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DENR GAD AGENDA AND STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2022-2027

DENR GAD Strategic Mandate

The Gender and Development (GAD) program of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) subscribes to and actively carries out its mandate according to at least three development plans: The Philippine Development Plan (2017-2022), the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (1995-2025), and Agenda 2030 of the United Nations.

As a program of DENR, GAD contributes to the implementation of DENR's overall mandate, mission and development goals (see box). Apart from this, the Philippine Development Plan (2017-2022) mandates DENR to lead in ensuring the ecological integrity and a clean and healthy environment for Filipinos, and to work towards improvements in the socio-economic conditions of resource-based communities.

Box 1: DENR'S Mandate, Vision, Mission and Goal

Mandate

The Department is the primary agency responsible for the conservation, management, development, and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources, specifically forest and grazing lands, mineral resources, including those in reservation and watershed areas, and lands of the public domain, as well as the licensing and regulation of all natural resources as may be provided for by law in order to ensure equitable sharing of the benefits derived therefrom for the welfare of the present and future generations of Filipinos.

To accomplish this mandate, the Department shall be guided by the following objectives:

1. Assure the availability and sustainability of the country's natural resources through judicious use and systematic restoration or replacement whenever possible;
2. Increase the productivity of natural resources in order to meet the demands for forest, mineral, and land resources of a growing population;
3. Enhance the contribution of natural resources for achieving national economic and social development;
4. Promote equitable access to natural resources by the different sectors of the population; and
5. Conserve specific terrestrial and marine areas representative of the Philippine natural and cultural heritage for present and future generations.

Vision

A nation enjoying and sustaining its natural resources and a clean and healthy environment

Mission

To mobilize our citizenry in protecting, conserving, and managing the environment and natural resources for the present and future generations

Development goal

Human well being, and environmental quality and sustainability ensured

In accordance also with the Philippine Plan for Gender-responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025, DENR's GAD program seeks to ensure "full participation of women in the promotion of sustainable development and that women equally enjoy and benefit from the fruits of ENR development and management."

Lastly, the Philippines being a signatory of the United Nation's Agenda 2030, the GAD program of DENR also works to realize the country's international commitments through contributing to the attainment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2030, most especially SDG 5 which calls for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. The GAD program of DENR sees SDG 5 as cutting across all other SDGs and has the potential to help accelerate progress in multiple sustainable development goals.

In all these pursuits, the DENR GAD program for 2022-2027 goes beyond the strategy of mainstreaming gender in DENR policies and programs. It also seeks to integrate understanding of and solutions to the emergent and urgent concerns of climate change, and health and disaster risks and hazards that are now besetting the country, in DENR's policies and programs including in GAD programming.

DENR GAD Agenda: Framework (2022-2027)

Anchored in the Department's Mandate, Vision, Mission, the DENR adopted the GAD Agenda 2022-2027 Framework that subscribed to the following legal bases:

- A. PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2012-01 – Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual GAD Plans and Budgets and Accomplishment Reports to Implement the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710)
- B. Section 36 Chapter VI. RA No. 9710 – The Commission on Audit (COA) shall conduct an annual audit on the use of the GAD budget for the purpose of determining its judicious use and the efficiency, and effectiveness of interventions in addressing gender issues, plans and policies on women empowerment, gender equality, and GAD
- C. RA 9710 otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Women – a comprehensive women's human rights laws signed on August 14, 2009. It is the Philippines' translation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

- D. Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025 – a 30-year plan that lays out development goals as well as strategies that will make gender equity essential in public policies and programs, published in 1998.
- E. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA+25) – considered as the major blue print for gender equality and empowerment of women. It was agreed during the 4th World Conference on Women in 1995
- F. Section 14, Article II, 1987 Constitution – The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men
- G. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women – an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. Described as an international bill of rights for women, instituted on 03 September 1981. It was ratified by 189 states, including the Philippines as one of the signatories of this treaty.

Additionally, the DENR GAD Agenda is framed by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Gender and National Development Plans.

A. Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is a call to all countries to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. The Philippines is signatory to these goals embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The DENR directly ascribes to the following:

1. SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. It also aims to address the need for women's full and effective participation, equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making, as well as the need for equitable access to, ownership and control over land and natural resources.
2. Action in one SDG area will affect outcomes in others. Achieving SDG 5 or gender equality cuts across all SDGs and is critical to achieving a wide range of objectives that will advance sustainable development. This includes promoting economic growth and reducing poverty (SDG 8 and SDG 1 respectively), enhancing human capital through health and education (SDG 3, and SDG 4), attaining food security (SDG 2), addressing climate change impacts and strengthening resilience to disasters (SDG 13), and ensuring more peaceful and inclusive communities (SDG 16).
3. The SDGs on the environment and natural resource sector are SDG 14, SDG 15 and SDG 6.
4. SDG 14 calls for conserving and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources, including protecting marine biodiversity as essential global resources that make Earth habitable. It seeks to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution and to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, and taking action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.
5. SDG 15 aims to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and sustainably manage forests, wetlands, mountains and dry lands. This SDG includes protecting about a million plant and animal species threatened with extinction, combating desertification, and stopping and reversing land degradation and biodiversity loss.

