



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Distr.: General
21 June 2023

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

Eighty-sixth session

9–27 October 2023

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of the Philippines to the list of issues and questions
in relation to its ninth periodic report***

[Date received: 22 December 2022]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Abbreviations

ACPC	Agricultural Credit Policy Council
ALS	Alternative Learning System
ANYO	Agri- <i>Negosyo</i> (Agricultural Business) Loan Program
APCP	Agrarian Production Credit Program
ATTF	Anti-Trafficking Task Force
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BDC	Barangay Development Council
BEDP	Basic Education Development Plan
BEmONC	Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care
BWC	Bangsamoro Women Commission
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CREATE	Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises
CREDe	Child Rights in Education Desk
CSE-ARH	Comprehensive Sexuality Education-Adolescent Reproductive Health
DA	Department of Agriculture
DepEd	Department of Education
DILEEP	DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Programs
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DMW	Department of Migrant Workers
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DST	Disability Sensitivity Trainings
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EEP	Emergency Employment Program
EML	Expanded Maternity Leave

FIST	Financial Institutions Strategic Transfer
FSL	Filipino Sign Language
FP	Family Planning
GAD	Gender and Development
GeSIS	Gender Sensitivity and Inclusivity Seminars
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GMEF	Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework
IACAT	Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking
IACVAWC	Inter-Agency Council on Violence against Women and their Children
KAYA	Kapital Access for Young Agripreneurs
LMS	Last Mile School
MCW	Magna Carta of Women
NCDA	National Council on Disability Affairs
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NHA	National Housing Authority
NIPAS	National Integrated Protected Areas System
NPS	National Prosecution Service
PAO	Public Attorney's Office
PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
PHRCS	Presidential Human Rights Committee Secretariat
PICACC	Philippine Internet Crimes against Children Center
PNP	Philippine National Police
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
RPRH	Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law
SAP	Social Amelioration Program
SC	Supreme Court
SSA	Safe Spaces Act

TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TUPAD	Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced
TVET	Technical-Vocational Education Training
UDHA	Urban Development Housing Act
UKNCA	United Kingdom National Crime Agency
WCPC	Women and Children Protection Center
WCPD	Women and Children Protection Desks
WCPU	Women and Children Protection Units
WIA	Women in Agriculture Project
WPLA	Women's Priority Legislative Agenda

I. Replies to the list of issues and questions

A. Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations

1. The Convention and its Optional Protocol (OP) are disseminated through capacity-building activities discussing international commitments and legal mandates as frameworks for women's human rights, gender equality, and empowerment of women and girls, such as the Supreme Court (SC)'s seminars and trainings on women and child rights and on trafficking in persons (TIP), which respectively benefitted 1,025 and 153 judges, court personnel, social workers, and law enforcement authorities in 2017–2021.

2. Aside from incorporation in Philippine Judicial Academy programs (e.g., Orientation-Seminar for Newly-Appointed Judges), the Convention is also highlighted in the Department of Justice's (DOJ) trainings for public attorneys and prosecutors alongside gender sensitivity, domestic legislation on women and children, procedures vis-a-vis children and trauma victims, and cases of women in conflict with the law. To date, the State has trained 140 prosecutors nationwide.

3. The Magna Carta of Women (MCW) or the State's translation of the CEDAW has been translated into the Philippines' major languages and has likewise been disseminated through popular media. The State's Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) dedicates a webpage to CEDAW, its OP, and OP-CEDAW jurisprudence. Supplementary materials are accessible at PCW's Digital Gender and Development (GAD) Library. Other government agencies, such as the SC, also have links to the CEDAW.

4. The CEDAW concluding observations and recommendations are disseminated by the PCW to national government agencies (NGA) identified to act on key recommendations, and were also discussed in meetings with NGAs and civil society organizations (CSO), i.e., Constructive Dialogue Learning Session conducted on 11 August 2016, which generated inputs on the implementation of the CEDAW and its OP, as well as recommendations and areas for collaboration.

5. CEDAW has been cited in four SC decisions, namely:

(a) *Ordoña v. Local Civil Registrar of Pasig City* (G.R. No. 215370, 9 November 2021);

(b) *People v. Pingol* (G.R. No. 219243, 4 November 2020);

(c) *HRET v. Panga-Vega* (G.R. No. 228236, 27 January 2021); and

(d) *Racho v. Tanaka* (G.R. No. 199515, 25 June 2018).

B. Women's rights and gender equality in relation to the pandemic and recovery efforts

6. The enactment of *Bayanihan* (Cooperation) to Heal as One Act addressed public health emergency, social amelioration program (SAP) and provision of safety nets, while the *Bayanihan* to Recover as One Act served as the primary reference for the National Action Plan (NAP) against COVID-19 implementation, including the undertaking of recovery and rehabilitation programs, especially for the most vulnerable sectors. These recovery efforts ensure transformative social protection and commence socioeconomic recovery, especially to small businesses. These use the

whole-of-government and society-approach and the use of digital platforms to promote transparency and accountability.

7. Vis-à-vis COVID-19, the PCW encourages national government agencies (NGA) to review their respective annual GAD Plans and Budgets, and continues to provide technical assistance, especially to NGAs that develop and implement response and recovery programmes, in applying a gender lens to policies, programs, and activities, including financial assistance, beneficiaries of which are mostly women. The updating of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) Plan 2019–2025 also incorporates gender-responsive measures into the implementation of response and recovery efforts.

8. To facilitate reporting of violence against women (VAW) cases during the pandemic, the Inter-Agency Council on Violence against Women and their Children (IACVAWC) reinforced its online information campaign to disseminate hotlines for police assistance, legal consultations, medical facilities, and referral services. The online information campaign has been translated into different local languages and cascaded to different regions. The IACVAWC also urged for the prioritization of services for victims of abuse.

9. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) also mandated the activation of *barangay* (village) VAW desks and *Barangay* Councils for the Protection of Children in April 2020.

10. In line with the 2022 national elections, express lanes and accessible polling places for heavily pregnant women and lactating rooms for nursing mothers during the registration period were installed.

11. Other programs initiated during the pandemic that also catered to women are the following:

(a) OPLAN Kalinga (Care) program - accommodates COVID patients who have vulnerable household members (e.g. pregnant women);

(b) Department of Agriculture's (DA) Resiliency Project, Bantay (Watch) African Swine Fever sa Barangay Program, Expanded Sure Aid Recovery Project, Agri-Negosyo (Agri-Business) Loan Program, Kapital (Capital) Access for Young Agripreneurs Program, and Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita (Bountiful Harvest and Higher Income) Program benefitted 722,208 women and 4,876 women groups in 2021; and 224,683 individual women and 7,909 women group beneficiaries in the first semester of 2022. The women in the vulnerable groups totalled: 966 youth; 46,062 senior citizens; 212 persons with disabilities; and 4,859 Indigenous Peoples (IP). Kadiwa is a market system which sells major agricultural goods at reasonably low prices to help poor Filipino households;

(c) DA assisted 831 women micro-entrepreneurs through the Gender Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women Project;

(d) Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) provided an emergency employment/cash-for-work program through the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced (TUPAD) Program to 1.552 million beneficiaries as of September 2021;

(e) Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) served 415,482 women in especially difficult circumstances as of the third quarter of 2021. They also served 876 VAW cases in 2020;

(f) Social Security System, Department of Finance, and Bureau of Internal Revenue's Small Business Wage Subsidy Program benefitted 1.194M female and 1.905M male beneficiary employees wage subsidy amounting to Php5-8,000;

(g) Department of Health's (DOH) Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health;

(h) Department of Tourism's COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program reached 18,655 women through its 725 trainings.

