

GENDER MAINSTREAMING AMONG LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs) IN GUIMARAS

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Abstract

This study was conducted to assess the stage level of gender mainstreaming which identified the objectives at each stage in the process, as to foundation formation, installation of strategic mechanisms, GAD application and commitment enhancement and institutionalization and that which correspond to the four entry points as to its policy, people, enabling mechanisms and programs, projects and activities. Descriptive research design was used to determine level of gender mainstreaming initiatives of local government units in Guimaras using the Gender Mainstreaming and Evaluation Framework (GMEF), a tool which was already been established in assessing the gender mainstreaming efforts of the government and which provide impact to the behavior and practices among local government employees and the respective clientele. The GAD Focal Point Persons of the five municipal LGUs and the provincial government were the respondents of the study of which had already organized their respective GAD Focal Point Systems. Results revealed that all of them were female with majority aging between 51-60 years old, college graduate and with a monthly income of more than P 20,000.00. At the foundation formation of gender mainstreaming, all LGUs have shown their commitment of support for GAD by issuing policies and raising people's awareness on gender. All LGUs have put in place the key people, necessary policies, support structures, systems and mechanisms to facilitate gender mainstreaming though there was no sporadic application of GAD concepts and tools. On the overall, LGUs are at stage 2 level of gender mainstreaming, the Installation of Strategic Mechanisms Stage.

Key words: gender mainstreaming, LGUs, GMEF tool, Guimaras

Introduction

Gender issues affect all of society. They shape and determine the processes that govern different institutions. The continuous effort exerted by government for gender equality and the empowerment of women illustrates the government's attempt to establish linkages between genders and authentic development in various aspects of life.

Pursuant to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Republic Act 7192 (Women in Development and Nation-Building Act), and the Millennium Development, the Philippines has committed to pursue women's empowerment and gender equality in the country. (DBM, NEDA and NCRFW Joint-Circular No. 2004-01) In accordance with the Executive Order (EO) No. 273 (Approving and Adopting the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025) agencies are mandated to institutionalize Gender and Development (GAD) in government by incorporating the GAD concerns spelled out in the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) in their planning, programming and budgeting processes. EO No. 273 also mandates agencies to incorporate and reflect GAD concerns in their agency performance commitment contracts, annual budget proposals and work and financial plans (DBM, NEDA and NCRFW Joint-Circular No. 2004-01).

With this commitment, agencies are tasked to formulate a GAD plan and to implement the same by utilizing at least five percent (5%) of their total budget appropriations pursuant to the Annual General Appropriations Act. (PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2012-01)

Government agencies both local and national, with their task of taking the lead and forming men and women for others, constitute an influential site where initiatives can take place systematically and relevant policies and programs should be crafted to suit the needs of Gender Mainstreaming initiatives in the institution itself.

With its intention of abiding to the agency's mandates on GAD and it is but proper to review its existing programs, policies and services. As GAD advocates and proponents are thus challenged to provide data that will convince them to give gender mainstreaming a chance that can result in more responsive processes and services for its clients and beneficiaries and an overall enhanced effectiveness of the organization.

Hence, this research study was conducted to assess the stage level of gender mainstreaming which identified the objectives at each stage in the process, as to foundation formation, installation of strategic mechanisms, GAD application and commitment enhancement and institutionalization and that which correspond to the four entry points as to its policy, people, enabling mechanisms and programs, projects and activities.

Framework

This study was viewed on the context of development that highlighted a people-centered perspective. It promotes people participation and empowerment on a sustained capacity to achieve a better life for all. Where development benefits both women and men, means an individual is able to live longer and can enjoy good health, nutrition, education, a satisfying job, a legal system that work, participation in political activities and governance, among others. Since, development provides opportunities to broaden an individual's capacity to do and capacity to be, as such, it is everybody's concern. Gender mainstreaming is an approach to development that looks more comprehensively at the relationship between women and men in their access to and control over resources, decision making, benefits and rewards in society. Gender mainstreaming as a strategy has been adopted by the government as a priority program to ensure that the concerns for gender equality is considered in the mainstream. Using the GMEF, a guide for assessing the progress of gender mainstreaming efforts identifies the major entry points and stages of gender mainstreaming (PCW Gender Mainstreaming Guidebook).

