

*Statistical Policies and Related Mechanisms in Advancing Gender Statistics: The
Philippine Experience*

Prepared by

Lina Castro
Director Social Stat Office
National Statistical Coordination Board
PHILIPPINES

1. Introduction

The Philippines is a signatory to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is also committed to the implementation of the 1985 Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted during the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995.

While it is evident that the status of women and where they are in the society, are not solely determined by law, it is also recognized, that legislation can obstruct or accelerate the achievement of full equality of women with men. Legislation and policies provide the enabling environment towards the empowerment of women and advocacy for equity and equality of women and men.

Thus, in recognition of the role of women in nation building, several policies/ laws/mechanisms have been institutionalized in the Philippines. These include among others, the following:

1. Art. II, Sec. 14 of the 1987 Philippines Constitution provides:

“The state recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men.”

2. In the Philippines, there are three government agencies that deal specifically with the women's issues. These are the following:

a) National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) - It is the recognized national machinery on women and is an advisory body to the President and the cabinet in formulating policies and programs on women and development;

b) Bureau of Women and Young Workers (BWYW) of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) -It formulates policies and promulgates orders, rules and regulations implementing the provisions of the Labor Code affecting working- women and minors;

c) Bureau of Women's Welfare (BWW) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) -It promotes women's welfare with specific attention to the prevention or eradication of exploitation of women in any form such as, but not limited to prostitution and illegal recruitment, as well as the promotion of skills for employment.

3. The Family Code of the Philippines (1987) has provisions that protect the equality of women and the family such as the provision that husband and wife should have joint management of conjugal properties.

4. The Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP, 1987-1992) stipulates that gender and development shall be effectively integrated across sectors at the national and sub national planning processes.

5. A companion plan to the MTPDP, the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW), 1982-1992 addresses the need to institute appropriate policies, strategies, programs/projects and mechanisms to ensure that women are effectively mobilized in the development process. Executive Order 348, issued on February 17, 1989 directs all government agencies to implement the programs and projects outline in the PDPW.

6. Republic Act No. 6725, enacted on May 12, 1989, prohibits discrimination against women in employment, promotion and training opportunities.
7. Republic Act No. 7192, known as the “Women in Development and Nation-Building Act “ enacted on February 12, 1992 is a legislative milestone in the pursuit of equality among women and men in development and nation building. Section 4 of this act directs the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to ensure with the assistance of NCRFW, that all agencies which affect the participation of women in national development, collect sex-disaggregated data and include such data in their program/project papers, proposals or strategies. As a follow-through to RA 7192, starting in 1995, Section 27 of the General Appropriation Act (GAA)¹ of the Republic of the Philippines states that all departments, bureaus, offices and agencies shall set aside an amount to be used for gender-responsive projects. In 1996, the minimum amount that should be set was at 5% of an agency’s total appropriation.

Sec. 31 of the GAA, FY 2008- Programs/Projects Related to Gender and Development², the latest Act, stipulates the following:

“All departments, including their attached agencies, offices, bureaus, SUCs, GOCCs, LGUs and other instrumentalities shall formulate a Gender and Development (GAD) Plan designed to address gender issues within their concerned sectors or mandate and implement applicable provisions in the CEDAW (acronym, mine), the BPFA, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (2000-2015), the PPGD (acronym, mine) (1999-2025), the Framework Plan for Women, and the Ten-Point Legacy Agenda of the Macapagal-Arroyo Administration. The cost of implementing the GAD Plan shall be at least five (5%) of the agency’s or local government’s total 2007 budget appropriations.

The development of the GAD Plan shall proceed from the conduct of gender analysis, the generation and review of sex-disaggregated data, and consultations with gender advocates and women clientele. Its implementation shall contribute to poverty alleviation, the economic empowerment especially of marginalized women, the protection, promotion and fulfillment of women’s human rights, and the practice of gender-responsive governance. Utilization of the GAD budget shall be evaluated based on the GAD performance indicators identified by the agency or local government.”