6. SDG 6 seeks to ensure the availability of water and sanitation for all, including sustainable management of water resources. It targets access to adequate sanitation and hygiene for all, paying special attention to the needs of girls and women, and people in vulnerable situations.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls cuts across the SDGs' on the environment and natural resources. Research evidence shows that "women play a pivotal role in natural resource management, and their increased participation leads to improvements in local natural resource governance, conservation efforts and more sustainable livelihoods." In the case of forestry, for example, women's participation has been shown to decrease levels of deforestation, increase probability of forest regeneration, more equitable sharing of benefits and generally improved forest sustainability.

B. Gender and National Development Plans

1. The Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 states in Chapter 20 that the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) sector plays a critical role in the country's development. The Strategic Framework of PDP calls for ensuring the ecological integrity and a clean and healthy environment as a foundation for supporting the three main pillars of the national plan, namely enhancing the social fabric, reducing inequality and increasing potential growth. Towards this strategy, the key outcome to deliver is ensuring the ecological integrity and improving the socio-economic conditions of resource-based communities.
2. The Philippine Plan for Gender-responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025, the perspective framework to integrate gender in Philippine development plans, states as a goal that the ENR sector "shall be directed towards ensuring full participation of women in the promotion of sustainable development and that women equally enjoy and benefit from the fruits of ENR development and management."

Among the specific programs that PPGD prescribes are:

- 1) Explicit consideration of GAD in the development and implementation of forestry-related programs, and appropriate technology development and transfer program for women on forest utilization and development;
- 2) Promotion of biodiversity and sustainable management in environmental management, along with promotion of women's participation and leadership in solid waste and toxic waste management;
- 3) Information, education and training to minimize health hazards in small mining communities and
- 4) Ensuring equal access in the government's allocation and disposition of public lands.

SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS

A. Mainstreaming Climate Change and Disaster Risks in GAD Strategic and Annual Plans

The direct relationship between gender equality, women's empowerment and climate change, cannot be denied. On the one hand, women are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which could, in turn, exacerbate existing gender disparities. On the other hand, women have unique knowledge and skills that can help make the response to climate change more effective and sustainable. Climate change impacts men and women differently, given their different roles and responsibilities in the household and community levels. The following were gender impacts of climate change and disaster were underscored in the DENR GAD Agenda:

- a. Climate change can impact on women's productive roles since the physical impacts of global warming, rising sea levels, flooding in low lying areas and increased salt-water intrusion, can jeopardize sustainable livelihood strategies. Food security and family well-being are threatened when the resource base on which women rely to carry out their critical roles and obtain supplementary incomes is undermined.
- b. Natural hazards, particularly erosion and other forms of soil degradation, pollution of freshwaters, shoreline erosion, flooding, loss of wetlands, drought and desertification impact directly on women in their roles as providers of food, water and fuel.
- c. Natural disasters increase women's economic insecurity through loss of essential productive resources, such as land, gardens, equipment and animals. The loss of jewelry, utensils and other traditional forms of capital can be a severe economic setback for women in many areas. Women in informal sector work, such as street vending, child care and domestic work, or owners of small home-based businesses, may lose their jobs and have no means of securing compensation.
- d. Gender differences in access to and control over resources lead to differences in vulnerability, and capacity to respond and recover. This includes access to economic, political, community and internal resources, as well as time and information. Compared to men, women tend to have fewer resources to cope with climate shocks and stresses. For example, gender differences in access to vital information about climate patterns or extreme weather events can increase vulnerability to the health risks of natural disasters and famines.
- e. When women do not receive adequate information on hazards and risks and on the links of natural resource use to environmental sustainability to the same extent as men do, there is a risk that they can contribute directly and indirectly to environmental vulnerability. The particular roles, responsibilities and needs of women as well as men need to be considered as this may provide valuable information for developing early warning and information systems.
- f. Because of gender-specific constraints - low decision-making capacity, lack of assets (financial, physical, human, social) and socio-cultural norms on mobility, etc. - women may need additional support in order to be able to effectively act upon such information/warnings.
- g. It is important to understand the different impact of climate change and natural disasters on women and men – the losses and costs to both – and their potential for recovery after disasters.

