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## Advancing Gender Equity in Development Plan Preparation in Laguna, Philippines

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### Abstract

Women and men play crucial roles as catalysts for change in economic, social, and political spheres in development through participation in plan preparation. The study assessed the gender responsiveness and women representation of Laguna's development plans through document analysis and use of the Harmonized Gender and Development (GAD) Guideline checklist for development planning. The four provincial planning documents evaluated have 'conditional passing' mark or promising gender and development prospects. Notable gender-related issues, objectives and strategies of the assessed plans were focused on social services affecting health, nutrition, and population management programs. Deciding bodies that endorse and adopt the plans reflected only 20.5 % women, far from having equal representation. It is recommended that the province's strategic role be strengthened in providing technical assistance in GAD mainstreaming for further capacitating its cities and municipalities. Moreover, a localized HGDG checklist reflecting the local plan structure to appropriately assess gender components is deemed necessary. Entry points to promote gender equity for the next planning cycle include addressing in-migration issues and climate change impacts, gender analysis in the manufacturing economy and sustaining demands for better social and infrastructure services.

**Keywords:** gender-responsive; development planning; women representation.

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## **1. Introduction**

Development encompasses all sectors and entails management of resources in the natural and built environments. The perspective on an integrated and holistic development planning provides a better view of development for all - women, men, elderly and the young ones. Women and men play crucial roles as catalysts for change in economic, social, and political spheres in development through participation in plan preparation. Thus, local development plans must be able to reflect regional and national development priorities that would benefit the general welfare of the people and community.

Philippine policies on gender and development (GAD) mainstreaming are advanced compared to its developing nation counterparts. Laws, institutions and strategies from the national and local levels are in place and GAD budget allocations are mandatory. The document "Mainstreaming of Gender into Development Planning" formulated by the Philippine Commission of Women (PCW) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) with support in implementation by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) on localizing the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act 9710) by PCW-DILG-NEDA and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) [1] manifest their strength as policies in the national level, but these must be visible up to local level GAD awareness and sensitivity through the presence of gender responsive development plans.

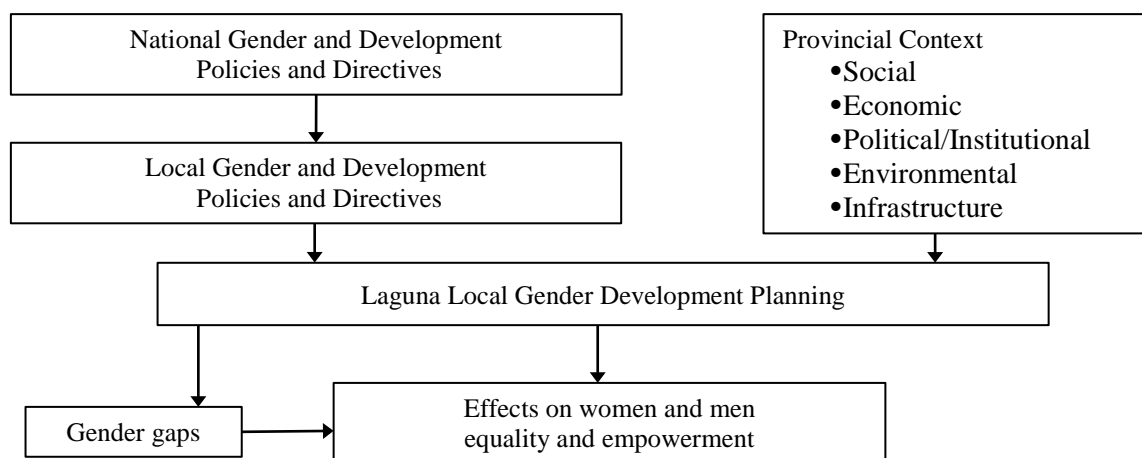
Gender responsive development plans "address gender issues identified through an assessment of gender impacts of previous policies or strategies, gender dimensions of challenges, and gender analysis of the current situation... (and) have explicit gender and equality and women's empowerment outcomes and outputs, and have programs that are designed to produce the target result" [2].

