

# Gender and Development (GAD) Budget Policy and Promotion of Gender Equality in the Barangays of Iligan City, Philippines: Challenges and Opportunities

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## ABSTRACT

This article adapted the Gender and Development framework embodied in the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGRD) 1995 – 2025. PPGRD envisions promoting gender empowerment and equality by addressing the needs and issues of marginalized women at the basic administrative local government units through representation and a legislated gender budget. With more than 2 decades since PPGRD was passed, the pressing need in this study was to determine how gender mainstreaming and GAD Budget Policy (GBP) compliance had fared in the southern part of the country, specifically in the city of Iligan, and within its most basic administrative units, the barangays. This article focuses on the GAD Budget Policy, a vital component of GAD, to determine gender budget compliance at the *barangay* level, specifically in the 15 barangays of Iligan City. The study, conducted from 2016 to 2017, used Key Informant Interviews and reviewed national and local GAD ordinances and documents.

Barangay Gender and Development and gender budget policy still have a long way to go in the barangays, despite their triumphs and challenges. While GAD structures, mandated by the city government, cascaded to the barangay level, it was noticeable that women remained a minority in barangay governance. There was, however, a high level of compliance with the 5% gender budget and the preparation of the annual GBP. Although gender budgets were limited and allocated to gender-friendly programs, projects, and activities, they were not sustainable. Through their involvement, women beneficiaries felt a sense of equality, empowerment, and self-worth for contributing to the family income and participating in community development projects.

**Keywords:** Gender and Development (GAD), Gender Budget Policy, Local Government Unit (LGU), Barangay, sustainable development

## INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is one of the Asian countries with legislative mandates for gender budgeting. It has been 24 years since the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGRD): 1995 – 2025 was crafted. With only 6 years remaining until the target year of completion, monitoring the progress of Gender and Development in the country has become essential. A vital component of the PPGRD is the GAD budget policy. *Gender budgeting has been seen as a powerful tool for integrating gender into fiscal policy in the region to address gender inequality and women's development* (Chakraborty, 2010, p. 8). Gender programs and projects are costly, and government budget resources are scarce. Systematic evidence is thus necessary to assess the worth and success of the gender budget policy and the programs through which it is implemented.

In Chackraborty's Review of Gender Budgeting in Asia (2018), she noted that national-level gender budgeting does not fully address the fiscal challenges faced by countries with heterogeneous regions and populations. With fiscal decentralization underway and subnational governments responsible for basic public services, subnational gender budgeting is also important and spreading, though it is still limited to a few countries. The Philippines is one country in which the GAD Budget Policy began at the national government level and, over the years, has been expanded to include local government units. Establishing genderized baseline information on how national and local mandates cascaded to barangay, the basic administrative units in the Philippines, is

essential as it provides a systematic foundation to a more in-depth analysis of gender issues and concerns towards sustainable development. The basic research issue is the extent to which gendered governance has been implemented in the barangays, providing a realistic basis for mainstreaming gender in local government development plans and programs. As Heilet (et al. 2008) observed, local government is in a unique position to contribute to the global struggle for gender equality and can have a great impact on the status of gender equality around the world, in its capacities as the level of governance closest to the citizens, as a service provider, and as an employer.

While the GAD Budget Policy in the Philippines has been studied and reviewed, these studies have focused on selected line agencies of the government (Illo, 2010) and on case studies of selected state colleges and provinces. In Southern Philippines, a study on Gender mainstreaming was done in the cities of northern Mindanao. The recent study by Mendoza et al. (2018) focused on the barangay level, the basic administrative unit of the local government unit, in this case, the city of Iligan in Southern Philippines. The data used in this paper were culled from the study by Mendoza et al. (2018).

This paper limited its objectives to describe the experiences of some barangays in setting up basic GAD structures; the allocation of 5% for gender concerns; the preparation of the GAD Plan and Budget; and in evaluating if the programs, plans, and activities indicated in the GAD Plan & Budget were gender-responsive to the targeted beneficiaries.