12. The involvement of the IP Mandatory Representatives (IPMR), elders and leaders, and women in the State's pandemic and recovery efforts have mitigated the impact of the pandemic among the indigenous cultural communities (ICCs)/IPs.

C. Legislative framework and definition of discrimination

13. The State, through the PCW, continuously advocates with relevant Congressional committees, legislators, and CSOs to discuss strategies to facilitate the passage of the Women's Priority Legislative Agenda (WPLA) - related bills for the harmonization of national legislations with the MCW.

14. The WPLA for the current Congress is based on the discriminatory laws cited in the MCW and the concluding comments of the CEDAW Committee. The WPLA includes repealing the "forgiveness clause" of the Anti-Rape Law, amendments to the Family Code of the Philippines, and the Revised Penal Code (RPC).

15. Another recently enacted measure to amend the Anti-Rape law is Republic Act No. 11648: "An Act Providing for Stronger Protection against Rape and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and Increasing the Age of Determining the Commission of Statutory Rape".

16. See Table 1 below data on gender-based violence (GBV) reported to the police.¹

Table 1

National incidence of GBV reported to the Philippine National Police (PNP)

<i>Cases</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>Total</i>
Anti-Violence against Women and their Children (VAWC)						
Act of 2004	21 431	16 082	15 605	11 162	8 430	72 710
Anti-Rape Law of 1997	2 604	2 497	2 588	2 110	2 056	11 855
Acts of Lasciviousness	2 029	1 978	2 041	1 547	1 509	9 104
Concubinage	237	205	212	136	141	931
Anti-TIP Act	31	39	28	39	51	188
Anti-Sexual Harassment	100	74	98	58	71	401
Anti-Photo and Video Voyeurism	62	93	87	115	111	468
Safe Spaces Act (SSA)	0	0	19	66	155	240
TOTAL	26 494	20 968	20 678	15 233	12 524	95 897

Source: PNP

¹ Reported complaints on other forms of discrimination apart from VAW are being sought from concerned agencies including the reparations provided to the plaintiffs.

D. Access to justice and legal complaint mechanisms

17. The State conducted inter-agency meetings to respond to the CEDAW Committee's recommendation on the cases of Ms. Vertido and R. Following a social case management assessment on Ms. Vertido, the DSWD provided services, including financial and medical assistance, to her and her family, and referred her to its Crisis Intervention Section. Ms. Vertido was further assisted through coordination with regional offices of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and DOLE. The State also reached out to R and her designated guardians to offer these services and assistance.

18. To ensure women's access to effective redress and free legal aid, the Philippine National Police (PNP) continuously assists VAW victims through its Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs). The DSWD also assists victims, including those in conflict and disaster-stricken areas, through community-based and residential-care services. In 2021, 659 women were assisted by the DSWD. Finally, free legal aid is provided by the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) and National Prosecution Service (NPS). The DOJ Action Center also caters to walk-in clients, including women.

19. To heighten awareness of women's rights, PCW's website elaborates on the MCW, Expanded Maternity Leave (EML), and anti-VAW laws. Various information, education, and communication (IEC) materials informing women of their rights, including the mechanisms thereto, are also available and are also provided to inquiring clients. The annual National Women's Month Celebration and the 18-Day Campaign to End VAW also serve as platforms to raise public awareness on laws protecting women's rights. These campaigns are participated by national and regional government agencies, including local government units (LGU).

20. *Barangay* VAW desks, PNP-WCPDs, LGU's social welfare offices, and the DOJ Action Center are mechanisms on the ground that ensure vulnerable and marginalized women have access to courts and free legal aid. The SC exempts indigent litigants from payment of filing fees in all courts. The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) also assists women with disabilities on access to justice and provides free legal assistance in the filing of cases against offenders of the MCW.

21. Under Republic Act No. 9406, or the "PAO Law", PAO lawyers shall render, free of charge, legal representation, assistance and counselling to indigent persons in criminal, civil, labor, administrative, and other quasi-judicial cases. Also, under the DSWD's community based-services, women are provided with gender-responsive case management and appropriate services such as, but not limited to, counselling services, legal assistance, and witness preparation.

22. The SC also promulgated the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Social Aspects of the Family Courts Act of 1997, in particular, by creating Court Social Welfare Officers to ensure women victims' participation in the proceedings, and facilitate referrals of women and their families to concerned institutions for financial assistance. The Court of Appeals reported 436 female indigent litigants who have criminal cases pending with them, whose filing fees are waived as instructed by the SC.

23. Aside from hiring sign language interpreters to assist deaf parties or witnesses during hearings, the SC issued the Law Student Practice Rule to further expand access to justice of marginalized sectors, including women, persons with disabilities, and persons living in the socio-economic periphery. The Clinical Legal Education program was institutionalized as a prerequisite to take the bar examinations.

24. National Council on Disability Affairs' (NCDA) Sub-Committee on Access to Justice and Anti-Discrimination developed policy and program recommendations and

conducted orientation for prosecutors, public attorneys, and other private lawyer practitioners in assisting persons with disabilities, including women and girls with disabilities, during litigation.

25. NCDA also provided sign language interpreters for deaf litigants, trainings to Women's Desk Officers of the PNP in the LGUs for assisting women and girls with disabilities subjected to abuse and violence.

E. National machinery for the advancement of women

26. In August 2021, the PCW established its North Mindanao Field Office (NMFO), covering Regions 9, 10, and 13, through the support of Sen. Risa Hontiveros. Through the NMFO, the PCW means to localize the MCW and provide GAD-related technical assistance to regional line agencies and LGUs in Northern Mindanao.

27. Further to being the overall monitoring body to implement the MCW, the PCW coordinates with all government agencies, including government owned and controlled corporations (GOCC), and issues guidelines to ensure gender perspective in policies and programs. It employs gender analysis and assessment tools, such as the Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF) and Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines, to boost gender mainstreaming. The use of the Enhanced GMEF requires "all government departments, including their attached agencies, offices, bureaus, state universities, and colleges, GOCCs, LGUs, and other government instrumentalities (to) adopt gender mainstreaming as a strategy to promote women's human rights and eliminate gender discrimination in their systems, structures, policies, programs, processes, and procedures."

28. Gender budgeting is mandatory across all government agencies. The MCW stipulates that at least five percent of an agency's total annual budget be allocated to execute its GAD plan and budget and GAD-related agency mandates.

29. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) has institutionalized the sub-committee on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which monitors and reports on the country's implementation of the 2030 Global Agenda on Sustainable Development. Relative thereto, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) established SDG Indicators Focal Points responsible for ensuring data collection on indicators under their mandate. Updates on SDG implementation are reflected in the Philippines' SDG Watch. The PSA continuously improves methodologies on SDG data collection to ensure inclusivity. Meanwhile, in 2021, the PSA Board enjoined all agencies to provide data support through its adoption of the updated Philippine Core GAD Indicators. Among others, the said GAD Indicators include SDG indicators with available sex-disaggregated data. Further, the Inter-Agency Committee on Gender, Children, and Youth Statistics developed guidelines on establishing a statistical GAD database, including an Agency Readiness Assessment Criteria, as a guide for all agencies for the systematic collection, analysis, and dissemination of gender statistics.