The urgency to localize the Magna Carta of Women under JMC 2013-01 [1] stipulates that "mainstreaming gender perspectives in local plans shall consider the planning structure, the multi-sectoral development and land use plans, the planning process, the local development investment plan (LDIP), and the budget." Thus, the joint guideline necessitates assessing the gender responsiveness of a locality's vision, sectoral plans and investment programs through gender analysis with data and information relevant to formulate gender responsive plans and programs, projects and activities (PPAs). These should be monitored and evaluated based on their gender components and be reflected in GAD plan and budget (GPB) and LDIP. Moreover, it emphasized the responsibility of the local government units (LGU) to ensure integration of the GAD Code provisions in the local development plans. The GAD code supports the LGUs' effort in advancing, protecting and fulfilling women's rights, economic empowerment and gender responsive governance as per RA 9710.

The rapidly urbanizing province of Laguna is located 30 kilometers south of the Metro Manila. It is part of Calabarzon region with six cities and 39 municipalities. Women constitutes about 50.4 % of the 2010 population while total population grew at 2.5 % from 2010 to 2015, reaching over 3.0 million [3]. Though land use is largely agriculture, its cities serve as locations of about 5.0 percent of the Philippine industrial and economic zones [4]. In July 2014, the province, through the Provincial Executive Order (EO) No. 19, mobilized and reestablished its Provincial GAD Council (PGADC) as the designated provincial body to regulate and monitor

projects, programs and activities towards achieving gender sensitivity [5]. The EO spells out the multi-sectoral composition and functions of the GAD Council. The current composition of the PGADC, as amended by EO No. 3 in 2015 [6] to include the creation of a TWG and GAD Council Secretariat, has approximately a 60:40 female to male ratio. The council is chaired by the Provincial Governor and co-chaired by the SP Committee Chairperson on Family, Women and Social Services. It includes heads from the provincial attorney, budget, general services officer, health, human resource management, nutrition action center, planning and development office, population office, social welfare and development, tourism, special livelihood, education, interior and local government, trade and industry, Philippine National Police provincial women’s desk, women’s organization and persons with disabilities (PWDs) representatives among others. The council functions mainly in formulating, developing, implementing, coordinating and monitoring gender plans, programs and policies with proper consultation with various government and non-government sectors. The PGADC is attached under the auspices of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinating Office (PPDCO), wherein the latter acts as the Council secretariat. In the early 2000, before the creation and institutionalization of the current council, PPDCO served as the secretariat too and clearing house for gender related functions, preparation of GAD accomplishment reports and plan and budget. As of 2015, the province has crafted its provincial GAD Code while 12 of its cities and municipalities have their own local versions [7].

The aim of the paper is to assess the gender responsiveness and women representation in the local plan preparation of Laguna province. The specific objectives are: (1) to evaluate gender responsiveness of selected provincial plans using the Harmonized Gender and Development Guideline (HGDG) checklist for development planning; (2) to identify women representation among adopting and approving bodies in the plan preparation process; (3) to analyze gender gaps and bottlenecks in the provincial planning processes; and (4) to propose entry points in improving gender responsiveness of Laguna’s development plans. As shown in the conceptual framework of the study (Figure 1), the national gender and development policies and directives shape the local gender and development planning in the provinces, cities and municipalities through various laws, memorandum circulars, strategic frameworks and plans.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework of the study

Source: Author's construct

The implementation of these policies in the province are affected by the context in the local level in terms of the social, economic, political, environmental and infrastructural advances. Gender gaps or issues are those gender-linked policies, systems, conditions and beliefs that obstruct the attainment of an individual's full life satisfaction. These gaps and issues were gathered from the province's development plans and survey. Through the study, gender responsiveness of the development plan and gender gaps were identified and examined how they affect gender equality and empowerment of women and men.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

The assessment of the gender responsiveness of the plans was conducted through an in-depth document analysis of four provincial development plans using the Harmonized GAD Guideline (HGDG) checklist for development planning and supplemented by survey among selected GAD focal point system (GFPS).

Four plan documents in the province were selected reflecting their differences in terms of function (sectoral, spatial, legislative, investment) and duration (short- and long-term). These were the Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) 2011-2020, Provincial Development Plan (PDP) 2014-2016, Executive Legislative Agenda (ELA) 2014-2016, and Annual Investment Plan (AIP) 2015 [8, 9, 10, 11]. The study is limited in assessing the provincial plans and not individual city and municipal level plans.