The framework of this study was built on the assumption that realistic, inclusive, and sustainable development can only be achieved when it is geared towards addressing the needs, issues, and concerns of women that are deeply rooted in their unequal power relations with men. It was in this context that the BPA identified 12 fundamental gender concerns of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), which were subsequently adopted as priority gender concerns to be addressed over 30 years through the Philippine Plan for Gender – Response Development (PPGRD) from 1995 to 2025. These concerns included poverty, health, education, economic empowerment, power and decision-making, violence against women, the girl-child, mechanisms for advancement, the effects of armed conflict, women's rights, mass media, and the environment.

This study was framed by the ideals of gender empowerment and gender equality, embodied in various GAD mandates and ordinances in the Philippines. In particular, Republic Act (RA) No. 7192, or the *Women in Development and Nation-Building Act*, mandated the allocation of a certain percentage of official development assistance to gender concerns (Illo, 2010). The law had likewise served as the starting point for what is now known as the Gender and Development (GAD) Budget Policy. The Gender and Development (GAD) budget policy, adopted under the term of former President Fidel V. Ramos, provided that all instrumentalities of government shall allocate a minimum of five percent (5%) of their total budgets for the implementation of policies, programs, projects and activities that will improve the status of women in accordance with the Women in Development and Nation Building Act (RA 7192). It subsequently became a regular provision under Republic Act 8250, the Annual General Appropriations Act of 1995, and an effort championed by then Senator Leticia Ramos Shahani. In 1998, this policy became part of the Local Budget Memorandum, which the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) issues annually to Local Government Units (LGUs) (Valdeavilla & Manapat, 2001), thereby extending the GAD Budget Policy to the barangay level. Adding more inputs to gender mainstreaming in local governance was the enactment of the Magna Carta of Women through Republic Act No. 9710 on August 14, 2009. This law adopted gender mainstreaming as an approach to promote and safeguard women's rights and to eradicate gender discrimination in government structures, systems, processes, policies, programs, and projects.

In this study, barangay experiences with GAD Budget Policy included compliance with and implementation of basic GAD structures, the GAD Budget Policy, the GAD Plan and Budget, and impacts on project beneficiaries. GAD structures were indicated by the presence of the VAWC Desk and the Committee of Women and Children in the barangay. GAD Budget Policy in this study focused on the 5% gender budget of the barangay. How the 5% GAD Budget was spent as reflected in the annual barangay GAD Plan & Budget. Measures of gender-responsive projects were based on *Gender Responsive LGU (GeRL) ka ba? A Self-Assessment Manual*, prepared by the Commission for Women (PCW, June 16, 2014). Impacts on project beneficiaries include increasing the women's participation in contributing to and benefiting from local development processes.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature comprises the Philippine Laws Promoting Gender Welfare and Equality and Studies on Philippine Gender and Development (GAD) Budget Policy. The Executive Order No. 273 known as *The Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development-1995 to 2025* was adopted on September 8, 1995 under the Ramos administration this mandated all government agencies, departments, bureaus, offices, and instrumentalities, including government-owned and-controlled corporations, at the national, sub-national and local levels to institutionalize Gender and Development (GAD) efforts in government by incorporating GAD concerns, in their planning, programming and budgeting processes, specifically in the preparation and assessment of their sectoral performance or investment plans. It provided that the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), in coordination with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), shall be responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and periodic assessment of the Plan to be conducted by various government agencies.

The Republic Act No. 7192, known as the *Women in Development and Nation Building Act*, stipulated that the State recognizes the role of women in nation building and shall ensure the fundamental equality of rights and opportunities before the law for women and men. To attain the objectives of this policy, a substantial budget from foreign development is required. Assistance shall be set aside and utilized by the implementing agencies supporting programs and activities for women, so that women benefit equally and participate directly in the development programs and projects of said department, and that agencies shall review and revise all their regulations, circulars, issuances, and procedures to remove gender bias therein. The GAD Budget Policy authorized government agencies, offices, bureaus, state universities and colleges, government-owned and -controlled corporations, and, now, local government units (LGUs) to utilize at least 5 percent of their annual budget for GAD-related activities. It began as an expressed public financing commitment to the specific goals, services, and activities for women that had been identified in the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025, followed by a Presidential Memorandum issued to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) by former President Fidel Ramos in 1996. The issuance of administrative guidelines came much later, through Joint Circular 99-4 issued by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the DBM, and the NCRFW. The policy was further strengthened by Section 27 of RA 8760, the General Appropriations Act, also passed in 1999. Additional guidelines were issued by the three concerned agencies in Joint Circular 2001-1 (Francisco, 2001).