8. Executive Order No. 273, signed on September 8, 1995 approved and adopted the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development, (PPGD) 1995-2025. The PPGD is a 30-year perspective framework for pursuing full equality and development for women and men in accordance with RA 7192 and the 1987 Constitution as well as the main vehicle for implementing in the Philippines the Beijing Platform for Action.
9. Executive Order No. 348 which adopted the PDPW in 1989 also mandates the creation of Gender and Development (GAD) focal points within an agency, a sector or a locality. The

¹ An Act Appropriating Funds for the Operation of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and for Other Purposes. This provides that 5% of the appropriation of government agencies should be earmarked for gender and development.

² GAA, FY 2008, Volume 104, No. 1, Official Gazette

focal points are tasked to catalyze, coordinate, provide direction to, and serve as technical adviser on gender and development efforts.

10. Republic Act No. 8353, or the Anti-Rape Law enacted on September 30, 1997 expands the definition of the crime of rape and reclassifies it as a crime against person instead of a crime against chastity.
11. Republic Act No. 8505, known as the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998, was also passed to establish a rape crisis center in every province and city, authorizing the appropriation of funds thereof and for other purposes.
12. Act No. 3753, Law on Registry of Civil Status specifies what information need to be recorded with the Civil Registrar, such as births, deaths, marriages, annulment of marriages, legitimations, adoptions, naturalizations and changes of name. It also provides for the terms and regulations for registration and certification to be followed by every Local Civil Registrar.
13. RA 7192's Implementing Rules and Regulations, Rule IV- Roles and Responsibilities, Section 8 – NEDA and NCRFW, Part C. Monitoring and Evaluation, Item 6 also stipulates the following provisions:

“NEDA and NCRFW shall mobilize specifically the Planning offices/units and concerned bureaus of the various agencies such as the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) of the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) of the Department of Labor and Employment, in identifying and making available crucial sex-disaggregated data requirements, vis-à-vis their specific purposes (planning, programming, delivery of services, resource allocation, etc.)

Data that are beyond the agencies' capacity to generate shall be referred to the data generating agencies such as the National Statistics Office (NSO), among others for appropriate action.

These specialized data producing agencies shall provide the necessary technical assistance to concerned entities by virtue of their mandates and specifically by the RA provisions. As among those government agencies mandated by this RA, they shall be expected to initiate pro-active measures towards ensuring the timely and adequate collection of sex disaggregated data for planning and programming purposes.

Specifically, the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) shall ensure that gender concerns are integrated into the sectoral plans and programs of the Philippine Statistical Development Plan and that appropriate mechanisms are adopted to implement the gender-based statistical activities of the concerned agencies at both the central and sub-national levels.”

RA 7192 together with other policies, e.g. Section 28 of the GAA³, Joint Memorandum Circular of the NCRFW, NEDA and the Department of Budget and Management prompted concerned agencies to generate gender statistics.

³ 2008 GAA

2. Role of the Philippine Statistical System

Executive Order No. 121 “Reorganizing the Philippine Statistical System (PSS) and for Other Purposes” issued by the President of the Philippines in January 1987, provided the framework for coordination in the country. The Philippines is one of many countries with a decentralized statistical system. The PSS is decentralized as upheld by the reorganization of the system in 1987 under Executive Order No. 121 which recognized the need to maintain a decentralized statistical system characterized by independence, objectivity, and integrity to make it more responsive to the requirements of national development. Its mission is to provide timely, accurate and useful statistics for the government and the public, especially for planning and decision-making.

By virtue of this order, the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) was created as the highest policymaking and coordinating body on statistical matters in the country. And as stipulated in the executive order, decisions of the NSCB are final and executory.