PDPFP is a development plan that addresses the disconnect between the spatial and sectoral concerns. Spanning from six to ten years, it consists of policies and sectoral goals, objectives, and PPAs. It also serves as a link to the national and regional plans and policies to the city and municipal plans. Laguna's PDP is still being prepared as the provincial counterpart of the comprehensive development plan within the governor's three-year term. It includes multi-sectoral goals, policies, strategies and PPAs. ELA coincides with the three-year term of the local chief executive that includes the major development thrusts and prioritized PPAs in the executive and legislative departments with technical support and inputs from the local development council, sectoral and functional committees. The AIP is the one-year slice of the LDIP which stems from the PDPFP. This is the annual basis for budgetary allocations for PPAs including capital expenditures and regular operating requirements of the locality.

The HGDG checklist is an instrument to mainstream gender perspectives in development programs and projects among various government, non-government and foreign organizations to achieve the objectives of gender equality and women empowerment [1]. It is prepared by NEDA, PCW and Office of Development Assistance Gender and Development Network which is aimed at improving effectiveness of national and local development guidelines. The HGDG checklist for development planning, consisting of 30 questions, examines six elements of a gender-responsive plan covering the preparation process and content as follows: Element 1: women and men participation in plan preparation; Element 2: analysis of the previous planning period's performance and challenges and its impact to men and women; Element 3: GAD statements specified on plan goals/objectives focused on gender equality and empowerment of women; Element 4: policies, programs, projects and activities identified to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women; Element 5: analysis of gender policies, strategies and activities in the plan; and Element 6: result matrix of indicators, targets and sex-disaggregated data. Upon evaluation, scores are totaled and interpreted as shown in Table 1. The goal of development plans is

to achieve a score of 15.0 or better to be said as gender responsive. Thorough analysis of the four planning documents was done to identify each degree of gender responsiveness and compliance with the six elements and their subcomponents.

**Table 1:** GAD Score Interpretation

<b>Score</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
0.0 to 3.9	GAD is mostly invisible. Plan needs to be revised.
4.0 to 7.9	Plan has GAD promising prospects. Plan earns 'conditional pass.'
8.0 to 14.9	Plan is gender sensitive. Plan passes the GAD test.
15.0 to 20.0	Plan is gender responsive.

Meanwhile, women representation in the selected plan approving bodies such as the Provincial Development Council (PDC), the Sangguniang Panlalawigan or Provincial Council (SP) and Calabarzon Regional Land Use Committee (RLUC) were reviewed. However, the study was not able to consider other characteristics of the members of the bodies such as socio-economic status, education, and GAD awareness. Recurring and notable GAD development issues and bottlenecks from the four plans were culled out, analyzed and compared with the 2016 Laguna Provincial GAD Plan and Budget (GPB) and survey responses.

To probe further the local GAD and planning scenario in the province, key informant interviews and survey were conducted. The Laguna PPDCO staffs involved as technical working group members in development plan preparation were interviewed and consulted on the HGDG scoring and identification of provincial GAD issues. Through purposive sampling, survey was conducted among respondents from provincial offices, city and municipal GAD representatives. Respondents were mainly department heads and planning staff who are GAD focal in their respective units and offices but may not be directly involved in the plan preparation. A 50-question self-administered survey instrument was devised composed of two main parts: (1) the first part mirrors the six HGDG elements and; (2) the second part reflects the LGU's gender issues and concerns based on the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025 [12]. The questionnaire employed five-scale options with 1 as the lowest (meaning strongly disagree), and 5 the highest (i.e., strongly agree). Responses were averaged in each item and analyzed together with the document analysis and HGDG results. Relevant documents were also gathered and reviewed such as Laguna governor's executive orders, PDC minutes of the meetings and resolutions, Calabarzon Regional GAD Council and RLUC reports.

### **3. Results**

This section details the gender responsiveness of four development plans; representation of men-women in plan adopting bodies; identified provincial gender gaps and bottlenecks; and proposed GAD entry points of the development plans.

### 3.1. Gender responsiveness of Laguna development plans

The four Laguna planning documents subjected to the HGDG for development planning got an average of 5.8 or conditional pass. This means that the plans are neither gender sensitive nor responsive but with promising GAD prospects. Table 2 summarizes the GAD scores as well as high and low elements of the four plan documents.