The Republic Act 9710, the *Magna Carta of Women*, approved in 2009, promotes the empowerment of women; pursues equal opportunities for women and men; and ensures equal access to resources and development. The law also stipulates that the State realizes that equality of men and women entails the abolition of the unequal structures and practices that perpetuate discrimination and inequality. With this, the State shall provide the necessary mechanisms to enforce women's rights and adopt all legal measures necessary to foster and promote equal opportunities for women to participate in and contribute to the development of the political, economic, social, and cultural realms. Too, the State ensures the full integration of women's concerns in the mainstream of development include providing them with opportunities to enhance and maximize their potential and obtain jobs.

A Joint Circular (2012).-01 of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) is known as the Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Gender and Development (GAD) Plans and Budgets. Accomplishment Reports to Implement the Magna Carta of Women. The purpose of this circular is to prescribe guidelines and procedures for the formulation, development, submission, implementation, monitoring and evaluation including accounting of results of agency annual GAD plans and budgets (GPBs), and GAD accomplishment reports (AR); and to provide the mechanics for the development of programs, activities and projects (PAPs) to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of women at the socio-cultural, economic and political spheres. This Joint Circular was formulated in consultation with national government agencies (NGAs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), and government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs).

Turning now to related studies, in 2001, Josefa "Gigi" Francisco published an article in Social Watch titled *"The GAD Budget Examining Public Financing with a Gender and Poverty Lens."* She traced the development of the GAD Budget Policy from the national level down to the local government units. Francisco (2001)

identified some challenges in the GAD Budget.

The policies of the local government units were reviewed, and recommendations for improvement were offered.

The compilation by Valdeavilla and Manapat (2001) consisted of 12 experiences from a national agency, a regional line department, a women's organization, a state university, and LGUs. The stories showed the struggles, difficulties, and breakthroughs of GAD advocates in the field. They may not be phenomenal or regarded as models, yet they shared insights and lessons that would ignite the reader's inspiration and creativity. Numerous political and technical difficulties have beset the GAD budget policy. Yet, many agencies and LGUs continued to move on and confront the challenges. There had been failures, but there had been learning as well. More importantly, there were significant breakthroughs that now constituted a rich source of inspiration and ideas for others. This publication was an initial effort to put some of these experiences together.

In 2001, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) published *Going CEDAW in the Philippines*. The book had three sections documenting the government, executive, legislature, and judiciary; and organized women, schools, and media in various activities from 2005 to 2008. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), also known as the International Bill of Rights for Women, the Women's Convention, or the United Nations Treaty for the Rights of Women, was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and came into force on September 4, 1981. The Philippines signed it on July 17, 1980, and ratified it on July 19, 1981, making it a State Party to CEDAW.

The study by Clulow and Manson (2005) showed that, despite strong legislation supporting gender equality and women's empowerment, the implementation of the GAD budgetary requirement was uneven across government agencies and political units in the Philippines. The good example they cited was Los Baños, which demonstrated innovative engagement in GAD planning and budgetary requirements through an NGO that helped 30 barangay-level women's organizations in the area.

In 2010, Illo published *"Accounting for Gender Results: A Review of the Philippine GAD Budget Policy."* This research focused on line government agencies in the Philippines and reviewed the implementation of the GAD Budget Policy in their respective offices. Illo's (2011) study determined whether the provisions of RA 7192, *Women in Development and Nation. The Building Act* had been achieved among selected line agencies. Her research examined whether support for gender mainstreaming was provided, and whether women equally benefited from and participated in the development process.

Chakarabarty's (2016) *A Survey of Asia's Gender Budgeting Efforts*. In this IMF Working Paper, the authors present selected Asian nations and their experiences with GAD Budgeting. The Philippines is one of the Southeast Asian nations that spearheaded the GAD Budget as a national mandate. It is one of the early nations in Asia to champion women's equality and empowerment by enacting the GAD Budget Policy.