30. Consultations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and CSOs, including those representing the marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, IPs, and women in the informal economy, are part of the PCW's process in developing policies and reports, such as the Updated GEWE Plan 2019–2025, WPLA, and periodic reports on the CEDAW. CSOs are also represented in inter-agency mechanisms like the National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security, the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (IACAT), IACVAWC, and Inter-Agency Oversight Committee on the SSA. They are also involved in the development of laws such as the SSA and its IRR.

31. The PCW assists key priority sectors, i.e., micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) development, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, education, peace and security, and environment, in developing gender-responsive sectoral policies, plans, and programs through targeted capacity-building, monitoring and evaluation, and other forms of technical assistance.

F. Women human rights defenders (HRD) and civil society

32. The State, through the CHR, carries out the following measures to provide a safe and enabling environment for women HRDs, activists, and CSOs:

- (a) Investigates and provides legal assistance to cases of women HRD;
- (b) Issues advisories and statements tackling pressing and urgent issues on human rights abuses;
- (c) Pushes for a Model Ordinance on the Protection of HRDs to institutionalize protection of HRDs; and
- (d) Prepares Situation Report on Women HRDs in the context of the pandemic.

G. Temporary social measures

33. To accelerate employment equality, the 105-Day EML Law was enacted to protect and promote the rights and welfare of working women. DOLE Department Order (D.O.) No. 178-17 addresses the occupational safety, health issues and concerns related to wearing high-heels and/or standing at work for long periods.

34. In terms of economic empowerment, women benefit from the DOLE's Integrated Livelihood Program, which reinforces entrepreneurship and community enterprises.

35. In order to boost women's businesses in the informal economy, the DTI focuses on MSME development targeting constraints faced by women entrepreneurs.

36. Department of Education's (DepEd) Basic Education Development Plan (BEDP) 2030 expands disadvantaged groups' access to inclusive and equitable education, such that out-of-school girls continue to learn through the Alternative Learning System (ALS) and collaboration with local mechanisms enhance the delivery of core messages on adolescent sexual health and teenage pregnancy.

37. In 2018, the gap between male and female enrollees in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) strand narrowed by 2.54%. Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) continues to provide opportunities for women in male-dominated sectors. Women comprised 38% of graduates from courses in non-traditional trades in 2018, while 46% of technical-vocational education training (TVET) Scholarship Programs enrollees in 2020 were women.

H. Gender stereotypes and harmful practices

38. The State, through PCW, utilizes education programs and various media to intensify campaigns against GBV and its forms, such as gender stereotypes, victim-blaming, misogyny, and objectification of women. The annual Women's Month celebration and 18-Day Campaign to End VAW are also avenues to positively convey women as active participants in economic, social, and political life.

39. The State is currently preparing a comprehensive assessment on the implementation of the MCW. The progress in its implementation will reflect the effectiveness of advocacies and capacity-building activities aimed at improving the lives of women and girls.

40. On child marriage, the National Demographic and Health Survey 2017 reported the following percentages of girls/women that are married or in a union: 8.5% aged 15–19 years (currently in a union); 2.2% aged 20–24 (in a union before age 15); and 16.5% of women aged 20–24 (in a union before age 18). There have been no reported prosecutions and convictions, so far.

41. The Anti-VAWC Act of 2004 is currently being assessed to examine the extent that the law has addressed VAW, 18 years after its enactment. This will include assessment of the public's awareness and knowledge of VAWC. As such, the results of the study will guide future anti-VAWC advocacy and preventive efforts in the form of the next IACVAWC Strategic Plan and possible amendments to the law.

42. Through the PCW, DepEd, Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and TESDA's collaboration, the State means to implement gender transformative education in the Philippines. Ongoing efforts include developing a continuum for gender integration in the curricula from basic education to higher education, including TVET, and developing policy guidelines and assessment tools to guide curriculum developers and teachers in ensuring that curricula, learning, and instructional materials are both gender-fair and sensitive. Continuous GAD capacity-building activities for education implementers are also being done at the organizational level.

43. The State, through the PCW, unceasingly endeavors to cultivate a positive image of women and continuously calls upon public figures, including government officials and social media content creators, as well as companies, to become active contributors to the mainstreaming of women empowerment. Following the broadcasting of a rape scene in an evening drama series in 2019, the PCW firmly condemned rape as an attack on human dignity and debunked misconceptions surrounding the act. The PCW also flags social media content that feature sexual harassment and online entities which encourage child grooming.

I. Gender-based violence against women

44. The State enacted various laws against GBV with better focus on unique elements, such as intimate partner violence, rape, gender-based sexual harassment, trafficking, voyeurism, online sexual abuse and exploitation, child marriage, etc.

45. Through the IACVAWC, the following are the State's undertakings to combat GBV:

(a) Development of a strategic plan to guide the IACVAWC by virtue of the Anti-VAWC Act of 2004;

(b) Strengthening of services to increase accessibility to women victim-survivors through capacity-building of service providers, provision of alternative platforms for reporting (online channels), and inclusion of VAW/GBV emergencies in the national emergency hotline;

(c) Awareness-raising through advocacy campaigns; development of new IEC materials targeting women communities, young boys, and girls; translation of IEC materials into local languages; and mapping of available services and programs for VAW victim-survivors;

(d) Monitoring of the functionality of local anti-VAW mechanisms to address (regional, provincial, city/municipal, barangay); and

- (e) Involvement of male groups in anti-VAW advocacy programs.

46. State agencies conduct annual IEC activities, including dissemination of materials on anti-VAW laws. In 2019, PCW launched the Cine Juana Digital Shorts Competition, which used film and youths' voice in elevating awareness on VAW as a crime; featured the interactive Anti-VAW Expo that oriented participants on VAW and VAW laws; and conducted the theatrical VAW Experiential Museum illustrating the struggles of abused women online and offline.

47. *Khutbas* (sermons), which are discussed in mosques during Friday prayers, were developed in response to the alarming incidence of GBV/VAW in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). To date, five *Khutbahs* have been written, to wit:

- (a) Wife discernment and abandonment;
- (b) Trafficking women and their children;
- (c) VAW;
- (d) Husband forcing sexual relation with his wife; and
- (e) Rape.

48. The DOH has been training its medical personnel on the 4Rs (Recognition, Reporting, Recording, and Referral); Multidisciplinary Team Training in Handling Cases of VAWC for community frontliners; and Enhanced Training on Handling VAWC for Hospitals since 2017. This ensures that medical personnel are equipped to assist women and girl victims of sexual violence. A total of 365 health workers of Women and Children Protection Units (WCPUs) in DOH-retained hospitals were capacitated in 2020.

49. The PNP increased its quota allocation for women recruits in the police force, forensics, and legal services. In 2019, 23 out of the Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC)'s 80 newly hired personnel were women. As of August 2021, the WCPC has a total of 264 personnel, 145 or 54% of whom are women. Police officers, especially those assigned in WCPDs, are regularly trained to handle victims of GBV. In 2021, PCW entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Emergency 911 Commission and The Asia Foundation for the inclusion of VAWC emergencies in the national hotline. This also entailed the adoption of a pocket guide and a referral pathway to be used by hotline operators who have been capacitated on VAWC cases and related sensitivities.