**Table 2:** HGDG Rating of Assessed Planning Documents in Laguna, Philippines

Plan Document	PDPFP		PDP		ELA		AIP	
Overall Score	7.00		6.50		5.25		4.50	
Interpretation	Plan	has	Plan	has	Plan	has	Plan	has
	promising GAD prospects		promising GAD prospects		promising GAD prospects		promising GAD prospects	
High element(s)	1		1		1		1	
Lowest element(s)	6		6		3, 6		3, 4, 6	
Element 1: Participation of women and women's groups in the preparation of development plans (Maximum score: 2.0)	1.50		1.50		1.75		1.50	
Element 2: Gender analysis of past performance and of challenges and identification of key gender issues (Maximum score: 4.0)	1.25		1.50		0.75		1.00	
Element 3: Gender equality goals, outcomes, and outputs (Maximum score: 3.0)	1.50		1.00		0.50		0.50	
Element 4: Matching of strategies with gender equality and women's empowerment issues or goals (Maximum score: 3.0)	1.50		1.00		1.00		0.50	
Element 5: Gender analysis of the policies, strategies or activities in the draft plan documents (Maximum score: 4.0)	1.25		1.50		1.25		1.00	
Element 6: Results monitoring indicators and targets (Maximum score: 4.0)	0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	

PDPFP garnered the highest score at 7.0, while the AIP had the lowest score at 4.5. The long-termed plan's

detailed and analytical approach of the existing conditions to identify key development issues leads to identification of several gender-related issues, though focused mostly on social services sector such as health, nutrition, population management. It also considered the role of women and men in the manufacturing sector, in some cultural livelihood and tourism activities. This reflects how the traditional manufacturing sector, which is dominated by men, opens opportunities and expands areas for employment for women as well. The PDPFP also signified that maternal health is imperative towards achieving the overarching goal of better health for the whole of province. Such statement recognizes maternal health challenges should be addressed as necessary for the attainment of overall development in the province. It also registered the highest scores in Elements 3 and 4 which emphasize gender equality in its goals and outcomes and corresponding gender strategies.

On the other hand, the 2015 AIP, as a single-slice investment plan, has very limited opportunity to elaborate on the roles and issues of men and women. The programs of actions, though linked to the medium- and long-term plans, are composed of specific provincial agencies and offices activities for implementation. Gender specific programs are included in the: (1) budget for women's month celebration under the administrative support services, (2) maternal and child care program, (3) children and women, home for women and children, family protection, early childhood development program and day care worker program which specified an output of intensified awareness on gender issues, and (4) provincial GAD budget advocacy for women and senior citizen programs. The last program has indicated a target to achieve 30.0 % increased awareness in gender issue and 95.0 % implementation of women and senior citizens programs. Budgets on social welfare and services development program; health, nutrition and population control are indicative of the focus on women's reproductive role, not much on the economic role of women. As the AIP's nature does not provide extensive gender data, it was evident that low scores in Elements 2 to 5 were obtained.

The PDP and ELA resulted to 6.5 and 5.25 scores, respectively. Both were able to imply that the vision and overarching goals of Laguna's development are for the whole citizenry including women and men. Both lack sex-disaggregated data across all the sectors of the plan except in population and educational attainments of men and women. Similar to the broader-termed PDPFP, the gender-related issues, policy outputs and strategies are linked generally to the social sector and provision of support to women's role in the family. ELA's distinct bias on implementing family method program targets 17 times more for women than men. The goal in implementing family program in danger zones aimed at ligating at least 1,040 women and sterilizing 60 men through free tubal ligation and vasectomy programs.

All of the assessed plans had high scores on Element 1 - women and women's groups participation in plan preparation while very low scores in Element 3 - gender equality goals, outcomes and outputs and Element 6 - result monitoring indicators and targets. Securing active involvement of women and women groups representing their interests is vital in the organization phase of plan preparation. However, it is evident that the province was not able to sustain the women participation and input towards a more comprehensive gender analysis (Element 2) in the plan preparation process.

There were no sex-disaggregated data presented except for the male-female population ratio and literacy rates in the AIP, ELA and PDP, and overseas Filipino workers in the PDPFP. Sex-disaggregated data are basic in gender

analysis of the status, needs, capabilities roles and responsibilities of men and women in the society. Having such understanding may contribute to a better view of the differential and potential impacts, constraints and opportunities towards gender equality and women empowerment. A high score in Element 2 could be translated to better gender equality goals and policies in the succeeding elements. The PPDCO relates that the inadequacy of sex-disaggregated data for provincial, city, and municipal level is an issue across the country. The nationwide difficulty poses concerns especially if there is no LGU-wide database system and sufficient resources to collect sex-disaggregated data among all its constituents across many sectors.