Research Objectives

This study was conducted to assess the progress in gender mainstreaming efforts among local government units in the province of Guimaras as mandated by law. Specifically, it aimed to determine the following:

1. The profile of agency's GAD focal point as to sex, age, civil status, educational qualification, and monthly income.
2. Assess the level of implementation on gender mainstreaming among LGUs in terms of commitment of support, strategic mechanisms installed by top management, GAD-related interventions, commitment enhancement and institutionalization of gender mainstreaming.

Methodology

Research Design. Descriptive research design was used in this study to determine level of gender mainstreaming initiatives of local government units in Guimaras. The study used the Gender Mainstreaming and Evaluation Framework (GMEF), a tool which was already been established in assessing the gender mainstreaming efforts of the government and which provide impact to the behaviour and practices among local government employees and the respective clientele.

Respondents of the Study. The GAD Focal Point Person of each LGU were identified to be the respondent of the study. All the local (provincial and municipal) government units in Guimaras having organized their respective GAD Focal Point System were covered, namely, the provincial local government of Guimaras and the five LGUs, such as the municipality of Buenavista, Jordan, Nueva Valencia, San Lorenzo and Sibunag.

Data Gathering Instrument. The established GMEF tool was used in data gathering. The assessment tool is used to evaluate the level of mainstreaming efforts of the LGUs concerned in terms of the four key areas such as policy support, people, enabling mechanisms and programs, projects and activities (PPAs). The tool is composed of four stages. Stage 1 focused on the commitment of support that the agency has for its GAD program as one of the priority thrusts. This stage signalled the foundation formation of which the agency is able to raise people's awareness on gender and has generated support for gender mainstreaming. Stage 2 focused on the installation of strategic mechanisms of top management. At this level, the agency has put in place the key people, necessary policies, support structures, systems and mechanisms to facilitate and sustain gender mainstreaming and has a sporadic application of GAD concepts and tools. Stage 3 focused on the GAD application. These are interventions made by the agency to achieve a full realization of gender mainstreaming. At this stage level, the agency has integrated and consolidated gender efforts to produce intended or desired impact on women and has integrated GAD in KRAs of the agency. While, stage 4 focused on the agency's commitment enhancement and institutionalization of gender mainstreaming to improve ability to respond gender issues and concerns. Reaching stage 4 means that the agency has implemented continuous monitoring, evaluation and improvement of gender mainstreaming efforts and at the same time incorporated GAD in all aspects of the agency's operations.

To determine level of gender mainstreaming of the LGUs in Guimaras, the GMEF Score Sheet was used to compute the scores, as shown:

LEGEND OF SCORES		
Average Score	Equivalent Rating	Stage
0.01 – 0.50	1	1
0.51 – 1.00	+1	1
1.01 – 1.50	2	2
1.51 – 2.00	+2	2
2.01 – 2.50	3	3
2.51 – 3.00	+3	3
3.01 – 3.50	4	4
3.51 – 4.00	+4	4

The following Scoring Guide had been used to compute for the scores for the identified key areas:

1. Using the GMEF descriptors or the "banig" and the results of the self-assessment survey, mark the appropriate cell of the score sheet where accomplishments of your agency are located. If your agency is able to implement one or more of the descriptors specified under a specific stage, assign one (1) point to it. If not, assign zero (0).
2. Add the total score per row in the last column of the score sheet.
3. Get the average score per entry point by adding all the points in the last column of the score sheet and dividing the sum by the number of key areas for that entry point.
4. To get the overall rating, all the average scores in the four entry points and divide by four. Refer to the Legend of Scores for the corresponding equivalent rating and stage.

Data Collection Procedure. Names of the Local Chief Executives (LCE) and their respective GAD Focal Point Persons of the provincial and the five municipal LGUs were shortlisted. Survey instrument was then reproduced with transmittal letter addressed to each LCE with attention to the GAD Focal Point Person. Research office staff was requested to conduct the survey. Follow-up and retrieval of survey instrument was personally done by the faculty researchers. Data collected were tallied, computed, analyzed and interpreted.

