



Women's BULLETIN

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Left: Employees experience wearing a hijab for a day. **Right:** Speakers and participants of the #ThumbsUpForChange: A Gender and Peace Caucus

Gender advocacy is not a simple “female = male” equation or ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women. It beats right at the center of various issues hence the birth of the Magna Carta of Women (MCW) or Republic Act No. 9710.

The MCW is a comprehensive women’s human rights law that seeks to eliminate discrimination through the recognition, protection, fulfillment and promotion of the rights of Filipino women, especially those belonging in the marginalized sectors of the society. It conveys a framework of rights for women based directly on international law.

Among its provisions is on ‘peace and development.’ Section 29 (b) of the law says that among the considerations in a peace process is “the institution of measures to ensure the protection of civilians in conflict-affected communities with special consideration for the specific needs of women and girls.”

Section 10 of the MCW also mandates the protection and security of women in times of crisis situations especially in all phases of relief, recovery, rehabilitation, and construction efforts.

With the timely ‘revisiting’ of these provisions of the MCW in view of the five-month Marawi siege and the ongoing rehabilitation efforts in the city, the Public Affairs and Communication Service (PACS) organized **#ThumbsUpForChange: A Gender and Peace Caucus** in line with the 2018 National Women’s Month Celebration.

Gender and Development (GAD) principals and alternates of DILG Central Office Bureaus, Services, selected Project Management Offices (PMO), nearby regional offices, and attached agencies gathered at the DILG-NAPOLCOM Center on March 9, 2018 for an in-depth discourse on the dynamics of gender advocacy and peace-building.

Civil society leader from Marawi, **Samira Gutoc-Tomawis**, shared what women and girls went through at the beginning of Marawi crisis in May 2017 and their present condition and needs in bouncing back to normal, productive living amid the rehabilitation of their home city.

For the part of the government, Director **Erlinda Olivia Tiu** of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) spoke of updates on the efforts of the government for the ‘rise of Marawi’ including their GAD-related initiatives. PIA co-heads the interagency Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM) – Information Management and Strategic Communication Support Group.

The discussion wouldn’t be complete without a speaker from the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW). GAD Specialist **Rene A. Gandeza Jr.** talked about the state of GAD in the Philippines and the endorsement of the MCW and its provision for indigenous women. He also expounded on the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAPWPS) which serves as the response of the Philippines to various international instruments on women, peace and security. The DILG is a member of the Executive Committee of the NAPWPS National Steering Committee.

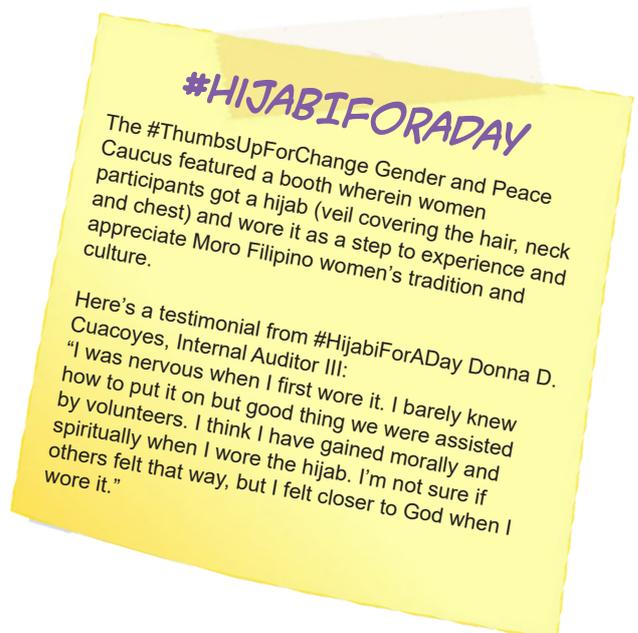
Widening the dialogue to a long-term vision, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Supervising Economic Development Specialist **April M. Mendoza** presented the gender considerations in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022.

To meaningfully cap the activity with concrete outputs, the participants came up with possible collaborative and doable GAD initiatives that can be done in line with their offices’ mandates.

PSSupt. Harris R. Fama, Chief of the Family, Juvenile, Gender and Development Division (FJGADD) of the PNP Directorate for Police Community Relations, had this to say about the event: “It helped us understand deeper the situation and needs of women particularly the Filipino indigenous women as member of the marginalized sector.”

“The government should strengthen its effort and support to plans, programs and activities that address gender-based violence, and ensure the integration of women, peace and security programs, activities, and projects in its annual GAD Plan and Budget,” he added.

Meanwhile, Lyn L. Aguilar, Local Government Operations Officer IV of the National Barangay Operations Office, suggested the conduct of a seminar on laws on women for all male and female employees, especially newly-hired ones. Such activity would make them aware and knowledgeable on GAD and enable them to share their insights to their families and communities because “we can all make change and the change we are looking for starts with us.” -- **Nesreen A. Hadjirasid**



DILG SHARED VISION

A strongly determined and highly trusted Department committed to capacitate and nurture local government units, public order, and safety institutions to sustain peaceful, progressive and resilient communities where people live happily.