The goals, outputs, and strategies of the four plans as reflected in Elements 3, 4 and 5 were able to include specific policies for women, and some for men in general. However, these inclusions were usually clustered in the social protection, nutrition, health and population programs. The programs and strategies were linked to the reproductive functions of women (such as pregnancy, giving birth, child rearing, providing food and nutrition, cancer diseases) and their vulnerability to abuse, violence and exploitation. Though the PDPFP's economic chapter acknowledged that "both men and women are engaged in manufacturing activities," skills development is limited to small-scale livelihood opportunities. Specific opportunities for men and women to pursue non-traditional jobs as well as understanding of differences on how they are differently affected by employment, disaster, environmental and land use changes were not appropriately emphasized and addressed in the plans. A gender-responsive plan opens wider opportunities for non-traditional jobs for men and women which may "breakdown existing occupational segregation, thereby fulfilling the strategic gender need to abolish the sexual division of labor" [13].

Element 6 was not evident in all the plans as current local plans do not carry a detailed results matrix monitoring. NEDA, the lead agency in crafting the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, had included results matrices (RMs) as plan's accompanying document to enable performance measurement and management for development results [14]. The RMs include overall and sectoral objectives and results linked to the current administration's policy guided with indicators, baseline data, end-of-Plan targets and concerned agencies to implement and monitor. Philippine national and regional development plans had included RMs but are not evident in the sub-regional, provincial and local levels. Though most local plans have implementation monitoring mechanisms (i.e., year-end accomplishment report, monitoring and assessment tools such as the Local Governance Performance Management System), the limitation of not having a sex-disaggregated baseline data for measuring gender gap is a felt challenge.

The HGDG scores of all the assessed plans were averaged and compared to the average survey results (Table 3). The survey showed that Elements 5 and 1 obtained the highest average scores, 3.96 and 3.90, respectively, confirming the results of the HGDG assessment of the four plans. Respondents had acknowledged that policies noted in the plans were expected to provide greater opportunities for women and men to have higher quality jobs and reducing women and youth's vulnerabilities. The survey also confirmed that women and women groups are generally consulted and had participated in plan formulation activities. Further, Elements 3 and 4, averaging at 3.89 and 3.87, respectively, mean that respondents acknowledged the gender-responsive goals, programs and activities focused in providing proper and adequate maternal and child care services as well as economic and protective programs for disadvantaged women and youth.



Meanwhile, differences in survey and HGDG results were observed with Elements 2 and 6. The respondents had perceived that there is presence of GAD indicators for monitoring in the plans (Element 6), with 3.86 average, but objectively verifiable targets and indicators to measure changes in gender gap reduction were lacking and not fully documented and integrated in the assessed plans. Though Element 2 has high HGDG score, survey showed that it has lowest score suggesting that sex-disaggregated database for wide use in the province and its various offices is yet to be established. Moreover, GAD database is very important in establishing a verifiable target to monitor plan results in Element 6.

**Table 3:** Comparison of HGDG Results and Average Survey Responses per Element

<b>Element</b>	<b>Average HGDG Scores</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Average Survey Responses</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1	1.56	1	3.90	2
2	1.13	3	3.80	6
3	0.88	5	3.87	4
4	1.00	4	3.89	3
5	1.25	2	3.96	1
6	0.00	6	3.86	5

### **3.2. Women representation in plan approving bodies**

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls targets the need to "ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making." Moreover, it was reasoned that the women in decision-making bodies play critical role in ensuring that women's day-to-day activities are prioritized and given due importance [15]. Examining the women representation of the PDC, SP and RLUC in plan preparation considered the body's membership when the plans were endorsed and adopted. They are composed of elected officials, those occupying executive and managerial positions, and representatives from the academe, non-government organizations and people's organizations ((NGOs/POs).

The role of the Provincial Development Council is to assist the governor in crafting a comprehensive multi-sectoral development plan for Provincial Council (SP) approval. Therefore, its capacity to influence local development plans is very crucial as all plans undergo the council's scrutiny. It is headed by the provincial governor and composed of congressional representatives, city and municipal mayors, and representatives of 12 NGOs/POs with PPDCO as the technical secretariat. Two in every 10 members of the PDC for 2013-2016 were women (Table 4). It should also be noted that the approving PDC has only one woman representative from the 12 NGOs/POs. In addition, there is absence of women group in the PDC as compared to the number of fisher/farmer and transport groups - that are male-dominated. In June 2015, the PDC had approved the membership of the Provincial GAD Focal Person as one of its members to put forward the gender-related concerns in the province and its constituents. However, when the GFPS membership to the Council was

approved, plans had already been completed. It is expected that more active participation of the provincial GFPS on ensuring that gender issues with corresponding policies to address them will be included in the next planning cycle.