50. The PNP-WCPDs in 1,907 police stations handle the investigation of reported VAW cases. The WCPD also prepares documentation and case build up and assists VAW victim-survivors in availing medical and psychosocial care, including application for protection orders and case filing in court, if necessary. WCPD personnel perform their functions with adherence to the protocols stipulated in the Investigator's Manual for WCPD operations.

51. In 2017, DILG issued the "Guidelines in Monitoring the Functionality of VAW Desk in Every *Barangay*". In 2020, DILG also issued the "Guidelines in the Functionality of Local Committees on Anti-Trafficking and Violence Against Women and their Children (LCAT-VAWC)".

52. From 2017–2021, a total of 95,897 GBV were reported to the PNP (see Table 1). As to the data on the number of VAW cases handled by the NPS and the PAO, see tables 2 and 3. For IACAT's data on trafficking convictions, see Table 4.

Table 2
Number of VAW Cases Handled by the NPS, 2021

<i>Status</i>	<i>Cases under Anti-VAWC Act of 2004</i>	<i>Rape Cases</i>
Total Caseload (pending and previous years' court cases)	12 700	12 445
Resolved (cases for court filing or dismissed cases)	11 352	10 805
Pending	1 348	1 640
Information Filed in Court (all filed criminal cases in court and are not included in the computation of the aforementioned classifications)	7 213	10 217

Source: DOJ

Table 3
Number of VAW Cases Handled by the PAO, 2021

<i>Status</i>	<i>Cases under Anti-VAWC Act of 2004</i>	<i>Rape Cases</i>
Case Pending, Beginning	2 387	683
New Cases Received	1 696	113
Total Cases Handled	4 083	796
Terminated	2 041	200
Pending, End	2 042	596

Source: DOJ

Table 4
Data on Trafficking Convictions

<i>Year of Decision</i>	<i>Cyber Sex Trafficking/ Pornography</i>	<i>Sex Trafficking/ Sexual exploitation</i>	<i>Labor Trafficking</i>	<i>Simulated Birth</i>	<i>Total</i>
2017	31	70	1	1	103
2018	70	130	11	-	211
2019	65	94	1	2	162
2020	100	71	3	-	174
2021	42	53	6	2	103
2022 (first quarter)	27	20	3	-	50
Total Convictions	335	438	25	5	803

Source: IACAT

53. VAW prevention policies and guidelines are developed and implemented by each DSWD-managed institution for the care of abused women, including children and persons with disabilities. Such VAW preventive measures are likewise required for the accreditation and licensing of women-centric residential care facilities operated by NGOs and LGUs.

54. As the authority on GEWE, the PCW welcomes collaborations with CSOs in ensuring compliance of concerned government agencies to the Rules for the

Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders or otherwise known as the Bangkok Rules, which entails the delivery of gender-responsive treatment and interventions to women in conflict with the law. The State's implementation of the Bangkok Rules reinforces women's protection against discrimination and VAW while in detention.

55. Stakeholders and frontliners of government agencies, private and business entities, and hospitals are capacitated through Disability Sensitivity Trainings (DST), which informs participants on disability laws, basic courtesies to persons with disabilities, and correct language in referring to persons with disabilities, including women. DST equips frontline personnel with the right skills and understanding to better assist members of the sector.

56. The State ensures women and girls with disabilities' access to justice through designated public attorneys in every PAO regional office and WCPC units of the PNP, which is a member agency of the Sub-Committee on Access to Justice and Anti-Discrimination.

57. The Expanded Anti-TIP Act of 2022 empowers government authorities in combatting TIP and holding perpetrators accountable, especially in the online landscape. The State's online anti-TIP campaign is further reinforced by the recent enactment of the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Act, which promotes safer online spaces for children. The IRR of these laws are underway.

58. Meanwhile, as a member of the WeProtect Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online, the State continuously implements measures against online sexual exploitation, especially of children.²

J. Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

59. The Guidelines on the Referral System Involving TIP Cases inform implementors on case referral concerning victims of trafficking, as well as potential victims, and institutionalize a tracking system of TIP incidents throughout all TIP intervention stages. These Guidelines are disseminated to police, immigration officers, and personnel at the foreign posts, prosecutors, and members of the various Anti-Trafficking Task Forces (ATTF) as first point of contact of victims. Assistance to TIP victims is a continuing program of the State through the IACAT.

60. In 2021, the IACAT, with the support of the United Kingdom National Crime Agency (UKNCA), launched the Cyber-TIP Monitoring Center. Using advanced surveillance equipment, the center is dedicated to following leads of internet-based TIP and online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC).

61. In February 2019, the PNP, National Bureau of Investigation, Australian Federal Police, UKNCA, and International Justice Mission launched the Philippine Internet Crimes against Children Center (PICACC) to strengthen the global law enforcement collaboration in combating OSEC.

62. The DOJ established and continues to supervise 24 ATTF all over the Philippines, including six port-based task forces strategically located on critical entry or exit points in the country. These ATTFs are composed of prosecutors who specialize in investigation, case-building, and prosecution of TIP cases in coordination with law enforcement units.

² Included in the Philippines' 9th Periodic Report on the Implementation of CEDAW.

63. From 2018 to June 2022, a total of 1,258 TIP cases were filed in court. For the same period, the total number of convictions for TIP and related offenses is 700, with 443 offenders convicted. The ATIP Act, as amended, recognizes trafficked persons as victims of trafficking; hence, they are not penalized for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of, or as an incident or in relation to, being trafficked or in obedience to the trafficker's orders. The law also mandates the provision of mandatory services for TIP victims. In 2021, 1,359 or 71% of the 1,914 victim-survivors assisted by the DSWD were female. The IACAT also constructed and supervised the TIP Center, which is used for emergency and urgent referrals to provide temporary shelter to victims.

64. The State has ongoing initiatives on regional cooperation with countries of origin and destination, as well with other countries to prevent trafficking in women and girls, which includes the following:

- Finalization of the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Philippines and Syria on the Cooperation to Combat Transnational Organized Crime;
- Renewal of discussions on the proposed bilateral agreements between the Philippines and Macau (including the draft Philippines-Macau Agreement Concerning Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, Agreement for the Surrender of Fugitive Offenders, and the Bilateral Labor Agreement);
- Development of the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral TIP Work Plan for 2022–2027;
- Implementation of Project Needlestack - focusing on strengthening law enforcement responses to Cyber TIP line Reports (CTRs) in Malaysia and the Philippines. It receives and processes CTRs from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an international private, non-profit organization that operates a centralized reporting system on the online exploitation of children;
- Launching of PICACC to strengthen the global law enforcement collaboration in combating OSEC;
- Philippines and United Arab Emirates MOU on Cooperation in Combating Human Trafficking, which institutionalizes their respective obligation to strengthen the preventive and protective campaign, and to streamline efforts in ensuring everyone's protection against human trafficking;
- Philippine-Australia subsidiary agreement, in relation to the implementation of the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking, is a 10-year investment that continues Australia's long running collaboration with the ASEAN to end human trafficking in the region. The program works on strengthening the justice sector's response to human trafficking; and
- Philippine-United States of America's 4-year partnership agreement to implement shared plans that intend to improve the Philippine Government and CSOs' capacity to prevent OSEC, child labor trafficking, and address the evolving nature of TIP.

65. The enactment of the Anti-OSAEC and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Act will usher the development and implementation of programs meant to advance the campaign against OSAEC and protect and reintegrate child victims.

