



102

Republic of the Philippines  
**COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**  
Regional Office 02  
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan

**MEMORANDUM**

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**FOR** : ATTY. KRISSI SHAFFINA TWYLA A. RUBIN  
GEWHRC

**FROM** : ATTY. JIMMY P. BALIGA  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, REGION 02

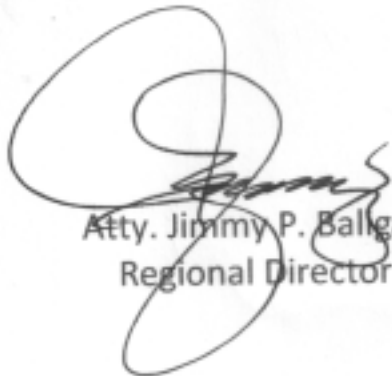
**SUBJECT** : DOCUMENTATION REPORT

**DATE** : October 15, 2019

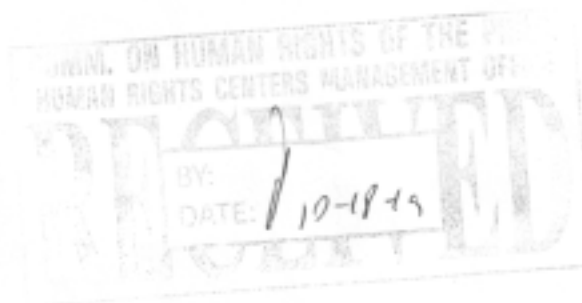
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We are respectfully submitting a copy of the Documentation Report on the Focused Group Discussion on Making Data Work for Women: Mapping of Legal Referral Mechanisms on Gender Based Violence conducted in the municipalities of Amulung, Cagayan on September 11, 2019 and in Echague, Isabela on September 13, 2019. We are likewise submitting a soft copy of the report to the email address of the GEWHRC.

Thank you.



Atty. Jimmy P. Baliga  
Regional Director



## DOCUMENTATION REPORT

**Title of Activity** : Making Data Work for Women: Mapping of Legal Referral Mechanisms on Gender Based Violence (GBV)

**Venue/Location** : SB Conference Hall, Municipal building, Echague, Isabela

**Date Conducted** : September 13, 2019

### Participants:

The twenty-four (25) participants were composed of nineteen (21) females and three (4) males representing various sectors which include the Mengal community women, and service providers.

	Name	Age	Sex	Description	Sector
1		55	F		Community Women
2		57	F		Community Women
3		40	M		Community Women
4		57	F	MWO	Community Women
5		59	F	Punong Barangay	Community Women
6		41	M	Prosecutor	Service Provider
7		64	F	Senior Citizen	Community Women
8		59	F	LGU-MSWDO	Community Women
9		54	F		Community Women
10		55	F		Community Women
11		57	F		Community Women
12		70	F		Community Women
13		64	F	Senior Citizen,	Community Women
14		55	F		Community Women
15		62	F	Senior Citizen,	Community Women
16	Vanessa	49	F	Nurse II of National Health Office	Service Provider
17	Pierre	57	M	PAO Lawyer of Echague station	Service Provider
18	Winalyn	27	F	Patrol Woman;PNP	Service Provider

19	Reina	31	F	Patrol Woman;PNP	Service Provider
20		51	F		Community Women
21	Gerielle	28	M	Deputy Chief of Police	Service Provider
22			F		Community Women
23	Jean		F	MW President of Pangal sur	Service Provider
24			F	Representative of Women Social Welfare	Community Women
25			F	Representative of indigenous people in the Provincial board	Community Women

### **Preliminaries:**

Ms. Lou P. Lopez, the Information Officer III of the CHR Regional Office 02, welcomed the participants to the Regional mapping of legal referral mechanisms on Gender Based Violence (GBV). She explained the flow of the program and asked the participants to introduce themselves to all the people present at the hall. Afterwards, Atty. Marie Grace R. Marcos, the CHR GAD Focal Person, introduced the CHR to the participants as Gender Ombud. She then explained the definition of Gender Based Violence (GBV) to the participants. She said that their activity with regards to the GBV Observatory Project will serve as a starting point of the CHR to fulfill their mandates and that this report will be submitted on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November in time for the 18<sup>th</sup> day Campaign to end VAW.

Atty. Marcos also mentioned that in the region, the CHR monitors the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women (MCW), the Anti- Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), and other related laws on women.

She stressed the significance of the regional GBV mapping as an avenue where the CHR can gather inputs and insights from women across various sectors on the implementation of Gender and Development. Atty. Marcos encouraged everyone to participate actively in the group discussions and assured them that their sharing will be kept confidential.

