF projects on enhancing engendered democratic governance;
- to assess and validate UNIFEM's contribution to UNDEF's primary purpose of supporting democratization around the world;
- to inform, develop and further refine UNDEF and UN Women's strategic and funding priorities regarding gender and governance and thus support efforts to generate and disseminate lessons and results on gender and democratic governance interventions.

The evaluation methodology is set out in the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between UNDEF and UNIFEM according to which the evaluation was conducted in two stages: a scoping study undertaken by the evaluator to analyze the nine UNIFEM executed Round II project designs and create tailored guidelines. A

resources, and how gender is divided in terms of labor, benefits and decisions.³ The sub classifications may be observed among indigenous women, who may belong to farming and fishing communities; yet these should not be treated as absolute conditions since indigenous communities practice their own economic and governance systems.



The Muslim women in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) are another economically and politically marginalized group. Since late 60s, the government of the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines has faced armed opposition from several Muslim groups, which sought greater autonomy for the island of Mindanao. The conflict has its roots in the systematic marginalization of the Moros (Islamized Native people) of Mindanao by the national government, in favor of the Catholic Filipinos whose families migrated to Mindanao from other

³ Such classification was identified by the PO-NGO Lobby Group on a Rural Women Magna Carta; the group was formed in 2001 in a series of consultations called by the Philippine Peasant Institute.

parts of the Philippines as part of a deliberate resettlement policy⁴. Decades of armed rebellion and internal conflict led to the internal displacement and emigration of Muslim Mindanaos, alongside an influx of Christian settlers from the neighboring islands of Luzon and Visayas on account of population pressures have led to a transformation in the demographics and Muslims now comprise only 18% of the population as compared to 76% at the turn of the century.⁵

Against this backdrop of armed conflict, displacement, and poverty, Muslim women face various forms of discrimination. As a result of traditional practices and formal regulations, they are susceptible to early and/or forced marriages and domestic violence.

Ø Fulfillment of Rural Women's Peace Agenda, especially in Mindanao.



A PKKK activist demands adequate housing for fishing communities

Nisa Ul-Haqq Fi Bangsamoro Inc. (Nisa) is a group of Muslim women advocating for women's rights in the context of Islam and culture. The *Nisa* members are women from the following non government organizations: Alternative Legal Assistance Center (SALIGAN), Bangsamoro Lawyers' Network (BLN), Neighbors PopDev, Almujaadilah Development Foundation, Inc. (AMDF), Tarbilang Foundation, Inc.

Strategies

The logical impact diagram that follows is based on the project logic as set out in the project document. The framework involves five distinct (immediate) outcomes.

1. Bi monthly meetings of the project management team to plan, strategize, assess and monitor overall programme progress

Increased number of representatives of rural and indigenous women's groups oriented on CEDAW and advocacy to achieve government accountability

1.2. Provincial Level Training for members of rural and Indigenous

2.3. Information dissemination and advocacy events to generate

Personal Law, to the provincial LGU
for inclusion in the GAD plan and
budget

Furthermore, to encourage government policies, programs and services to become more gender sensitive to rural and indigenous women's rights, the project has successfully engaged local governments in discussions of the agenda of the rural and indigenous women, in particular the public fora on Magna Carta of Women⁶ (MCW) and workshops on Gender Responsive Governance. During the project lifetime one local government unit has signed a memorandum of understanding with the rural women's groups and another local government has committed to incorporating its Gender and Development Code in relation to the MCW.

The creation of CEDAW Watch Teams, including ten Muslim NGO leaders in 5 provinces, corresponds to the objective of enhancing the capacity of Muslim women NGOs to advocate and monitor government a

It is worth noting that during the project lifetime the Philippine government has not submitted any periodic country report to the CEDAW Committee. Therefore, women's CSOs in the Philippines have not drafted a NGO Shadow Report, which usually represents the civil society's perspective on the situation of women's rights

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other participating provinces, like Bukidnon, Sorsogon, Leyte,

however the Governor has committed to pass it. The drafting consultations and lobbying for the adoption of the GAD Codes represent a major achievement for the advancement of Muslim women's rights given their incorporation of pertinent provisions relating to marriage and family relations. It is worth noting that the GAD Codes in the ARMM also incorporate principles of gender equality, as found in the *Qur'an* and *Sunna*. Another significant outcome of the project is that the principles and provisions, embodied in the newly adopted in the Philippines Magna Carta of Women, have been disseminated in the ARMM through regional and provincial GAD Codes.



GAD Codes Training for Muslim community leaders in the ARMM, organized by *Nisa* in collaboration with Oxfam

Gender-responsive policies, programs and services for Muslim women

A significant project achievement is the adoption of the ARMM Regional GAD Code, which provides for allocation of 5% GAD Budget to programs, projects and activities focusing on gender equality and gender justice to address gender discrimination and marginalization of women in the ARMM. Likewise, the project implementation has resulted in the adoption of provincial and city GAD Codes,

been drafted, proposed and lobbied by the CEDAW Watch Teams. The adoption of the regional and provincial GAD has proved that training together NGOs and local governments was particularly successful. Thus, during the policy making consultations, lobbying and advocacy activities the Muslim women led NGOs and their government counterparts have shown a significant improvement in their capacities to advocate for women's rights