**Table 4:** Women Representation in Approving Bodies of Selected Plans in Laguna, Philippines, in percent

<b>Approving Bodies</b>	<b>PDPFP</b>	<b>PDP</b>	<b>ELA</b>	<b>AIP</b>
Provincial Development Council (PDC)	20%	20%	20%	20%
Regional Land Use Committee (RLUC)	37%	*	*	*
Provincial Council (SP)	18%	18%	18%	18%
Average	25%	19%	19%	19%

\* PDP, ELA and AIP do not undergo RLUC review and endorsement

One of the functions of the Calabarzon RLUC is to review and endorse the draft PDPFP prior to SP approval. It is composed of regional line agencies heads, academe, provincial planning and development coordinators, and heads of the league of local planners. Moreover, it provides technical assistance to the provincial planners specifically the PDPFP technical working group. On the 2013-2016 RLUC membership, women representation was at 37.0 %.

The SP adopts and enacts ordinances, approves resolutions, and appropriate funds for the general welfare of the province and its constituents. It is the final body that adopts the draft plans. The SP is composed of 12 elected board members and 1 ex-officio/presiding member. Only two of the 13 members (18.0 %) are women.

On the average, only 20.5 % are female members of the three plan approving bodies. Highest female representation was reflected in the RLUC, given the broader range of members across different government levels. The PDP, ELA and AIP, approved by the PDC and SP, had an average of 19.0 % women in the approving bodies. The PDC and SP are mainly elected officials - majority of whom are men. Meanwhile the PDPFP, being endorsed by the PDC to RLUC's technical review and subsequently endorsed by the regional body for SP approval, had the highest women representation of 1 in 4 males. The composition of women representing decision-making bodies is among the handy yet hasty indicators in gender equality. The overall female representation in provincial decision-making bodies is below the critical mass of 30.0 % and way below the gender-equality ratio (i.e., 50:50).

Based on the survey results, the respondents acknowledged that local legislation on GAD and women representation in management positions (department heads of local offices) were growing in the province. GAD awareness consciousness, support and commitment of local chief executives, top level officials, program managers, planners and social service agents were also evident and perceived to be improving. The different levels of GAD implementation in the province pointed to an evident GAD consciousness, capacities and

protection of women welfare. Women's representation usually considers them as members of the sex without considering differences in terms of socio-economic characteristics. One of the limitations of the men to women ratio is that the socio-economic characteristics of the members of bodies are not reflected. Moreover, men who are women rights and GAD advocates in the assessed bodies were not scrutinized. More women represented in political spheres are not enough as women represent a diversity of economic and socio-cultural status, education and ethnicity among others. Bari [16] emphasized that enabling mechanisms and environment are necessary to address gender gap in politics.

### **3.3. Gender gaps and bottlenecks**

The 2016 GPB had identified the client- and organization-focused gender issues that had to be addressed by the province with corresponding proposed PPAs and budget requirement. Client-focused issues include challenges felt by the constituents in the sectors of health, education and awareness, security and protection, economic development, environment, and infrastructure sectors. Notable gender bottlenecks in the province were high incidence of malnutrition, low participation of prisoners on literacy programs, growing cases of abuses and violence, and limited gender responsive infrastructure projects. Moreover, the 2016 GPB did not focus on women, men and children alone, but also on sectors of the society needing dire attention such as clients in the crisis center, indigents, prisoners and PWDs. Meanwhile, the organization-focused gender issues were categorized among the health and social service providers, cooperative and livelihood provision, local GFPS, GAD policies and data needs and career development. It was observed that the social service (including health and population management) and economic sectors identified the urgency to provide gender-sensitive programs and services to men and women. Moreover, the state of GAD implementation and integration in the province, cities and municipalities need to be escalated and sustained with various training needs on GAD policies, use of gender-related disaggregated data, and formulation and enhancing of GAD codes.

Below are the GAD issues that were notable in Laguna's development plans and GPB. Generally, they included women's reproductive role as wives and mothers and vulnerability to various abuses. Human trafficking and gender responsive services for the youth were also emerging issues. The PDP also surfaced the emerging social issue on extramarital relations among spouse left behind, migrant or both parties.