66. The DILG is implementing the project "Advocacy and Capacity Building for Local Institutions on Women and Children," under the Justice Sector Convergence Program of the Justice Sector Coordinating Council. The project aims to strengthen

the capacities of the LGUs, through the LCAT-VAWC in addressing TIP and VAWC, and through the Local Council for the Protection of Children.

67. The IACAT and the IACVAWC are currently developing the National Strategic Action Plan against TIP 2023–2027 and IACVAWC Strategic Plan 2023–2025, which will guide the implementation of the Anti-Trafficking Law and Anti-VAWC Law. These plans will serve as blueprint for action of government instrumentalities, NGOs, and other sectors in combating TIP and VAW.

K. Participation in political and public life

68. The 2016 and 2019 election results show that women occupy a fifth of the national and local seats. About 28% of national positions and 31% of local positions were occupied by women in 2016. The same percentage was recorded in 2019 for national positions with a slightly decreased share of 29.1% for local posts.

69. In the 2022 National Elections, women comprised 20.16% (8,782) of total election candidates.³ There was only 1 female out of the 10 presidential candidates, and 1 female out of 9 vice-presidential candidates. Lastly, only 12 out of 64 senatorial aspirants were females.

70. In order to improve women’s representation in politics, Gender Sensitivity and Inclusivity Seminars (GeSIS) and a Seminar/Webinar on Campaign Rules and Regulation for Women Aspiring Candidates were conducted, such as: GeSIS to Senior High School (SHS) and College Students, Webinar on Gender Responsive Elections Seminar with VAW in politics (VAW-P); seminar on Gender and Elections among Bangsamoro Women and other marginalized women; Gender-Sensitive Online Votes Education for Overseas Voting and Local Absentee Voters (highlighting women’s and men’s role in election preparation registration and election day); Gender-Sensitive Online Votes Education for members of the vulnerable sectors specifically for persons with disabilities, senior citizens, illiterate, persons deprived of liberty, and IPs; Video Conference on Elimination of VAW in Politics, and seminar on Campaign Rules for Women Aspiring Candidates. Likewise, IEC materials were made available in social media to increase public awareness on the importance of diversity in politics and to educate young voters to register and exercise their right. Online press releases on voter’s registration, including advisories and releases, were also published in the website of the information agency, in order to reach a wider audience.

71. In 2021, the House Committee on Women and Gender Equality approved the substitute Bill to House Bill 7179 or the “Women Participation and Representation in Political Parties Act.” The substitute bill mandates political parties to craft and implement a clear women and gender and development agenda, and a program consistent with their party philosophy and ideals. It also reiterates that the required women’s representation in political parties should be aligned within the gender quota.

72. The Philippines’ Updated GEWE Plan 2019–2025 has identified strategies to increase women’s participation in politics. Women’s participation in public governance remains at 42% in 2019–2021.

73. Meanwhile, one of the indicators in monitoring the functionality of the *Barangay* Development Council (BDC) is that at least 40% of all the BDC members are women. As of 2019, 53% of the 42,046 *barangays* have at least 40% women in the BDC.

³ COMELEC ERSD, “Quick Stats: May 13, 2019 National and Local Elections”, May 11, 2019.

L. Education

74. In June 2022, DepEd launched the BEDP 2030, which provides a strategic roadmap to improve the State's delivery and quality of basic education, whether formal or non-formal. Through D.O. No. 24 (s. 2022), DepEd directed all its offices and units in governance levels to align their policies, plans, and programs with the BEDP 2030.

75. Measures taken to ensure girls' access to education:

- DepEd's Last Mile School (LMS) Program aims to address the gaps in resources and facilities of schools that are located in geographically-isolated, disadvantaged, and/or conflict-affected areas;
- Significant interventions by the DepEd will focus on 2,298 LMS over the next few years, with 1,418 or 61.71% of these being in CAR and Regions VIII, IV-B, and VII; and
- DepEd conducted targeted campaigns to enjoin communities to encourage the large number of out-of-school girls to continue learning activities through the ALS.

76. Enrollment rates at all levels of education among girls and women, disaggregated by location in urban or rural area:

- The Net Enrollment Rate (NER) for females is higher than males in all basic education levels. However, the population and the enrollment in total amount is higher for males in all levels. As shown in the table 6 below, the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) is higher for males in Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 6. This means that more females are in the right age in every education level compared to males. There is a more pronounced decreasing trend in the percentage of enrolled males compared to females, widening the gender gap over time as the cohorts grew older.

Table 5
GER and NER for All Basic Education Levels by Gender for School Year 2019–2020

GER	Kindergarten	Grades 1–6	Grades 7–10 (Junior High School/JHS)		Grades 11–12 (SHS)
Male	92.04%	102.23%	100.03%		72.57%
Female	88.28%	99.98%	104.33%		84.16%
NER	Kindergarten	Grades 1–6	Grades 7-10 (JHS)	Grades 11–12 (SHS)	
Male	62.59%	93.79%	78.80%	40.65%	
Female	64.31%	94.15%	87.20%	55.34%	

Source: DepEd SY 2019–2020 Performance Indicators

- In 2020, TVET Scholarship Programs had a total of 178,284 enrollees; 96,273 (54%) women and 82,011 (46%) men; and
- TESDA's various skills training programs in non-traditional trades and STEM-related areas reached 121,810 female beneficiaries in 2020.

77. The following are measures taken to investigate and prosecute cases of bullying, sexual violence, and harassment:

- Mechanisms established in higher educational institutions (HEIs) to address sexual harassment include the establishment of the Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) and women's desks. As of September 2021, there are 128 women's desks established nationwide in HEIs. In the absence of a women's desk, women's concerns are addressed through existing offices, such as the Student Affairs, Guidance Office, GAD Center, or provision of assistance in coordination with the women's desk of the LGU, barangay, or police;
- TESDA has established its CODI of sexual harassment cases in all its 17 regional offices. The GAD Focal Point System-Executive Committee Chair instructed all regions to facilitate the establishment of CODI in all public and private TESDA Technology Institutions; and
- The DepEd Child Protection Policy enunciates the State's zero tolerance policy against all forms of abuse, violence, exploitation, neglect, discrimination, and all other forms of maltreatment against learners. In 2021, the DepEd issued a policy for the creation of the Child Rights in Education Desk (CREDe) and the Child Protection Unit (CPU). The CPU is the mechanism that will fully operationalize, implement, and coordinate programs, projects, and activities pertaining to child protection in DepEd. CREDe, on the other hand, was created to ensure that all basic education schools, learning centers, and offices of DepEd are child-centered, child-caring, respectful, protective, fulfil, and promote the dignity and rights of the child in the context of basic education.

78. The following are measures to address gender stereotypes in curricula and textbooks:

- Continuous promotion of Gender-Responsive Curricular Programs in higher education and roll-out of the Gender Sensitive Curriculum and Gender Sensitivity Trainer's Manual in TVET programs; and
- Introduction of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Grade 8 under the content of Family Health, and in Grades 11 and 12 under the Personality Development where GAD concepts are discussed. The policy guidelines for the implementation of the CSE defines key CSE messages, ensures increased learner knowledge, clarifies values and attitudes, enhances skills to reduce risks to health outcomes, and enables learners to achieve their full potential.

M. Employment

79. The *Trabaho, Negosyo, Kabuhayan* (Work, Business, Livelihood) aims to create decent jobs by promoting entrepreneurship for Filipinos, including those overseas. From 2016 to 2019, 6,485 job fairs were organized. From 2020 to May 2022, 751 face-to-face and virtual job fairs were conducted. Of the 128,947 applicants in 2021, 49% were female. Webinars on business creation and investments were also conducted for Filipinos overseas.