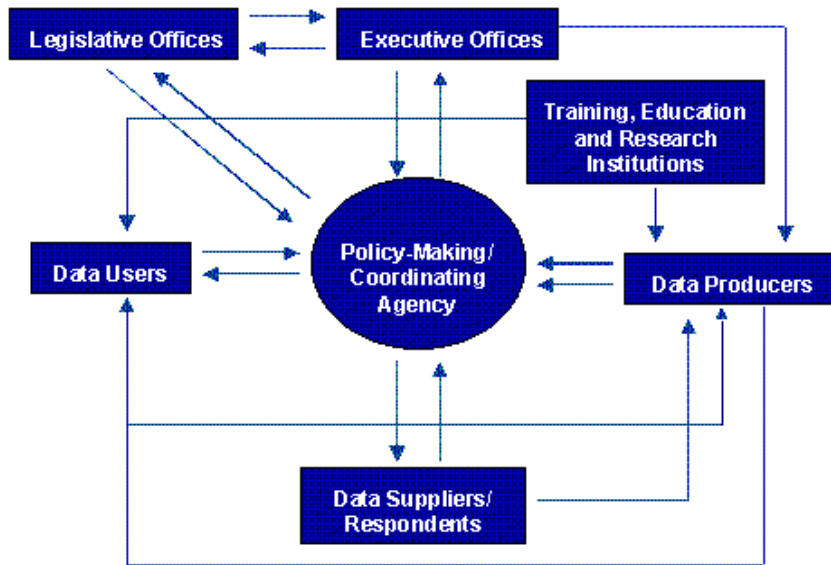
The PSS consists of statistical organizations at all administrative levels, its personnel and the national statistical program. Specifically, the organizations comprising the system include the following:

- A policy-making and coordinating body – the National Statistical Coordination Board
- A single general-purpose statistical agency – the National Statistics Office
- A research and training arm - the Statistical Research and Training Center
- Units of government engaged in statistical activities either as their primary function or as part of their administrative or regulatory functions – all departments, bureaus, offices, agencies, and instrumentalities of national and local governments and all government-owned and –controlled corporations and their subsidiaries

The major statistical agencies in the PSS include the NSCB, NSO, SRTC, the BAS, the BLES, and the Department of Economic Statistics of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). Other data producers in the government include research and statistics divisions/units usually within the planning service of the various departments and bureaus, e.g. Office of Planning Service of the Department of Education (DepEd); National Epidemiology Center of the Department of Health (DOH), etc.

The chart below shows the linkages among the various institutions and players in the PSS.

Framework for the Management and Coordination of the PSS



Thus, as mandated, the NSCB Executive Board formulates statistical policy measures in the form of resolutions and memorandum orders designed to introduce new statistical frameworks and activities, enhance existing methodologies, and improve the quality and accessibility of government-produced statistics. These include various policies to advance and promote the generation of gender statistics.

3. Statistical Policies and Measures

Based on its mandate, the NSCB has issued various policies and measures and has institutionalized mechanisms to advance and promote the generation of gender statistics as enumerated in the foregoing discussion.

a. NSCB Resolution No. 8- Series of 1994: Enjoining Different Agencies to Promote Gender Concerns in the Generation of Statistics

Recognizing the need to provide strong data support to the effective implementation of the laws enumerated in Part 1, the NSCB as the coordinating body on statistical development efforts in the country issued NSCB Resolution No. 8, series of 1994 entitled “Enjoining Different Agencies to Promote Gender Concerns in the Generation of Statistics”. The Board directed all government agencies to promote gender concerns in the production and dissemination of statistics for planning and policy/decision-making purposes. Since its approval in 1994, a number of data producing agencies such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS) under the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) under the Department of Labor and Employment, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), etc. have already responded to this call by compiling and gathering sex-disaggregated statistics and integrating gender concerns in their work program and other related activities.

b. Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP) approved by Presidential Proclamation

The Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP) is a mechanism for setting the directions, thrusts, strategies and priorities of the PSS. It serves as a companion document addressing the statistical requirements of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) of the country. The PSDP is approved by the President through a Presidential Proclamation, for adoption and implementation by all concerned.

In support of RA 7192, the Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP) 1993-1998 translated the mission of the PSS into programs and activities, among others, to produce gender-sensitive statistics for all sectors of the economy. To institutionalize the collection, generation and and processing of sex-disaggregated data, efforts to enhance the gender-responsiveness of the PSDP was explored and implemented. Appropriate guidelines and mechanisms were developed and disseminated to ensure that sectoral plans and programs in the PSDP will address sectoral gender issues.

Another move to further support this was the addition of a major sectoral program in the 1998-2004 Philippine Statistical Development Program (PSDP), the Institutionalization of the System of Gender and Development Indicator System. These programs are done in constant partnership with the NCRFW. In addition, since the NSCB has the mandate to monitor the implementation of the PSDP, concerned agencies were urged to invoke Section 27 of the General Appropriations Act to ensure funding of activities to improve the generation of statistics needed for the Gender Indicator System.