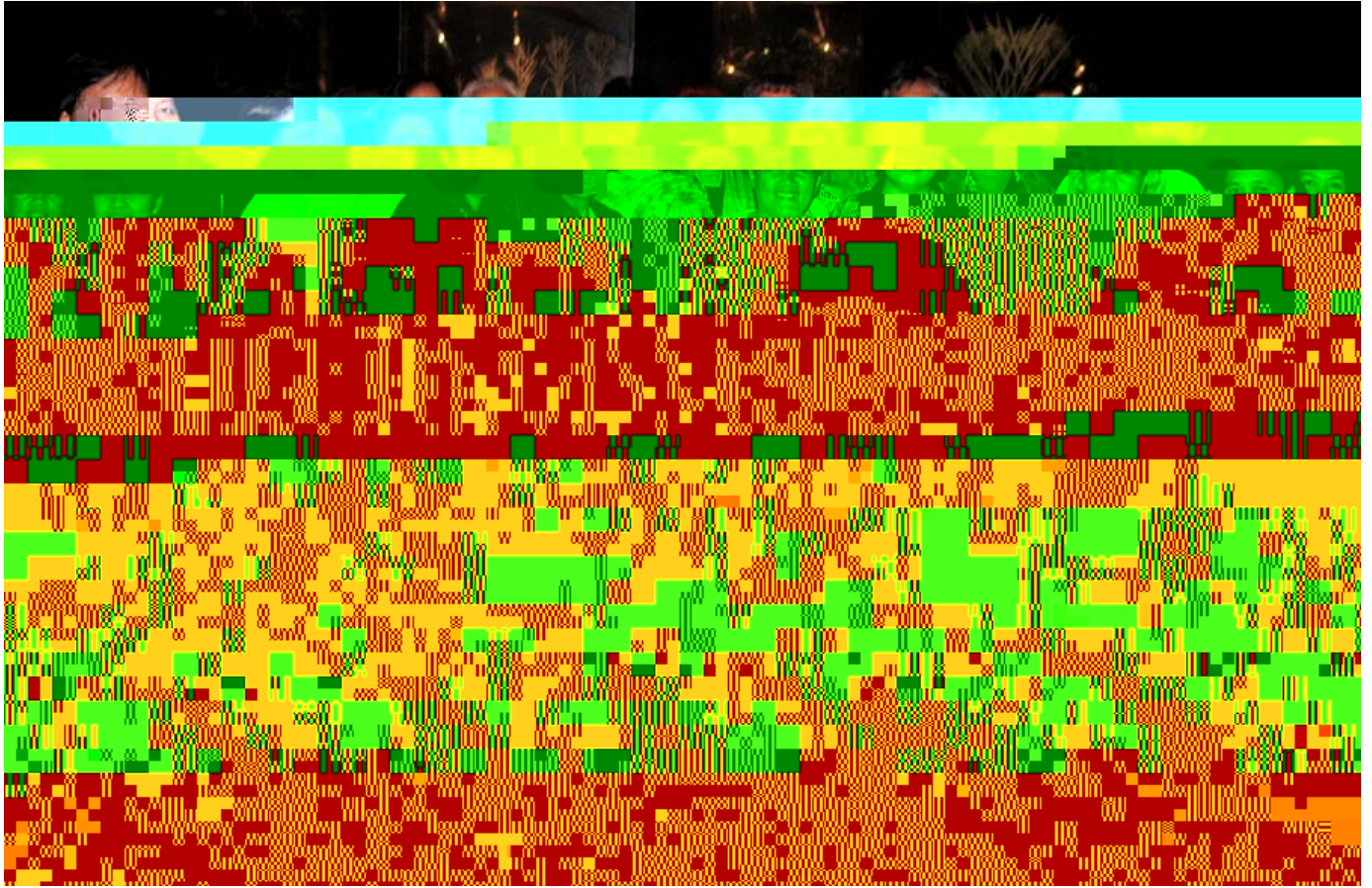
- Ø Reviving of the Inter agency Committee on Rural Women (IACRW), which serves as a venue for discussion of the rights of rural and indigenous women and their participation in local

in November 2009. This activity was further delayed in the period December 2009 – March 2010, as the required data from the local government units – sex disaggregated data and local plans/policies for the farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples – was difficult to access due to the local elections. In this respect, implementing partners encountered unexpected hardship, since many officials were wary of giving information that might compromise political parties and political plans for the elections. The implementing partners found a partial resolution to this issue through focus group discussions (FGDs). Nevertheless, the FGDs departed from the original schedule for data gathering and entailed contracting additional researcher writers. Yet, the flexibility and the problem solving attitude of the implementing partners proved beneficial for the rural and indigenous women, since it involved reviewing of CEDAW and TSMs and their application to the rural women's agenda.

d. Impact

The project has impacted significantly the policy reforms related to gender responsive governance at the regional, provincial and city levels. The project's added value can be seen in the application of the CEDAW provisions at local level, and particularly in the monitoring of State accountability and engagement with local and provincial governments towards the advancement of women's agenda. The project contributed to enhancing the capacities of rural and indigenous women and community leaders with respect to organizational development, networking lobbying communication skills, data gathering/research and analysis. This impact is evidenced by the fact that many rural women leaders were encouraged to participate and run for the Barangay (village) elections and used the rural women's agenda as their platform for governance.

Furthermore, the intense capacity building and participatory policy formulation resulted in a sense of ownership of the implemented activities by the project beneficiaries, assertiveness in their human rights, and ultimately will achieve the empowerment of the trainees. In this respect, the project succeeded in enhancing the capacity of Moro women NGOs to advocate women's human rights and propose F 1 F



PKKK advocates

e. Sustainability

The empowerment of rural, indigenous, and Muslim women through training and capacity building