80. DOLE cascaded ILO Recommendation 204 (Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015) to its Regional Offices, LGUs and private sectors. This is to raise awareness on the situation of informal sector workers, many of whom are women, who are exposed to vulnerabilities and decent work deficits, and to help local policy makers in crafting responsive policies and programs.

81. The EML, SAP, especially for workers in the sugar industry, and the DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Programs (DILEEP) are some measures that provide social protection for women workers in the informal economy.

82. Through D.O. 230-21, DOLE provides support mechanisms, including redress for workers in the informal economy, domestic workers, and those in micro-enterprises pursuant to the SSA, to ensure protection from gender-based sexual harassment. National Anti-Poverty Commission's Formal Labor and Migrant Worker Sectoral Council passed a Resolution Advocating for the Ratification of ILO Convention 190 on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.

83. Also, bills on the MCWIE have been filed in Congress and form part of WPLA since the 18th Congress, which are consistent with international standards under ILO Recommendation 204.

84. The Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) was established to facilitate overseas employment and reintegration of Filipino workers and promote the empowerment and protection of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) through continuous training and knowledge development. In his first State of the Nation Address, President Marcos Jr. made a commitment to protect and promote the welfare of OFWs, directing the DMW to pursue automated services to ensure the immediate delivery of assistance to OFWs. In response, the government has recently launched its One Repatriation Command Center to provide immediate response to concerns of distressed OFWs.

85. The "Safe and Fair: Realizing Women Migrant Workers' Rights and Opportunities in the ASEAN Region (2018–2022) Programme" is part of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate VAW and girls, a global, multi-year initiative between EU and UN. PCW, as Vice-Chair of the National Project Advisory Committee, assists ILO and UN Women in effective project implementation and discusses emerging issues in safe and fair labor migration for women, among others.

86. Overseas Workers Welfare Administration-registered OFWs can avail of services including health care, disability and death benefits, scholarships and financial assistance for education and training, workers assistance and on-site services, and social services and family welfare assistance.

87. Apart from the EML and the programs of relevant NGAs that promote shared family and work responsibilities, the 2021 National Household Care Survey by Oxfam Pilipinas with PCW and the Oxfam-led "Business Resilience Assistance for Value-adding Enterprises (BRAVE) for Women Program" are some initiatives towards development of a national policy framework on unpaid care and domestic work. Policies on flexible work arrangement in government in 2022 have also been implemented to improve work-life balance and provide reasonable work arrangements for vulnerable employees, especially senior citizens, pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals, or those with sickness/injuries and mobility issues. The enacted Telecommuting Act also allows private sector employees to work remotely with the same entitlements as on-site employees.

N. Health

88. The State's National Policy on the Prevention of Illegal and Unsafe Abortion and Management of Abortion Complications continuously upholds the rights of women seeking abortion, including the prevention of stigmatization of women in need of the procedure. This policy provides guidance on the prevention of illegal and unsafe abortion and the provision of quality post abortion care in all public and private health facilities, while reiterating the importance of family planning (FP) to prevent unintended pregnancies.

89. The State annually conducts awareness-raising campaigns on FP including information on modern forms of contraception and undertakes initiatives to ensure

women's and adolescent girls' access to safe and affordable contraception as part of the implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health (RPRH) Law, such as:

- Caravan and community outreach programs especially in far-flung and geographically disadvantaged and isolated areas, IP communities, and localities where there is limited access to FP services. A total of 286 outreach missions "FP Days" were conducted in underserved, hard-to-reach, and densely populated urban areas which helped out 5,369 women of reproductive age. In BARMM, 3,888 community health workers, including Muslim religious leaders, parent leaders, and indigenous tribal leaders, promoted FP and referred health clients to healthcare providers reaching 1,167,140 individuals across five provinces in the region;
- FP on Wheels initiative - implemented in Batangas, Bohol, Cavite, Cebu, Davao City, Iloilo, Laguna, and Cainta, Rizal, through the Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines and with assistance from USAID. It intensified and expanded the delivery of FP services directly in communities; and
- E-Plano App - developed by FriendlyCare, with support from USAID, serves as an FP service booking application where clients can choose and access their preferred FP methods in health facilities nearest to them.

90. The State ensures the protection of pregnant women during childbirth through the DOH's Safe Motherhood Program, which advances women's full access to health services towards safer pregnancy and delivery. In cases where facility-based delivery is not possible in massive disasters, the State ensures that women due to give birth are given emergency birthing kits through their midwives, provided that an ambulance should always be on standby in case of complications. Iron supplementation is also provided to pregnant and lactating women, including those in temporary shelters. Training on Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEmONC) is also given to municipal health officers, public health nurses, and midwives especially in birthing clinics. The Safe Motherhood Program's strategies were also recalibrated in order to adapt to the "new normal" by improving the quality of FP counselling and expanding services availability of postpartum FP in hospitals and primary birthing facilities; maximizing teleconsulting and teleprescription platforms for antenatal and postpartum care; and conducting online trainings on BEmONC and safe motherhood.

91. In May 2020, DOH issued Interim Guidelines on the Continuous Provision of Maternal Health Services during COVID-19 pandemic to ensure unhampered and priority services especially for maternal emergencies.

92. In implementing CSE, the State conducted the following:

- In September 2021, the State launched the CSE-Adolescent Reproductive Health (CSE-ARH) Convergence, which highlighted the various service delivery mechanisms available for both in and out of schools;
- The DOH's Playbook for the Key Assistance for Developing Adolescents Network was developed to increase the number of facilities and trained personnel from various sectors that can address adolescent sexual and reproductive health concerns, as well as adolescents' hesitation in seeking services. This was released to the public and is currently being implemented in at least 10 provinces;
- DepEd led a series of webinars on CSE and orientation training on the pilot implementation of CSE-ARH to connect schools with local health service providers. The webinar, which was attended by representatives from all regions,

provided steps to accomplish the establishment of a school referral mechanism and the use of the Rapid Psychosocial Tool; and

- CSE Coasted Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was also developed, detailing DepEd's strategies and key interventions for CSE integration in the K to 12 Basic Education curriculum. The State started the implementation of CSE for FY 2020–2021 in selected public schools including in Regions I, VII, and XI. The State also conducted a CSE Conference to determine the status of CSE's roll out.

O. Economic empowerment

93. Measures to promote gender responsive financial inclusion strategies, including access to banking/ financial products, support and services in rural and indigenous communities and outer islands include the following:

- Comprehensive Tax Reform Program, which aims to accelerate poverty reduction and to sustainably address inequality by making the tax system simpler, fairer, and more efficient.

Some of the packages under this program are mandated under:

- Financial Institutions Strategic Transfer (FIST) Act; and
- Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Act.
- Initiatives to support women entrepreneurs include:
 - Rural Agro-enterprise Partnership for Inclusive Development and Growth;
 - *Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-aseño* (Fund for Change and Development);
 - Landbank's I-RESCUE Program;
 - Landbank's Female-Initiated Livelihood and Investment Projects via Inclusive Financing to Accelerate Entrepreneurial Growth Lending Program; and
 - PhilGuarantee's MSME Credit Guarantee Facility.
- Loan programs that can be availed by women farmers, fisher folks, and agripreneurs include:
 - *Agri-Negosyo* (Agricultural Business) Loan (ANYO) Program;
 - *Sikat Saka* (Raised Farming) Program;
 - Agrarian Production Credit Program (APCP); and
 - Kapital Access for Young Agripreneurs (KAYA) Program.