Statistical Treatment. The data gathered were encoded and computed using the GMEF Score Sheet, in Excel format. Interpretation of results was done using frequency counts, and percentages to determine profile of respondents, while, average scoring per entry point stage level of gender mainstreaming.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the respondents

Table 1 presents the profile of the GAD Focal Point Persons of the six LGUs in the province of Guimaras. Indicators of which included the sex, age, civil status, educational qualification and monthly income. Results revealed that all of them were female with majority aging between 51-60 years old, college graduate and with a monthly income of more than ₱ 20,000.00. This implies that the crucial roles of women in the respective units are recognized as effective development planners and implementers of change efforts.

Table 1: Personal profile of the respondents

Categories	F	%
Sex		
Female	6	100
Total	6	100
Age		
31 - 40	1	16.67
41 - 50	1	16.67
51 - 60	4	66.66
Total	6	100
Civil Status		
Married	6	100
Total	6	100
Educational Qualification		
College Graduate	4	66.66
College Graduate w/ MA units	1	16.67
Master's Degree Holder	1	16.67
Total	6	100
Monthly Income		
₱20,000.00 and below	2	33.33
₱20,000.00 – above	4	66.67
Total	6	100

Policy

Table 2 presents LGUs' policy support for gender mainstreaming as critical and legitimate concern, even if in broad or general terms of expression/statement and enhancement/improvement either in the form of memoranda, executive orders or special guidelines. Result showed that broad statements of support to GAD had been formulated and issued, but existing policies/improvement have yet to be reviewed.

As indicated, gender mainstreaming efforts of the LGUs in terms of policy support is still at the foundation formation (1.5) or stage 2 level. This implies that the LGUs have already installed strategic mechanisms by putting in place the key people, necessary policies, support structures, systems and mechanisms to facilitate and sustain gender mainstreaming.

Table 2. Policy support for GAD

Key Areas	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Total Score	Interpretation (Stage Level)
Policy						
Expression/Statement	6	3	2	0	11	
Enhancement/Improvement	4	2	1	0	7	
Average Score	5	2.5	1.5	0	9	
Overall Average	.83	.42	.25	0	1.5	2

People

In terms of people, they are the stakeholders on whose shoulders fall the task of gender mainstreaming. They assume four distinct roles as the sponsor, the change agent, the target of change, and the advocates. Changes on the people are measured in terms of expression of support for gender mainstreaming, capability building interventions to enhance Key Result Areas (KRA) and GAD, benefits for women and participation of women.

As shown in Table 3, it revealed that participation of women and benefits for women are visible wherein almost all the LGUs consulted the women in the planning and decision-making processes and women were given opportunities and authority in the organization. However, expression of support for gender mainstreaming and capability building interventions to enhance KRA and GAD were not sustained. On the overall, with regards to its people, the LGUs had already the GAD application (2.54) or at stage 3 in their gender mainstreaming effort. This implies that the LGUs had initiated integration and consolidation of gender efforts to produce intended or desired impact on women, though efforts have to be done on the capability building interventions to enhance KRA and GAD.

Table 3. People

Key Areas	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Total Score	Interpretation (Stage Level)
People						
Expression of Support for Gender Mainstreaming	6	4	2	0	12	
Capability Building Interventions to enhance KRA and GAD	5	4	0	0	9	
Benefits for Women	6	5	5	3	19	
Participation of Women	6	5	5	5	21	
Average Score	5.75	4.5	3	2	15.25	
Overall Average Score	.96	.75	.5	.33	2.54	+3

Enabling Mechanisms

The success of any gender mainstreaming effort depends to a large extent on the resources allocated to it. This refers to the structures and systems, roles and functions of Focal Points, Capability building for Focal Points, gender-responsive data base, resources allocation of the budget and the agency's networking efforts that will develop networks and evolve partnership.