In Southern Philippines, Aguja et al. studied Gender Mainstreaming in Northern Mindanao cities. Their study revealed that the problem lies in the implementation of policy. Recently, Mendoza et al (2018) studied GAD mainstreaming in 15 barangays of Iligan City. Among the study's findings were that most barangays in the sample group were GAD-compliant and gender-responsive, yet not free from limitations and challenges. This article, which is an offshoot of the study of Mendoza et al (2018), focused on the barangay level, the basic administrative unit in the city's local government, which had not been included in the previous research.

## METHODOLOGY

The research study was conducted in Iligan City, a highly urbanized city in Northern Mindanao (Region 10) in the Southern Philippines. The City was one of the research sites in an earlier study on GAD Budget Policy in selected cities in Northern Mindanao. The present paper focuses on the city's basic administrative unit, the barangay. Iligan comprises 44 barangays, and 15 of these were randomly chosen for this study. The data used in this article were culled from a larger research project, *GAD Mainstreaming in Iligan City Barangay Governance: Policy Versus Implementation*, which employed mixed-methods survey, Key Informant interviews, and analysis of national and local GAD documents. Only the data from the Key Informant Interviews



and document analysis were used for this article. For the primary data, qualitative methods of Key Informant Interview were done among 39 barangay stakeholders, who were either the Barangay Captain/Chief, Barangay Councilor who chaired the Committee on Women and Children, Barangay Secretary, or any Barangay Councilor who was familiar with the programs and projects of the barangay, the Federation President of women organizations. The use of secondary data included a review of the national and local GAD mandates and ordinances, as well as the barangay GAD Plans and Budgets (GPBs) for 2014 - 2018.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned earlier, GAD mandates originated at the national government and cascaded to the local government units. The Local Government Unit of the City of Iligan has adapted and localized GAD national mandates and policies, as evidenced by the number of city ordinances on GAD. The city government's formulation of gender policies and ordinances had positively impacted its 44 barangays, specifically the 15 barangays in this study, which, in turn, adopted these GAD local ordinances.

### The Evolving Landscape of GAD Implementation in Iligan City Barangays: Challenges and Opportunities

The creation of the Iligan City Gender and Development Office (ICGDO) and the formulation of city ordinances further strengthened the formation of GAD structures at the barangay level. A city ordinance grouped barangays into several sectors, each with a coordinator who facilitated GAD at the barangay level. Among the structures for GAD set up in the barangays were the Violence Against Women (VAW) Desk and the Committee on Women and Children. The VAW Desk Officer was designated by the Barangay Chief or the Barangay Council, while the Chair of the Committee on Women was chosen among the elected barangay councilors. The creation of the VAWC Desk complied with JMC No. 2012-2 dated December 9, 2010, which set the guidelines for establishing a Violence Against Women (VAW) Desk in every barangay. Later, it became the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Desk. Setting up and maintaining a VAWC Desk were charged to the barangay's 5% GAD budget. Some feedback from the VAWC Desk Officers included the observation that they were no longer as active as several years ago because cases of violence against women had reduced significantly.

Findings showed minimal women's involvement in barangay leadership, with five female and 10 male barangay heads across the 15 barangays at the time of the study. Such a finding reflected the general profile of Barangay Councils in the city, where having a male Punong Barangay was the norm. Women, as a minority, were not only in the local government units in the Philippines but also in other countries. In 2003, across 52 countries from all continents, the average proportion of women in local councils stood at 15 per cent (Prabha & Barth, 2008). In Latin America and the Caribbean, women remain underrepresented in local decision-making structures (Hadley et al., 2007).

As to the Chairpersons on the Committee on Women in the 15 barangays, 9 out of 15 were women. While it may appear surprising that a few barangays in this study assigned men to chair the Committee on Women, the justification given was that these persons, even if they were men, were concerned with the welfare and protection of women. As for the VAWC Desk, 13 out of 15 were VAWC Officers. While VAWC appeared to be present in the 15 barangays, the interviews revealed that not all were functioning permanently due to a lack of funds. As one KI disclosed that the barangay GAD budget could easily be depleted if the salary/honorarium were taken from it. Another KI reported that VAWC was not needed as frequently as before because cases of violence against women had dropped.