To further guide the DENR in gender mainstreaming amidst of changing climate, the following goals were set:

- a. To ensure that women and men participate equally in decision-making with regards to policy and policy instruments aiming to improve the adaptive capacities of communities.
- b. To ensure that women and men participate equally in decision-making with regards to policy and policy instruments aiming to mitigate the risk of drastic climate change and destruction of ecosystems at all levels.
- c. To ensure that all policies and policy measures take into consideration the gender impact of climate change.

B. COVID-19 Outbreak: Health, Climate Change, Disaster Risks and Gender

The COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020 prompted the declaration of national public health emergency and state of calamity. Apart from the urgent measures to arrest the spread of the disease, the pandemic raised the need for the programs on ENR management to include the inter-relatedness of health, climate change and disaster risks, and gender concerns. The following are some of the interrelations emphasized as important factors to be considered in GAD planning:

1. In relation to the environmental determinants of health, it is critical to consider that climate change is already affecting the main environmental determinants of health i.e. safe water, clean air, adequate housing and sufficient food.
2. According to reports, the increasing frequency of disease outbreaks such as the COVID-19 pandemic is linked to climate change and biodiversity loss. Changing weather patterns may increase the geographical range and seasonality of certain vector-borne diseases.
3. Climate change will adversely impact the health of most populations over the next decades, but different populations will be impacted in different ways. Many of the health risks that are likely to be affected by ongoing climate change show differences in their impact on women and men.
4. Reducing gender-based vulnerabilities and building the adaptive capacity of women and men to the impacts of climate change is critical to reducing the adverse impacts of climate change on human health.
5. Reproductive health issues can particularly increase women's vulnerability when coping with climate variability. These issues include special sanitation needs during menstruation and after giving birth, constrained mobility during pregnancy, and higher nutritional needs during pregnancy and lactation. These biological factors may lead to different health risks for women and men in the face of food shortages caused by drought, displacement and other disruptions arising from climate change.
6. Another example of the influence of biological differences on the health impacts of climate change is the potential effect of saline contamination on the incidence of pregnancy-related complications. Climate change is expected to result in sea-level rises and consequently saline contamination.
7. Gender relations influence men and women's vulnerability to, and the impact of, climate change. Lack of decision-making power among women in some societies increases their risk of morbidity and mortality during and after natural disasters.
8. Differences in biology, sociocultural norms, roles, and relations, as well as access to and control over resources can each influence vulnerability to the health risks, and to the long-term health outcomes and social impact of climate variability and change.

9. Programs must be developed on the basis of a greater understanding of the gender specific needs in emergency situations - because of differential impacts of disasters - in relation to health, education, shelter, food supplies, water and sanitation, energy and other basic supplies, as well as employment and income- generating opportunities.

THE DENR GAD STRATEGIC PLAN (2022-2027)

DENR GAD VISION: A gender-responsive DENR championing equal enjoyment of the nation's environment and natural resources of all Filipinos, protecting the country's ecological integrity, and contributing to national resiliency and global competitiveness through partnership of women and men in the sustainable management of the country's environment and natural resources

DENR GAD MISSION: Women and men are mobilized in protecting, conserving and managing the environment and natural resources for the present and future generations, and in meeting the challenges of climate change, health emergencies and disasters

CLIENT-ORIENTED GOALS

1. Meaningful participation of women in consultation processes, in community organizations and in decision-making bodies towards the sustainable management of the country's environment and natural resources;
2. Ensured equal access of women and men to environment and natural resource goods and services; and
3. Enhanced resiliency of women and men in natural resource-based communities

ORGANIZATION-ORIENTED GOALS

4. Enhanced gender mainstreaming in policies, plans and programs; and
5. Institutionalized GAD mechanisms, including GAD knowledge management systems in DENR services, bureaus, attached agencies, and regional offices that can serve as a model for other organizations

KEY GENDER ISSUES¹

1. Limited participation of women in the sustainable management of the environment and natural resources
2. Women have less access to natural resources and its benefits
3. Greater vulnerability of women in ENR communities to climate change-related, and natural disaster and health risks and hazards
4. Limited participation of women in decision-making on adaptation and mitigation policies and measures

¹ Document sources of gender analysis: "Environment and Natural Resource Management," Chapter 13, PPGD 1995-2025; "Beyond Gender Mainstreaming: Linking Environment and Natural Resources, Climate Change, Health and Gender," DENR, 2021. Issues 1-3 were identified in the Strategic Planning process commenced in 2019 while 4th was identified in the stated second document produced in 2020 to 2021.