*Need to improve maternal and childcare services.* The need to escalate services for better maternal health care such as low pre- and postpartum diagnostics, undernourished mothers with low nutrient supplements and inadequate child/newborn care (low prenatal laboratory diagnostic, low percentage of newborn initiated to breastfeeding) were identified among the four plans and included in the 2016 GPB.

*Growing reproductive system diseases.* Three development plans had identified the increasing reproductive system-related and cancer incidences (breast and cervical) which were also included in the GPB. It was budgeted also under the AIP of the provincial population commission. But, there was no explicitly stated growing case for men's reproductive system diseases.

*Violence against women, human trafficking and youth development.* The GPB, PDPFP and PDP, which are

translated as programs under the AIP had identified women suffering from various forms of abuses - physically, sexually, neglect and abandonment; human trafficking and need for gender responsive services for adolescents and youth (i.e. high incidence of teenage pregnancy and motherhood, involvement in illegal drugs, and juvenile delinquency).

In terms of economic development, the GPB had identified the *need for adequate development programs and projects for women and men's opportunity for equal income and employment*. The development plans showed that its issues in employment and economy include low income for farmers and fishermen, while women and youth need venues for training for livelihood. There were no explicit gender-issues identified in the plan, and women's contribution to mainstream economy were not indicated (i.e., caring and unpaid family work). It was also determined that increased awareness of GAD issues is an important component in the plan as identified in the GPB.

Summarized in Table 5 are the top gender issues in Laguna province based on the survey conducted. The main issues in the survey results were similar to the gender challenges in the plans, specifically improvements in maternal and child care services, addressing violence against women and providing adequate economic opportunities for men and women.

**Table 5:** Survey Results of Top Gender Issues in Laguna, Philippines

<b>GAD Issue</b>	<b>Average</b>
Differences on employment opportunities among men and women	3.8
Weak collaboration linkages on GAD among government and NGOs	3.7
Need for sex-disaggregated data	3.6
Inadequate support services for nursing mothers/ employees with young children	3.6
Women organization toward resource mobilization on addressing GAD issues	3.5
Development of gender responsive, culture sensitive and non-discriminatory training programs	3.4
Forms of harassment and violence against women in workplaces	3.3
Inadequate training in non-traditional skills for women	3.3

The institutional and organizational gender issues resulted to inadequate collaboration linkages among the government and non-government institutions in uplifting men and women equality and opportunities; relatively low representation of women in organizing resource mobilization toward addressing GAD issues; the need to develop training programs that are gender responsive, culture sensitive and non-discriminatory; and the need to generate sex-disaggregated data. For the LGUs' clientele, the respondents identified the following gender issues on employment differences among men and women; the need for support services for nursing mothers and employees with young children; problems arising from harassment and forms of violence against women in the workplaces; and inadequacy of training in non-traditional skills for women.

The result of the HGDG evaluation and survey responses confirmed the need of the future local development plans to mainstream GAD. Aside from reflecting the gender issues and their corresponding objectives and strategies, prioritization of gender responsive PPAs should be reflected to the LDIP.

### ***3.4. Gender entry points of the plans***

The gender issues that the province face are vast which the GPB and the four provincial plans were not able to fully reflect women and men's needs as members of the productive, reproductive and community management. The gender bottlenecks reflected in the plans were focused on the reproductive role of women. The GPB and survey surfaced that women's position in decision-making bodies must be increased through various programs such as in health, education, and economic security and intervention on strengthening local GFPS capacities. Specific gender entry points in the sectors of Laguna's plan may be employed for future consideration include:

*On major development preference*, the PDPFP discussed the major sectoral concerns and goal of the province leading to its preferred 2020 development strategy of having a 'balanced and sustainable rural-urban economic growth' providing a safe and peaceful play for furthering productive employment and businesses [8]. The settlement, land use, and infrastructure issues should include or be supported by an analysis of the implication of the issues the province is facing for men and women farmers, urban dwellers, and tourism sites.

*On population and settlements*, one of the issues that the localities face is in-migration, or movement of people to the province primarily due to the availability of jobs. The influx of people, especially to the urbanizing cities and municipalities, poses constraints to deliver enough and quality social services such as health, education, and housing among others. There is a need to understand what are the effects and challenges of migration to women, men, children, elderly and other sectors of the society through careful gender analysis study.