As shown in Table 4, it revealed that all LGUs had set-up their respective Focal Points, most of them had already GAD structures and system and capability buildings conducted to focal points, majority had initiated gender-responsive data base and networking efforts, however, only half had allocated budget for GAD but not representing the least 5% of total budget. Also, four of the LGUs had sustained the Capability Building for Focal Points. On the overall, majority of the LGUs had already installed their strategic mechanisms to support gender mainstreaming (1.58) or at stage level. This implies that some of the LGUs had started put-

ting in place the key people with support structures; however, there is a need to heighten budget allocation of at least 5% as mandated by law for GAD implementation and conduct of gender-responsive data base of the LGUs.

Table 4. Enabling Mechanisms

Key Areas	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Total Score	Interpretation (Stage Level)
Enabling Mechanisms						
Structures and System	5	3	2	0	10	
Roles and Functions of Focal Points	6	3	2	0	11	
Capability Building for Focal Points	5	4	4	3	16	
Gender-responsive Database	4	1	0	0	5	
Resource allocation of the budget	3	1	1	1	6	
Networking Efforts	4	2	2	1	9	
Average Score	4.50	2.33	1.83	0.83	9.50	
Overall Average Score	.75	.39	.30	.14	1.58	2

Programs, Projects and Activities

Policy and top management support for gender mainstreaming is best reflected in the agency's programs, projects and activities. For the LGUs, their flagship programs are strategic entry points for implementing a GAD initiative as indicated by information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns, client-directed PPAs, implementation of international treaties, Philippine Plan for Gender and Development (PPGD) and other laws and policies on women and GAD, application of gender-responsive planning (GRP) and other planning technologies in PPAs, and personnel-directed PPAs.

Results showed that most of the LGUs' PPAs were client-directed and the majority had their PPAs implemented based on international treaties, PPGD, or other laws. Only three of the LGUs had personnel-directed PPAs and considered the GRP application in refining their PPAs. While information, education and communication campaigns was the least considered. On the overall, gender mainstreaming efforts of the LGUs as can be seen in PPAs implementation is (1.04) or at stage 2 level. This only means that LGUs have developed and used guidelines on the integration of GAD in the overall work and assessed gender biases in their existing PPAs, though there is a need for the LGUs to develop IEC materials appropriate for groups at the community level.

Table 5. Programs, Projects and Activities

Key Areas	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Total Score	Interpretation (Stage Level)
Programs, Projects and Activities						
Information, education and communication campaigns	2	1	0	0	3	
Client-directed PPAs	5	1	0	0	6	
Application of Gender-Responsive Planning	3	0	0	0	3	
PPAs implementing international treaties, PPGD, other laws	4	2	2	0	8	
Personnel-directed PPAs	3	2	1	1	7	
Average Score	3.4	1.2	0.6	0.2	5.4	
Overall Average Score	.56	.2	.1	.03	.9	+1

Overall Gender Mainstreaming Efforts of LGUs

The gender mainstreaming efforts of the LGUs of the Province of Guimaras has an overall rating of 1.63 or is at stage 2 level.

As shown in Table 6, LGU Buenavista ranks first with +3 stage level followed by LGU province with 3 the rest were at stage 2, while LGU-San Lorenzo at stage 1. However, looking into the different specific key areas, it can be noted that gender mainstreaming in terms of mobilizing people was highest (2.54) or at stage 3 levels among the LGUs except for LGU-San Lorenzo which is 0.75 or at stage 1. This is followed by enabling mechanisms with 1.58 or at stage 2 level on the average. However, it can be noted that LGUs Buenavista (3), Guimaras (2.33) and Nueva Valencia (2.17) are already at stage 3 levels followed by LGU-Sibunag (1.33) at stage 2 and LGUs Jordan and San Lorenzo (0.33) respectively at stage 1 level. Policy support of the LGUs for gender mainstreaming is at 1.5 or stage 2 level, though LGUs Buenavista (3) and Province (2.5) are at stage 3 respectively, LGUs Nueva Valencia (1), Jordan and San Lorenzo both with 0.5 are still at stage 1 level. Implementation of PPAs as to its gender-responsiveness was lowest (0.9) or still at stage 1, though LGUs Buenavista, Nueva Valencia and Guimaras province with 1.6 respectively are at stage 2 level and LGUs Sibunag (0.6) and Jordan (0.2) at stage 1, LGU San Lorenzo has not initiated yet its gender-responsive PPAs.