94. Through MC 2016-03, PCW encourages NGAs to use the Enhanced GMEF to assess their gender mainstreaming performance. Of the 25 agencies monitored by the PCW, 19 (76%) have improved their gender mainstreaming in 2022. The results of the GMEF assessment serve as bases of agencies in identifying and addressing organizational gender issues through their respective GAD agenda, plan, and budget.

95. Female labor force participation increased to 49.8% in the first semester of 2022 from 48.9% in 2021 and 45.8% in 2020. Better entrepreneurship opportunities, online jobs, and flexible work arrangements facilitated this improvement and are expected to persist in the new normal.

P. Rural women

96. The Guidelines for the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture are being reviewed and revised to ensure the equal recognition and valuation of women and men fishers and farmers' work.

97. The following are undertakings to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on rural women:

(a) Consultations by the PCW with stakeholders, especially women, in the agriculture, fisheries, and forestry sectors to present government programs; identify prevailing and emerging gender issues during the pandemic; and recommend measures to address needs and regain economic productivity. The resulting report guided government action in crafting sectoral and organizational policies addressing gender gaps;

(b) The Women in Agriculture (WIA) Project by the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion office of the DA promotes agripreneurship among women, including the vulnerable sectors;

(c) Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Development Sustainability Program provides immediate essential support services to cope with COVID-19 impacts;

(d) Capability development programs strengthen competency and competitiveness of stakeholders in agriculture and fisheries, including women; and

(e) Agricultural Training Institute's capability development programs strengthen the competency and competitiveness of stakeholders in agriculture and fisheries, including women.

98. For the capital requirement of women micro-entrepreneurs, the DA's Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) has implemented a credit window for women dubbed as the Agri *Pinay* Loan Program from the ANYO Loan Program. This program provides as much as PHP100,000 (USD 1,724) loan to women without collateral, no interest, payable in five years.

99. The DA also extended assistance to MSMEs through the SURE Aid Program, which provides USD300 (PHP15,000) loan to rice farmers at 0% interest. More than USD5 million (PHP246.3 million) worth of loans have been approved through this Program.

100. The DOLE implemented the following programs to assist priority beneficiaries, including women workers:

- DILEEP is comprised of two components, namely:
 - DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program: provides access to productive resources such as working capital in the form of raw materials, equipment, tools and jigs, helps beneficiaries start, enhance, or restore their lost livelihood undertakings; and
 - Emergency Employment Program (EEP): a community-based (municipality/*barangay*) package of assistance that provides emergency employment for displaced workers, underemployed, and unemployed poor, for a minimum of 10 days but not exceeding 90 days, depending on the nature of work.
- SAP for Workers in the Sugar Industry intends to augment the incomes, including livelihoods, of sugar workers and their qualified dependents in order to enjoy decent living (and productive employment), through the provision of services, such as cash bonuses; maternity, death, livelihood, and emergency

benefit assistance; training and education; and social protection and welfare benefits.

101. DILG, in collaboration with various agencies, developed the following policies promoting the rights of rural women and girls:

(a) DILG-DOH-DSWD-POPCOM-PSA Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) 2020-01 “Supplemental Guidelines to the JMC No. 1, s 2018 or the Revised Pre-Marriage Orientation and Counselling Program implementing Guidelines of 2018” dated June 15, 2020;

(b) DILG-DOH-DSWD-POPCOM-PSA Joint Advisory 2020-01 “Interim Guidelines on the Provision of PMOC services during the period of State of Public Health Emergency Throughout the Country due to COVID-19 Pandemic” dated June 15, 2020;

(c) DILG MC No. 2020-132 “Guidelines for the Establishment of the Implementing Teams of RPRH law in Local Government Units” dated October 7, 2020;

(d) DOH-DILG-NEDA-POPCOM JMC No. 2020-01 “Assessing the Demographic Vulnerabilities of Communities and Households to COVID-19 Infections in Planning and Implementing Efficient Pandemic Response at the Local and Community Levels” dated April 19, 2020;

(e) DOH-DILG JAO No. 2021-0002 “National Policy Framework on the Promotion and Recognition of Healthy Communities” dated December 07, 2021; and

(f) DOH-DSWD-DEPED-CHED-LEB-TESDA-DILG JAO No. 2022-0001 “Guidelines on Healthy Settings Framework in Learning Institutions” dated March 14, 2022.

102. To ensure rural women’s increased access to resources, DAR continues to implement its agrarian reform programs, including:

(a) Free irrigation service to lessen farmers’ production cost and promote higher yield, contributing to higher income;

(b) Removal of restrictions on free patents to allow the efficient and effective utilization of government-owned lands to contribute to wealth creation, entrepreneurship, and economic development;

(c) Boost the local production and consumption while increasing farm productivity and farmers’ income; and

(d) Promotion of sustainable modern agriculture and food security by building entrepreneurship culture among farmers and fisherfolks.

Q. Disadvantaged groups of women

103. The Bangsamoro government conducts fact-finding missions on harassment in the region, including those involving land conflict. For example, a fact-finding mission led by the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs, in coordination with Ministries of Interior and Local Government; Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy; Public Order and Safety; the Bangsamoro Attorney General’s Office; Bangsamoro Human Rights Commission; and Bangsamoro Women Commission (BWC) cited land conflict as the root of the harassment.

104. Emergency Housing Assistance Program provides quick cash assistance to low and marginal-income families affected by natural or human-induced calamities for repair of house structures, including Muslim women and their families through

regional offices. Maranao women and their families received financial assistance after Typhoon Odette in December 2021.

105. In March 2021, a joint assessment among women in the SPMS⁴ box and its buffer areas (priority regions for peace and development programs as part of critical, conflict-afflicted, and conflict-vulnerable areas) was conducted to evaluate the issues in closing the gender gap amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

106. New legislations were enacted for Mount Arayat, Mount Pulag, Naga-Kabasalan, Tirad Pass, and Banao establishing five more protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS), bringing the total to 113 legislated protected areas nationwide. The Year of the Protected Areas Campaign 2022 was launched to promote national parks, encourage government action in promoting protected areas, and ensure effective conservation and sustainable management at national and local levels.

107. Guidelines for the Implementation of the Housing Assistance Program for ICCs/IPs provide for equal treatment and value in participation and implementation of housing projects. IPs are actively involved as members of the Local Inter-Agency Committee and were provided equal authority in decision-making in policy formulation and planning as co-implementers.

- In the Municipality of Claver, Surigao del Norte, a Housing Project in the Daging Tribal Village has a woman Mamanwa leader who represents her tribe during planning and implementation;
- Through the support of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the Mamanwa women and their families were given equal opportunities to have adequate, liveable, and culturally sensitive houses; and
- In 2022, 307 Mamanwa families benefited from housing projects.

108. Indigenous women and girls are encouraged to participate in community consultations through the IPMR in policy-making and local legislative bodies,⁵ including in the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan. Community technical working groups must be composed of traditional leaders and recognized representatives from all indigenous sectors including women, youth, fisherfolk and farmers of the tribe that owns the ancestral domain.

