

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
PHILIPPINE COMMISSION ON WOMEN**

**JOINT MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR
No. 2016-01**

TO : Chairpersons of Regional Development Councils and NEDA Regional Directors

SUBJECT : Guidelines for the Creation, Strengthening and Institutionalization of a Regional Gender and Development Committee under the Regional Development Council

DATE : 28 March 2016

1.0 BACKGROUND

On 14-15 August 2014, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), in cooperation with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), conducted the First Regional Gender and Development Committee (RGADC) Summit with the theme "Strengthening Regional Mechanisms for GAD Convergence." The Summit resulted in the adoption of a Declaration which highlighted the need to "initiate, coordinate and monitor gender mainstreaming at the regional and local levels; strengthen institutional linkages with local government units (LGUs), academe, civil society organizations (CSOs) and people's organizations (POs) in pursuing Gender and Development (GAD) efforts at the regional and local levels; and ensure the participation of women and women's groups and other sectoral groups in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of regional and local development plans." To do this, the Summit Declaration also called for the review and issuance of policy guidelines for the strengthening of a regional GAD mechanism that is "empowered to provide technical assistance and support the implementation and monitoring of gender responsive programs, projects and activities among duty-bearers like regional line agencies, LGUs and other stakeholders, operationalized through sharing of expertise, facilities and other resources."

In response to the Summit's call, the PCW and the NEDA reviewed and examined existing GAD mechanisms at the regional level and conducted consultations for the development of the Guidelines provided in this Joint Memorandum Circular.

2.0 PURPOSE

This Joint Memorandum Circular is being issued by PCW and NEDA for the following:

- 2.1 Prescribe guidelines and procedures for the establishment, strengthening, and institutionalization of a Regional Gender and Development Committee (RGADC) under the RDC; and
- 2.2 Provide the composition, structure and functions of the RGADC to accelerate gender mainstreaming at the regional and local levels.

3.0 POLICY GUIDELINES

- 3.1 Section 36 of Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women (MCW), mandates all departments, including their attached agencies, offices, bureaus, state universities and colleges, government-owned and controlled corporations, LGUs, and other government instrumentalities to adopt gender mainstreaming as a strategy to promote women's human rights and eliminate gender discrimination in their systems, structures, policies, programs, processes, and procedures;
- 3.2 Section 41-D of the MCW Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) provides that the PCW shall engage existing mechanisms such as the regional or local development councils for the implementation of the MCW at the regional and local levels; and
- 3.3 The Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025, approved and adopted through Executive Order No. 273, identified the RDCs and the Local Development Councils (LDCs) as Gender and Development Focal Points that shall serve as the coordinating mechanism for the implementation of GAD action plans of regional and sub-regional offices of the different government agencies.

4.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 4.1 *Gender Analysis* – refers to a framework to compare the relative advantages and disadvantages faced by women and men in various spheres of life, including the family, workplace, school, community and political system. It also takes into account how gender discrimination may be compounded by class, age, race, ethnicity, culture, and other factors.
- 4.2 *Gender and Development (GAD)* – refers to the development perspective and process that is participatory and empowering, equitable, sustainable, free from violence, respectful of human rights, supportive of self-determination and actualization of human potentials. It seeks to achieve gender equality as a fundamental value that should be reflected in development choices and contends that women are active agents of development, not just passive recipients of development.
- 4.3 *Gender Audit* – refers to a form of “social audit” or “quality audit” which determines whether the organization's internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective, reinforcing each other and are being followed. This tool or process assists organizations in establishing a baseline, identifying critical gaps and challenges, and recommending ways of addressing them.
- 4.4 *Gender Equality*– refers to the principles asserting the equality of women and men and their right to enjoy equal conditions realizing their full human potentials to contribute to and benefit from the results of development, and with the State recognizing that all human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights;
- 4.5 *Gender Mainstreaming* – refers to the strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, programs and projects in all economic, political, social and civil spheres so that women and men benefit equally. It is the process of assessing the implications for women and

men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs in all areas and at all levels;

4.6 *GAD Planning and Budgeting* – is a systematic approach to gender mainstreaming, carried out by all government instrumentalities, through the annual development and implementation of programs, activities and projects and addressing gender issues and concerns in their respective organizations, sectors and constituencies by utilizing at least five percent (5%) of their total budget allocation;

4.7 *Women's Empowerment* – is the process by which women are mobilized to understand, identify and overcome gender discrimination so as to achieve equality between women and men in terms of access to and enjoyment of opportunities, benefits and privileges.

5.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

5.1 RDC chairpersons shall lead the issuance of a resolution creating and institutionalizing an RGADC under the RDC;

5.2 RDCs with existing GAD committees or similar mechanisms shall strengthen and, if necessary, reconstitute such based on the provisions of this Joint Memorandum Circular;

5.3 RDCs shall develop and implement a GAD capacity development program for members of the Council, particularly those of the GAD committee. These programs shall include gender sensitivity trainings, gender analysis, GAD planning and budgeting and gender audit, among others; and

5.4 Funds necessary for the organization, management and operation of the RGADC shall be included in the GAD budget proposal of the RDC and the committee's member agencies/LGUs for fiscal year (FY) 2017 and every year thereafter. RGADCs shall prepare their annual work and financial plans to carry out their roles, functions and responsibilities as stipulated under item 6.2 and submit the same to the RDC.

6.0 SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

6.1 Composition

6.1.1 The following shall be the regular members of the RGADC:

6.1.1.1 Chairpersons or representatives of sectoral committees of the RDC;

6.1.1.2 Directors of the regional offices of the NEDA, Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Commission on Human Rights (CHR);

6.1.1.3 Head of the CHED-recognized Regional GAD Center, if present in the region;

6.1.1.4 Representative/s from LGUs; and

6.1.1.5 Civil society/private sector organization/s representing the women sector who received the highest number of nominations among the regular members: Provided, that the number of civil society/private sector representatives shall not be more than one-fourth of the total number of members of the committee: Provided, further, that they shall serve for a period of three years.