*On climate change impacts*, the province has identified areas that are prone to flooding, erosion, volcanic hazards, ground shaking and earthquake-induced landslide. The vulnerability index should include women, children, senior citizens and PWDs. Inclusion of their needs and capacities to the disaster risk and vulnerability assessment, in line with the projected climate changes in 2020 and 2050, would provide better direction in provision of services and crafting climate-resilient strategies for its constituents.

*On the manufacturing economy*, a well crafted gender responsive employment pattern study, particularly in the emerging agricultural, industrial and services sectors, may provide the province an edge on pioneering policies that will not just provide gender-related data but also responsive to the needs of men and women.

*On transportation and infrastructure projects*, such as the Cavite-Laguna Expressway and future ones, necessitate studies that will look at the detrimental effects that as well as the beneficial effects of the project for women and men. Subsequent projects in this sector must employ HGDG checklist for infrastructure projects.

*On income and social services*, the province should consider the unpaid household and caring works as part of the analysis on the family income aside from having sex-disaggregated data for employment and workers providing health services.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The four planning documents in Laguna have promising GAD prospects as assessed using the HGDG checklist for development planning with an average score of 5.8. The PDPFP reflected the highest GAD-responsiveness score among the four plans at 7.00, while the AIP the lowest at 4.50. While, the PDP and ELA resulted to 6.5 and 5.25 scores, respectively. Element 1 or the women and women's groups participation in plan preparation obtained the highest score among the six elements, while Elements 3 (inclusion of gender equality goals, outcomes and outputs) and 6 (results monitoring indicators and targets) had the lowest scores. It showed that the development issues and the proposed strategies and PPAs to address them reflect the welfare approach to social policy which leaves existing sexual division of labor in status quo. The welfare approach, as a social development policy, assumes women's reproductive role and considers as beneficiaries than participants in the development process [13]. Among the strategies and PPAs identified in the plans adhering to this policy approach are the provision of nutrition and maternal services and promotion of family planning.

Women's representation in the development plans' endorsing and adopting bodies are considered low at about 20.5 % compared to the 50:50 equality ratio. The SP, PDC and RLUC have women representation at 18.0, 20.0, and 37.0 %, respectively. The PDPFP has the highest female representation in the approving process because it underwent three bodies before its adoption. The survey results firmed up that women in decision-making in the province is a challenge.

The proposed entry points to improve GAD responsiveness of the development plans were suggested for charting its future development strategy, addressing in-migration issues and climate change impacts, harnessing economical potential, and sustaining demands for better social and infrastructure services.

#### **5. Recommendations**

Addressing the gender gaps needs intervention not only in the social - usually corresponding to women's reproductive role - but also in the economic, infrastructure, and institutional sectors. These could translate to plans that carry out gender responsive outcomes, outputs and strategies bringing positive influence in promoting equity and empowerment of men and women in the locality thereby increasing women in policy and decision-making bodies.

Local Philippine planning guides had included all development principles and issues (i.e., ridge-to-reef management approach, green growth, cultural heritage, gender sensitivity, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, etc.) [17]. The national efforts of the PCW and development planning-related government institutions should be trickled down to the local level through various collaboration and technical assistance in GAD mainstreaming. The province's strategic role in the Philippine planning context, as emphasized by DILG [18] may be harnessed in investing in and training technically qualified GAD planning experts and personnel, especially in the PPDCO, who could eventually capacitate city and municipality counterparts. The creation of a provincial GAD planning resource pool can be an eventual step. This should also be coupled with adequate documentation and dissemination of successful local experiences to further promote gender equality in

development plan preparation with strong political support from the governor and its LGUs.

The HGDC checklist for development planning was crafted with the national development plan as a pattern. Its primary merit is on looking at all elements of plan development, however, its applicability to evaluate gender-responsiveness of sub-national and local development plans seemed to be in question. A checklist reflecting the local plan structure, particularly for three-year plans, deemed to be necessary to appropriately assess the gender components. Gender fair language should also be employed in the preparation of development plans.

Plan preparation immensely needs data that are sex-disaggregated. The difficulty for local planning offices to gather such must be addressed in the local and national levels. Efforts in the national statistical authorities are being done, and at the same time investment on local GAD database must be made. Sex-disaggregated data are primary for gender analysis which will improve identification of gender issues, analyze PPAs' gender responsiveness, and include baseline and targets for a localized results monitoring system.

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