Thus, at the barangay level, a simplified GAD structure existed, with the VAW Officer and the Committee on Women, directly under the Barangay Council. Aside from the barangay-based GAD offices of VAWC and the Committee on Women and Children, several women's organizations formed a federation. A total of 221 women's organizations were reported in the 15 barangays. The Federation President was the one directly representing all women's organizations, their issues and concerns, in the Barangay Council through the Committee on Women and Children.

In Section 36 of the RA 9710 Magna Carta for Women, at least five percent (5%) of the agency's or the local

government unit's total budget appropriations was required. In this study, 13 of 15 barangays provided the researchers with their GAD budgets for the years 2014 to 2018. In a related study on GAD Budget Policy among 25 line agencies of the Philippine government, it was reported that, "*several agencies or offices have reportedly reached the required 5 percent, but the total gender budget makes up less than 1 percent of the total appropriations for each year*" (Illo, 2010). To have an idea of how small the 5% budget of the barangay sample group in this study is, the findings showed that the barangay annual GAD budget ranged from PhP 807,304.13 (roughly \$16,000/year) to PhP 70,000.00 (roughly \$1,400/year for all projects/programs/activities. In an earlier study on GAD budget policy, Francisco (2001) observed that the amounts dedicated to gender activities were inadequate.

In compliance with the Joint Circular No. 2012, Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Gender and Development Plans and Budgets, 10 of the 15 sample barangays in this study complied. One Key Informant disclosed that although his barangay had a 5% GAD Budget, the barangay officials were not keen to submit a GAD Plan & Budget to the City Government. The absence of a penalty for non-compliance was one factor that explained why not all barangays had complied. The non-compliance with the GPB finding was also similar to an earlier study among selected line government agencies nationwide, where less than half of the 300-plus agencies submitted their GAD Plans, Budgets, and Accomplishment Reports (Illo, 2010).

With the expansion of the GAD Budget Policy down to the barangay (the most minor administrative unit), the Barangay GAD Plan & Budget Form has been standardized nationwide. It is downloadable from government line agencies such as the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Websites. In the said Form, the Program/Project/Activities (PPAs) were pre-categorized into Capability building, Provision of Services & Materials, Livelihood, and Education.

The activities under each Program/Project are organized into entries per barangay. The Form had provisions for intended beneficiaries, estimated cost, and the Committee in charge of each activity. The Barangay was allowed to include other PPAs that were deemed necessary. Despite the available template for GAD Plan and Budget (GPB), 100 percent compliance was not attained. This was not only at the barangay level but also at government line agencies. As reported by Illo (2010), since 2002, compliance rates averaged at 36.1 percent of the total for the gender plans and budgets, and 29.7 percent for the reports. Only 16.3 percent of all agencies had submitted their plans, budgets, and accomplishment reports. According to some key informants in this study, the preparation of GPB intensified only recently with the DILG-sponsored seminar held last December 2017. The said seminar workshop was a one-day event, and not many were able to attend due to the short notice. Key informants also reported difficulty completing the GPB Forms due to insufficient instructions. It was further found that not all who were tasked with preparing the GPB had the necessary technical skills in gender planning and budgeting.

The preparation of the Barangay Gender Plan & Budget was a process not only of allocating the 5% to gender needs and concerns, but also of identifying gender needs in local communities. In a related study (Mendoza et al., 2018), it was reported that the Committee on Women and Children, which was based on the Barangay Council, coordinated with the Federation President of women's organizations in the community on gender issues and concerns. The final say in approving the GPB was with the chief officer of the barangay, known as the *punong barangay* or the barangay captain.

A closer look at the Barangay GPB showed that the 5% GAD budget had been appropriated to programs/projects/activities.

### Capability Building Program

The most common entries under the capability-building program were the Gender Sensitivity Trainings (GSTs), Leadership training, Seminars on Gender issues, policies, values, and self-transformation, and reproductive health care awareness, and Forum of Health, Sanitation, and Security, which were undertaken at least once in nine barangays between 2014 and 2018. These capability-building activities were intended for Barangay Officials, some constituents in the barangay, and women leaders, with a budget of at least PhP10,000 (roughly \$200) to at most PhP 167,615—07 (roughly \$ 3,352) per activity.