The PSDP 2005-2010 signed by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo through Proclamation No. 1140, dated September 19, 2006, contains a chapter on Social Needs and Gender Development which prioritized the following programs and statistical activities in the next five years:

1. Incorporation of sex-disaggregated poverty and income indicators in the priority agenda of concerned statistical agencies;
2. Regular generation of sex-disaggregated data support to monitor the goals and priorities of CEDAW, PFA, MDG, MTPDP, and FPW;
3. Development of methodology to measure Gender and Development Index or GDI in the Philippines; and
4. Assessment and improvement of the Data Monitoring system on VAW

c. NSCB Resolution No. 5 - Series of 2001: Approval and Adoption of the Statistical Framework on GAD Indicator System

NSCB Resolution No. 5, Series of 2001, Approval and Adoption of the Statistical Framework on Gender and Development (GAD) Indicators System, approved the Statistical Framework of the GAD Indicators System and directed all concerned government agencies to adopt the Framework in the generation and analysis of gender and development indicators. The statistical framework was developed based on the vision and strategies for GAD as spelled out in the PPGD and the Beijing Platform for Action. The resolution also directs the NSCB Technical Staff to study and prepare the memorandum order for the creation of an Inter-Agency

Committee on Gender Statistics to insure the continuing efforts in the generation of gender statistics and that one of the terms of reference of this Committee shall be the identification of the agency that will institutionalize the implementation of the GAD Framework.

d. NSCB Resolution No. 6 – Approval and Adoption of the Statistical Framework and Glossary Related to the Protection of Women and Children

NSCB Resolution No. 6- Approval and Adoption of the Statistical Framework and Glossary Related to the Protection of Women and Children directed all concerned agencies to adopt the statistical framework and glossary in the generation and analysis of VAWC statistics. The framework includes: 1) scope of violence; 2) dimensions of violence; 3) forms of violence; 4) understanding VAWC; 5) Inter-Agency Referral and Networking System on VAWC (For Both the Victim and the Perpetrator); 6) Proposed Statistics to be Collected for VAWC; and the 7) Definition of Terms. The development of this framework was governed by local laws for the protection of women and children as well as declarations in international conventions and conferences on which the Philippines is a signatory.

e. NSCB Memorandum Order No. 3 – Series of 2002: Creating the Inter-Agency Committee on Gender Statistics (IACGS)

NSCB Memorandum Order No. 5 – Series of 2005: Reconstituting the IACGS

The NSCB Executive Board approved the creation of the Inter-Agency Committee on Gender Statistics, through Memo Order No. 3, Series of 2002 as the machinery within the PSS to rationalize as well as advise the Board on the concerns/issues and thrusts in the generation and dissemination of gender statistics. In May 2005, the IACGS was reconstituted with NCRFW as Chair, Co-Chair and the NSCB as Vice -Chair. The specific functions of the Committee are as follows:

- a. Formulate measures that will improve the system of collection and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data at the national and local levels;
- b. Formulate measures to ensure that the data requirements of the Statistical Framework for the GAD Indicators System and the Statistical Framework Related to the protection of Women and Children are being compiled by all concerned agencies;
- c. Identify and recommend statistical policies to the NSCB Executive Board for the generation of data support on gender issues; and
- d. Monitor the overall development of gender statistics in the country.

f. NSCB Resolution No. 12 – Series of 2005: Approving Recommendations of the IACGS

In October 2005, the above resolution approved the recommendations of the IACGS based on the statistical data assessment update matrix for the core GAD indicators and the Framework Plan for Women (FPW) indicators data assessment matrix. The resolution stated that the concerned agencies prepare their action plans to implement the recommendations of the IACGS and include these activities in their respective GAD plans and ensure the continuing efforts in the generation and improvement of gender statistics and institutionalize the GAD framework. Data gaps resulting from the assessment by an inter-agency task group shall be addressed by the concerned agencies through the recommendations of the Task Group e.g. forging of Memorandum of Understanding with the primary source agency. The IACGS is continuously monitoring the implementation of these action plans.