109. In implementing a housing project for the Mamanwa Group in Northern Samar, local authorities were consulted on the number of affected Mamanwa individuals, ownership of the proposed location, target group's willingness to be the recipient of the housing project, and their preference in housing design. The Housing Assistance Program for the ICCs is implemented in coordination with the NCIP.

110. The Trainer's Training Manual on Gender Equality Focusing on Women with Disabilities aims to advance gender-responsive government services to women with disabilities, such as inclusive education for learners with disabilities. Filipino Sign Language (FSL) is recognized as the official sign language without prejudice to other sign languages and alternative forms of information like braille.

111. The Mental Health Act ensures that before any medical intervention for women and girls with psychological disabilities, particularly those with neurological and psychiatric cases, prior consent should be made by the patient during a period of

⁴ The SPMS-box is a military term referring to the contiguous towns of Shariff Aguak, Pagatin (Datu Saudi Ampatuan town), Mamasapano, and Shariff Saydona.

⁵ <https://ncip.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/ncip-ao-no-3-s-2018-ipmr.pdf>.

sanity. It also mandates regular inspection of institutions to ensure that there is no abuse and violence perpetrated.

112. Existing National Housing Authority (NHA) guidelines in the development of human settlements have been enhanced to improve gender responsiveness and gender sensitivity to the concerns of marginalized women, particularly the awarding consideration, relocation, resettlement, demolition, and eviction.

- The prospective beneficiaries are being given equal opportunities to qualify for the socialized housing program provided they satisfy the criteria prescribed in the Urban Development Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992 or as modified by the Local Inter-Agency Committee and/or compliance with the specific requirements for every housing program;
- The Eviction and Dismantling of Informal Settler Families in NHA-owned or Administered Properties and Projects adhere and comply with the mandate of UDHA that, no urban or rural women and men that belong to the marginalized sector shall be evicted without relocation or financial assistance. Thus, the State through NHA ensures that the eviction and/or dismantling of illegal occupants (women, men, solo parents, senior citizens, etc.) are executed based on the existing laws and other legal issuances;
- Updated Standard Operating Procedures in “Governing Summary Eviction of Illegal Occupants and Dismantling of Structures in National Housing Authority-owned or Administered Properties and Projects” provides proper and humane relocation and resettlement procedures with special consideration to women and children; and
- New housing models for calamity victims have been upgraded with rooms and other improvements to avoid domestic violence, especially with women and children.

113. The DILG also issued the following policies promoting the rights of women with disabilities:

- DILG MC No. 2020-066 “Guidelines on Providing Welfare of persons with disabilities during the Enhanced Community Quarantine due to the COVID-19 Pandemic” dated March 31, 2020;
- DILG MC No. 2021-041 “Strengthening the Functionality of Persons with Disability Affairs Offices and Persons with Disabilities Focal Person” dated 08 April 2021; and
- DTI-DSWD-NCSC-NCDA-DOH-DILG-BIR Joint MC No. 01 series of 2022 “Guidelines on the Provision of the Mandatory Statutory Benefits and Privileges of the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities on their Purchases through Online (E-Commerce) and Phone Call/SMS” dated May 6, 2022.

114. The agency also conducted the following interventions for promoting the rights of persons with disabilities:

- Orientation on Strengthening the Functionality of the Persons With Disability Affairs Office (PDAO)/Focal Persons on July 13, 2021;
- Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training conducted last August 23, 2021 via Zoom Platform; and
- Webinar on Empowering Women with Disabilities on March 28, 2022 via Zoom Platform.

R. Climate change and disaster risk reduction

115. The PCW, with the Coalition against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific, drafted Guidelines on the Implementation of Gender-Responsive Emergency Interventions during Humanitarian Crises to operationalize the MCW Section on Women Affected by Disasters, Calamities, and Other Crisis Situations. A bill on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Protocols and Programming to Address the Gender-Differentiated Needs of Women during Emergency Situations was drafted by PCW with UN Women and women legislators.

116. PCW sits in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), assists in mainstreaming gender perspective as a cross-cutting concern within the Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) framework, policies, plans and programs, and helps ensure gender-responsive measures. The NDRRMC developed the NDRRM Plan 2020–2030 which aims to ensure gender-responsiveness in DRRM.

117. The National Climate Change Action Plan 2011–2028 aims to build the adaptive capacities for both men and women in their communities, increase resilience of vulnerable sectors and natural ecosystems to climate change, and optimize mitigation opportunities towards gender-responsive and rights-based sustainable development.

118. Through the first Nationally Determined Contribution, which integrated gender equality considerations, the State committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2030.

- Institutionalizing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Reporting and Monitoring cites sex-disaggregated data and gender-related information among the data gaps;
- The Local DRRM Plan Formulation Guidebook recognizes the need to include the GAD Officer in the Planning Team and involvement of vulnerable sectors including women;
- Strengthening the National Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security to implement the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, among others;
- National Policy on DRRM in Health for gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate health interventions;
- Strategies of the Environment focuses on the implications of a 1.5°C global warming on national priority programs; the pandemic; and growing concern to address risks and threats from climate change and natural disasters;
- Calamity Loan Assistance Program is a special program for calamity-stricken beneficiaries.

119. In April 2022, the State responded to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change - Gender Action Plan Priority Activity A.4, which calls for communication on strengthening evidence-based understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women and women's role as agents of change.

120. The State participated in the 66th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66), with the theme “promoting gender equality in the context of climate change, environmental and DRRM.” A feedback forum was conducted in May 2022 to highlight outcomes and secure government, civil society, and private sector commitment to pursue its agreed conclusions.

121. To uplift women and girls in BARMM, especially during crisis situations, the BWC champions their meaningful participation and leadership and accelerates

programs, projects, and activities for gender equality and women empowerment in climate change, environment, and disaster contexts.

S. Marriage and family relations

122. The WPLA for the 19th Congress proposes:

- Amending the Family Code Provision on Legal Separation, focusing on violence and abusive conduct as grounds for legal separation and recognizing sexual abuse; and
- Amending the Family Code of the Philippines to remove traces of inequality between spouses with respect to their ability to provide parental consent to marry, to administer their community property or conjugal partnership, and to exercise their parental authority over the person and legal guardianship over the property of common children.

123. On the equality of women and men, both in marriage and upon the dissolution of marriage:

- In March 2015, the law repealing the Crime of Premature Marriage was passed. It repealed Article 351 of the RPC which punishes a woman who shall marry within 301 days from the date of the death of her husband, or before child delivery if she is pregnant at the time of his death, by imprisonment ranging from one month and one day to six months and a fine not exceeding Php500 pesos; and
- Divorce bill has been part of the WPLA since the 17th Congress. In the 18th Congress, three bills were filed in the House of Representatives and two in the Senate, on Divorce.

124. Efforts to raise awareness about CEDAW and the Committee's general Recommendation No. 21 (1994) on Marriage and Family Relations could form part of future endeavors of the State through the commissions on IPs and on Muslim Filipinos.

125. The State, through the RPC under Title 12, Chapter 2 on "Illegal Marriages", considers bigamy as a crime punishable by six to 12 years of imprisonment. While Presidential Decree No. 1083: Code of Muslim Personal Laws allows Muslim to "take another wife", Article 27 provides that he can only do so "provided that he can deal with them with equal companionship and just treatment."

126. The law prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage was enacted in December 2021. The law prohibits informal union or cohabitation outside of wedlock between an adult and a child, or between children.