1. The Provision of Services and Materials Program comprised several items, including barangay day care workers, barangay health workers, barangay nutrition scholars/services, health & medical services, free circumcision, purchase of medicine for indigents, and supplemental feeding between 2014 - 2018. Nine barangays had at least one of these projects with a budget of at least Php 30,000 (roughly \$600) to at most Php 200,00 (around \$4,000) intended for the indigent constituents and malnourished children. In this study, the provision of health services was one of the most common PPAs reflected in Barangay GPBs.
2. The Livelihood program included livelihood skills training/workshops and the provision of small capital, undertaken at least once by four barangays during 2014-2018, with a budget of at least Php 40,000 (\$800) to at most Php 106,000 (\$2,120) for indigent constituents and organized women.
3. The Sociocultural Program included activities such as Women's Day, Barangay Gender Equality Celebration, ERPAT's Training, ERPAT's Day, Women's Assembly, Sports, and cultural activities. Women's Desk Officer was also reflected under this program. The budget for each activity ranges from Php 10,000 (\$200) to Php 193,169.60 (\$3,800), intended for women constituents in 10 barangays between 2014 and 2018.
4. The Education Program included scholarship to deserving indigents, Alternative Learning System (ALS), acquisition of reading & other educational materials, TESDA scholarship, and exposure trips/study tour undertaken in some barangays between 2014- 2018. Each activity amounted to at least Php10,000 (\$200) and at most Php300 00 (\$600), intended for indigent men and women constituents. Only the exposure trip/study tour was for barangay officials.
5. Protective Services, such as the formation of Bantay Purok and the VAWC Desk, were classified as such. Between 2014 and 2018, five barangays had at least one of these services.

### The Intersection of Gender Equality and Local Development

In evaluating whether these Programs/Projects/Activities were gender- responsive, the study used the *Gender Responsive LGU (GeRL) ka ba? A Self-Assessment Manual* prepared by the Philippine Commission for Women (PCW, June 16, 2014). Overall, specific entries in the Barangay GAD Plan and Budgets were gender-responsive. The said manual identified gender-responsive programs and services that LGUs should have, such as health, sanitation, and nutrition services, as well as GAD-mandated facilities, such as day care centers, VAW centers, and economic services. Still from the said Manual (2014:30), a local government unit was assessed as gender responsive if it has the availability of the following health-related facilities/services, such as a day care center, access to safe potable water, a barangay health center, and a multi-purpose facility that can be accessed/used by women for recreation and other functions and activities.

Because of limited funds (5% of barangay funds), not all mandated facilities and services listed in the assessment manual could be provided and funded with GAD funds. However, the bigger barangay infrastructure projects, which were gender-responsive, such as the construction of the barangay health center, day care center, waterworks system, canal, drainage, flood control system, and street lighting program, were found to be included in the Barangay Development Plans (Mendoza et al., 2017) of the same barangays in this article.

Aside from the clearly identified gender-responsive PPAs, Gerl Ka Ba also includes women's access to and use of information. The different barangays have provided women constituents with access to and use of information through the barangay assemblies, which are usually held twice a year. Through various women's organizations, women constituents in a barangay receive ample information about the barangay's activities and those of the barangay women's organizations. In addition, the barangay halls have bulletin boards where important information is posted from time to time. Women are thus not isolated from barangay events and activities because of easy access to information.

One clear manifestation of gender responsiveness in an LGU is its delivery of the mandated basic services and facilities to its constituents, with particular attention to the needs of women. Responses to practical gender needs pertain to those that improve women's living conditions and address their resource constraints. LGUs

should provide means for women to have greater access to resources and an equal say in decision-making. Services that would include those aimed at reducing the incidence of exploitation and violence against women, backed by programs that make women more economically independent (PPGRD 1995-2025).

Aside from the guidelines in the assessment manual, the project beneficiaries themselves provided positive assessments of how the livelihood projects affected them. From the interview findings, economic themes emerged across the 15 barangays, including increased income, employment, livelihoods, and economic activity. These women beneficiaries acknowledged that the livelihood projects in their barangays had provided them with economic benefits that helped them contribute to their family income. Capability building, specifically the development of livelihood skills, also emerged as a theme in the interview results from the 10 barangays. Through GAD projects, livelihood training was provided to women beneficiaries, enabling them to pursue economic endeavors. Because of the economic advantages and capacity-building impacts of GAD projects, women beneficiaries in nine barangays felt empowered by their economic contributions to the family and recognized their self-worth through their involvement in community development processes.