This only means that LGUs in Guimaras have differing stages in terms of gender mainstreaming of the different key entry points. People are mobilized by integrating GAD in the performance contracts and evaluation of the agency's KRAs (stage 3) with policy support for gender mainstreaming by integrating GAD in the agency's vision, mission and goals and the crafting of units and mechanisms for GAD budgeting (stage 2 levels) and IEC campaigns for gender responsive programs, activities and projects initiated (stage 1).

Table 6. Gender Mainstreaming Efforts of LGUs

Agency	Policy	People	Enabling Mechanisms	PPAs	Average Score	Stage Level
LGU-Buenavista	3	3	3	1.6	2.65	+3
LGU-Jordan	0.5	3	0.33	0.2	1.01	2
LGU-Nueva Valencia	1	3	2.17	1.6	1.94	+2
LGU-San Lorenzo	0.5	0.75	0.33	0	0.40	1
LGU-Sibunag	1.5	2.75	1.33	0.4	1.50	2
LGU-Guimaras	2.5	2.75	2.33	1.6	2.30	3
Average Score	1.5	2.54	1.58	0.9	1.63	+2
Equivalent Rating	2	+3	+2	+1	+2	
Overall Stage						Stage 2

Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions had been advanced, thus:

- All GAD Focal Persons of the LGUs in Guimaras are female with majority aging between 51-60 years old, college graduate and with a monthly income of more than P20,000.00 of which the crucial roles of women in the respective units are recognized as effective development planners and implementers of change efforts.
- Broad statements of support to GAD had been formulated and issued, though policies/ improvement have yet to be reviewed. That LGUs have already installed strategic mechanisms by putting in place the key people, necessary policies, support structures, systems and mechanisms to facilitate and sustain gender mainstreaming.
- Participation of women and benefits for women are visible wherein almost all the LGUs consulted the women in the planning and decision-making processes and women were given opportunities and authority in the organization, although expression of support for gender mainstreaming and capability building interventions to enhance KRA and GAD were not sustained. LGUs had initiated integration and consolida-

tion of gender efforts to produce intended or desired impact on women.

- All LGUs had set-up their respective Focal Points and had started putting in place the key people with support structures; but, there is a need to heighten budget allocation of at least 5% as mandated by law for GAD implementation and conduct of gender-responsive data base of the LGUs.
- Most of the LGUs' PPAs were client-directed and the majority had their PPAs implemented based on international treaties, PPGD, or other laws. This means that LGUs have developed and used guidelines on the integration of GAD in the overall work and assessed gender biases in their existing PPAs, though there is a need for the LGUs to develop IEC materials appropriate for groups at the community level.
- LGUs in Guimaras have differing stages in terms of gender mainstreaming of the different key entry points. People are mobilized by integrating GAD in the performance contracts and evaluation of the agency's KRAs with policy support for gender mainstreaming by integrating GAD in the agency's vision, mission and goals and the crafting of units and mechanisms for GAD budgeting and IEC campaigns for gender responsive programs, activities and projects initiated.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are advanced in order to accelerate gender mainstreaming efforts among LGUs in Guimaras, hence:

- LGUs may encourage active participation and cooperation of everyone regardless of sex, age, civil status, and educational attainment for the implementation of gender mainstreaming programs.
- To accelerate gender mainstreaming, LGUs may review/improve policy towards the integration of GAD from simple to complex, continuous capability building interventions to enhance KRA and GAD, strategic planning and continuous assessment of structures and systems, use of gender-responsive data base, allocation of at least 5% budget from GAA, sustain networking efforts and conduct of IEC campaigns.

Literature Cited

DBM-NEDA-NCRFW Joint Circular No. 2004-01

Executive Order (EO) No. 273

PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2012-01

PCW Gender Mainstreaming Guidebook