6.1.2 Representatives from other agencies or sectors may also be added as members of the Committee depending on the gender issues and concerns of the region: Provided, that the members of the committee shall, at all times, be odd in number to prevent ties in cases of decision-making.

6.2 Roles, Functions and Responsibilities of the Committee

- 6.2.1 Initiate, coordinate and monitor gender mainstreaming initiatives at the sectoral and regional level;
- 6.2.2 Lead in ensuring the integration of gender perspective in regional development plans, investment programs and policies through the conduct of consultations with stakeholders;
- 6.2.3 Promote the participation of women, women's groups and other sectoral groups in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of regional and local development plans, programs and projects;
- 6.2.4 Create sub-committees or technical working groups (TWGs) that will review and handle concerns on women's economic empowerment; social development rights; gender in security, justice and peace; gender in environment and climate change; and gender-responsive governance, among other areas, as necessary. The subcommittees or TWGs shall endorse matters pertaining to their sectoral concern to the RGADC and/or the RDC;
- 6.2.5 Recommend policies or actions that may be adopted by the RDC to facilitate gender mainstreaming and promote women's empowerment and gender equality in the region;
- 6.2.6 Coordinate and lead the preparation and submission of the GAD plan and budget (GPB) and GAD accomplishment report (GAD AR) of the RDC;
- 6.2.7 Facilitate and coordinate with national government agencies, particularly the PCW, the academe and other training institutions for the conduct of region-wide capacity development programs on GAD;
- 6.2.8 Promote and coordinate the generation and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics to come up with gender-responsive evidence-based regional/local development plans and programs;
- 6.2.9 Assist in the monitoring and collection of data on GAD indicators at the regional level;

- 6.2.10 Provide venues for discussing regional gender issues and concerns, as well as for recognizing and sharing good practices and experiences on gender mainstreaming;
- 6.2.11 Strengthen institutional linkages with regional GAD mechanisms (e.g., Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Trafficking-Violence Against Women and Their Children (RIACAT-VAWC) and Regional GAD Centers), GAD Focal Point Systems of regional line agencies, GAD offices of LGUs, donor agencies and civil society, among others, in pursuing GAD efforts at the regional and local levels;
- 6.2.12 Coordinate with and assist national oversight agencies, particularly the PCW, NEDA and DILG, in localizing the implementation of national laws, policies and programs on GAD; and
- 6.2.13 Prepare and submit reports on the status of implementation of the MCW and other GAD initiatives in the region following the guidelines set by the PCW and other government oversight agencies.

6.3 Officers and Their Functions

- 6.3.1 The RGADC shall have as officers a Chairperson and a Co-Chairperson.
- 6.3.2 The Chairperson shall be elected from among its members who are also regular members of the RDC. The Co-chairperson, on the other hand, shall be elected from among the members of the RGADC, preferably from among the representatives of civil society or the private sector. The Chairperson and the Co-chairperson shall jointly head the Committee and serve for a period of three years in sync with the term of local elected officials.
- 6.3.3 The Chairperson shall preside over the meetings of the Committee; call for special meetings to discuss issues that need urgent actions from the Committee; sign and endorse committee resolutions and reports to the RDC and other relevant bodies; direct and supervise the activities of the Committee; invite regional agencies or LGUs to the meetings of the RGADC to discuss gender issues or GAD policies, programs and activities in the region; supervise the monitoring of region-wide GAD programs, activities and projects; and perform other functions and duties as may be directed by the RDC Chairperson or through a resolution passed by the Council.
- 6.3.4 The Co-chairperson, on the other hand, shall discharge other functions which will complement those of the Chairperson, which include, but shall not be limited to, the following: preside over the meetings of the Committee in the absence of the Chairperson; assume the powers and responsibilities of the Chairperson, whenever the Chairperson is unable to perform her/his functions or when the position becomes vacant; and serve as the head of any ad-hoc committee the RGADC or RDC may create, unless otherwise specified by the aforementioned bodies.

6.4 Committee Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Committee shall be lodged under the Office of the RGADC Chairperson or an office to be agreed upon by the RGADC members. The secretariat shall provide technical and administrative support to the Committee; coordinate the preparation of the agenda of Committee meetings; keep a complete record of the minutes of the meetings and other pertinent documents of the Committee; prepare and/or review Committee reports; and perform other duties as may be assigned by the RGADC.

6.5 Committee Meetings

The Committee shall hold regular meetings at least once every quarter. It may also hold special meetings whenever it is necessary.

7.0 ROLES OF OVERSIGHT AGENCIES

7.1 National Economic and Development Authority

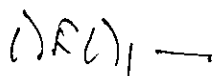
- 7.1.1 Provide technical assistance to RGADCs in mainstreaming and integrating GAD concerns in regional plans and programs, particularly through the promotion of the use of the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG); and
- 7.1.2 Integrate the accomplishments of RGADCs in the annual GAD Accomplishment Report being prepared by NEDA for submission to PCW.

7.2 Philippine Commission on Women

- 7.2.1 Provide updates on GAD-related policies, tools and other relevant materials;
- 7.2.2 Provide or facilitate the provision of technical assistance on GAD to RGADC to enable them to effectively perform their functions;
- 7.2.3 Assist in the development of GAD training designs or modules to be used in the provision of technical assistance in the region; and
- 7.2.4 Develop tools and guidelines for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the MCW and other GAD initiatives in the region, as well as for submitting reports and statistics gathered by RGADCs to PCW.

8.0 EFFECTIVITY

This Joint Circular shall take effect immediately.



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