In another gender study in other parts of the Philippines, Francisco, (2011) findings showed that indeed ordinary women's groups at the local level were benefiting from the allocation of funds in support of GAD activities, specifically by: (1) providing small loans for women's livelihood projects; (2) conducting education workshops on women's human rights and gender issues; (3) establishing local women's centers that respond to issues of women's health and violence against women, including abuse in intimate and family relations; (4) formulating integrated women's development/GAD programs and continuing GAD advocacy at various levels; and (5) strengthening citizenship actions by local women's organizations. Government agencies, for their part, highlighted the value of the GAD Budget by increasing their staff capacity to mainstream gender into plans and programs.

## CONCLUSION

All 15 barangays had complied with the GAD-mandated basic structures, such as the VAWC Desk and the Committee on Women and Children. Most barangays had complied with the GAD 5% budget and the required annual GAD Plan & Budget between 2014 - 2018, as covered by this study. Project beneficiaries felt they had contributed to the family income and community development.

Available GAD Plans and Budgets (GPBs) were found to include gender-responsive programs, projects, and activities, as outlined in the PCW manual. However, due to the insufficient GAD budget, PPAs mainly were focused on short-term, if not one-time, activities such as seminars and the observance of Women's Day. These short-term services and activities in their Barangay GPBs, however, were supplemented with medium-term infrastructures, services, and facilities reflected in their Barangay Development Investment Plans (see Mendoza et al, 2018). Women's involvement and participation in the making of GPBs was through the representation of the Chairperson of the Committee on Women and Children in consultation with the Federation President of Women's Organization. All these endeavors were attempts toward gender mainstreaming in barangay governance. Overall, the study found that while GAD national mandates had cascaded down to the barangay level, the full implementation of these ordinances remained lacking. Insufficient budgets for sustained development projects and a lack of project monitoring and evaluation were among the reported challenges to gender mainstreaming in barangay governance.

The 5% GAD budget was indeed found lacking for sustainable development projects at the barangay. The sample barangays had not complied 100% with the setting aside of the 5% GAD Budget. Cognizant of the limitations imposed by setting a 5% ceiling on gender-limited budgets, the move to examine how the remaining 95% of the budget is spent is recommended. The barangay's medium-term, five-year development plan included infrastructure projects with larger budgets over the next five years; these should be studied to determine whether gender mainstreaming is incorporated.

Although there was high compliance with GPB preparation and submission, the sample barangays did not reach 100% compliance. Some reasons for the non-compliant barangays included a lack of barangay funds and the city government's failure to compel them to submit the necessary documents. This study noted the absence of



penalties for non-compliance with GAD's 5% budget and for failure to prepare the GAD Plan, Budget, and Accomplishment Report. In a review of gender budgeting in Asia, Chakraborty (2001) reported that in the Philippines, there was no penalty for failing to fully and efficiently utilize the GAD budget. Illo (2010), in reviewing the Budget Policy in the Philippines, also made the same observation. Thus, this study recommended a review of GAD legal mandates to include penalty clauses. In addition, rewards and incentives for compliance could also be included in the revised GAD mandates.

Continuous skills training programs in budgeting, etc, etc, planning, and implementation were recommended for barangay officials and women's organizations. Of crucial importance to the success of gender programs, projects, and activities was the systematized, periodic monitoring and evaluation, which were lacking in the sample barangays.

Because the barangay council was composed of elected officials with term limits, changes in barangay officers also affected GAD personnel, thereby disrupting the continuity of GAD programs. It was recommended that barangay staff assigned to GAD should have job tenure and that GPB should be sustained.

It was further recommended to conduct a similar GAD study in other barangays in the city of Iligan and/or in other cities and/or municipalities, which may be comparative and longitudinal in nature, and the use of the 5-year Barangay Development Plan. This would determine the sustainability of GAD projects and their lasting impacts on the beneficiaries and local communities.

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