g. Presidential Proclamation No. 647 – Declaring the Month of October of Each Year as the National Statistics Month

The observance of the National Statistics Month (NSM) is a step towards promoting, enhancing and instilling nationwide awareness and appreciation of the importance and value that statistics provide the different sectors of society, while at the same time, ensuring the support of the public at large in improving and enhancing the quality and standard of statistics in the country. The NSM has provided the opportunity for NCRFW to advocate for the generation and improvement of gender statistics. The NSM celebration is held annually with a particular focus or theme for the year. The NCRFW hosted the 11th NSM with the theme: “Empowering Filipino Women through Gender Statistics”. The NSM celebration for that year highlighted the role of gender statistics in the country’s development.

All these years, the NSM celebration has been sustained through the support and cooperation of government instrumentalities and the private sectors, making the NSM an effective venue for strengthening and unifying the statistical community in promoting and instilling national awareness and appreciation of the importance of statistics.

**h. National Convention on Statistics – NSCB Resolution No. 6, Series of 2000:
Approving the Conduct of the National Convention on Statistics Every Three Years**

The National Convention on Statistics (NCS) has been conducted periodically by the Philippine Statistical System to (a) provide a forum for exchanging ideas and experiences in the field of statistics and for discussing recent statistical developments and prevailing issues and problems of the Philippine Statistical System and (b) to elicit the cooperation and support of statisticians and professionals in related fields from the government, academe and private sector towards a more responsive statistical system. In its year of approval in 2000, the conduct of the next NCS in 2001 was the 8th of its series. The NCS also serve as a forum and venue for the NCRFW to advocate for the generation of gender statistics as well as to provide the latest developments in the sector as scientific session/s are devoted and organized for gender statistics.

4. Other Related Mechanisms

Other structures, which serve as instruments and the enabling mechanisms in advancing the promotion and advancement of gender issues in the country include the following:

- The GAD Focal Point Mechanism is the primary structure for Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW) implementation. The focal points are envisioned to serve as catalysts for gender responsive planning and programming in various line agencies.
- The Senate and House Committee on Women and Family Relations serve as the women’s mechanism in the Philippine legislature.
- The academe/NGOs undertake continuing studies and researches on women’s conditions in varied sectors and geographical areas, and on issues affecting them such as the impact of mainstreaming gender development programs and policies on Filipino women, violence against women, reproductive health, overseas work and others.
- Women’s Priority Legislative Agenda (WPLA) was laid down by the NCRFW in 2008, anchored on the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), Framework Plan for Women (FPW), and the provisions of the CEDAW, particularly its Concluding Comments.

5. Challenges, Issues and Recommendations

Much remains to be done. There is a continuing “need for relentless advocacy in the form of assertiveness, actual presence, and regularity of follow -ups” for users and data generators to improve gender statistics. “It takes time for the gender message to sink in and for real change to take place.”⁴ There is likewise a need for substantial funding to address data gaps on gender issues. There is need for an enhanced monitoring system to be put in place as well as a stronger implementation of statistical policies. Conduct of consultations and dissemination fora with both users and producers of gender statistics should be continued including the training and sensitizing government statisticians and other statistical personnel to integrate gender concerns in their work.

It is clear that statistical policies and other mechanisms formulated by the NSCB have provided the legal framework for the promotion and advancement of gender statistics in the country. These paved the way for the Philippine machinery on women, the NCRFW, to work together with the agencies in the PSS to establish and sustain efforts towards improving gender statistics.

The PSS through the NSCB look back with pride on what we have achieved in the area of gender statistics. We look forward with hope to strive and do our best to make statistics as indispensable inputs in crafting the country’s development strategies, especially in the area of gender and development.

In closing, the NSCB will continue its role as the overall coordinator of advancing gender statistics as it formulates statistical policies and measures towards improvements in the generation, analysis and communication of gender statistics. The IACGS shall also continue to be the main institutional mechanism/structure established to continue and sustain efforts and initiatives and influence the rest of the PSS in improving gender statistics. Being one of the functional inter-agency statistical committees of the NSCB, and not just a Task Force attests to the recognition of the importance of gender statistics in the PSS.

⁴ Annotated statements from NCRFW officials.

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