### **Activity Mechanics:**

The activity was composed of a lecture and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The lecture on the Magna Carta of Women and CHR as Gender Ombud was delivered by Atty. Grace R. Marcos of the CHR.

After the lecture, the participants were asked to answer the questions in the focus group discussion guide to solicit their insights and inputs.

### **Activity Proper:**

*Lecture: Overview of Gender Based Violence (GBV)*

Lecturer: Atty. Grace R. Marcos, Regional GFPS, CHR RO2

Atty. Marcos of the CHR introduced the GBV Project to the participants as a resource hub for GBV, a repository of GVB data including normative standards on GBV from international to

domestic level, as well as GBV researches particularly looking at how laws on GBV are implemented, and how GBV manifest in the lived experiences of women. She stated some of the provisions of Gender Based Violence and described many forms of discrimination against women through distinction, exclusion, or restriction. To make the participants fully understand the rampant discrimination against women, she cited some examples such as:

- Allied Health departments in some Universities are implementing female students to undergo a Pregnancy test. Those who will have a positive result in the Pregnancy test will not be allowed to study in the University.
- The removal or dismissal of pregnant women from their jobs (i.e. women who work in private institutions lose their jobs when they get pregnant)
- LGBT communities are being rejected in applying for a job for a reason that employers see their identity as a hindrance to give excellent service to the company's clients (i.e. some clients prefer to be accompanied by employees with the same gender as they are.)

She also gave a brief discussion of the CHR's mandate as Gender Ombud and she stated the objectives of the GBV observatory project are as follows:

- Gather regional data on GBV, particularly highlighting issues faced by the most marginalized and 'excluded,' a focus on intersectionality, and an analysis that looks into women's lived experience of GBV.

Afterwards, the participants were asked to form two groups according to the sector they represent (Service Providers or Community women) or to the topic where they can share their rich experiences or insight. Before the groups will begin with their FGD, the CHR seek the consent of the participants, explaining the data privacy compliance notice of the Commission, and introducing the consent and profile forms that the participants are requested to fill up. The CHR said that the participants will be assured on the office's compliance with Data Privacy Law in the handling of their personal information. The CHR said that the results of the mapping will form part of the Commission's Gender Based Violence Observatory and will be presented during the Regional GBV mapping schedules on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2019. Follow through activities may be planned with the service providers as a result of the issues and gaps raised during the FGDs.

## **FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION**

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### *Open Forum: Service Providers*

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) prepared questions regarding on how Service Providers handle GBV cases, how they cooperate with other agencies, how they store documents of GBV cases and other related questions on GBV. Questions of the CHR together with Service providers' insights are as follows:

#### **I. Gender equality situationer in Echague, Isabela**

1. Basic demographics: for instance gender disaggregated data on per capita income, life expectancy, labor force participation or literacy available?



*Prosecutor: We do not consider how much their income is. We give service to everybody. It is an advantage for us that we can speak Ilocano, ibanag and itawes so that we can give great service to the complainants especially those who come from barrios who are not capable of speaking tagalog. But there are some Service providers who don't speak our dialect, having struggles in understanding the complaint of the victim which results to referral to other agencies.*

2. Apart from National laws and international human rights instruments, what important gender equality policies in place at the local level? How are the policies operationalized by the local agencies?

*Atty. Pierre: It has been reported to our office that here in Echague, we implement and prioritize Anti- Discrimination towards occupation. Whether you are a lawyer or a service crew, the community value your dignity as a person regardless of what your gender is. My personal insight about the case of Vanessa Salinas is that Isabela State University (ISU) has indeed discriminated in not re-hiring Vanessa Salinas and should really observe adherence to the law.*

*PNP: We have VAWC Desk that is operationalized by our trained personnel.*

## **II. Gender- based violence (GBV) in Echague (in relation to gender-based violence)**

1. What are the common forms of GBV received by the Service providers?

*All of the Service Providers told the CHR that Physical abuse is the common form of GBV that they are continuously receiving.*

2. Which groups of women that are most affected by the GBV forms identified?

*The Prosecutor and PNP reported that the group of women that are most affected by the GBV forms are working women, rural women and housewives, while the Nurse II of MHO had observed that women from barrios are more likely to be a victim of discrimination.*

3. What have been the observed trends in gender-based violence cases received in the past five years and what are possible economic, socio-political, cultural and other factors affecting this/these trends?

*The Service provider said that aside from Physical abuse,  
They observed the factor that affects the trend is economic  
because the university aims for a productive working schedule and only wants to pay a teacher who is fit to teach on the working schedule the university provided.*

4. The Service Providers shared the cases to the CHR that they find as difficult case

*Atty. Sherwin: We find it difficult for us to be passionate in giving service to every complainant whenever they are not firm with their decisions after all the endorsement and assistance we gave, some results to withdrawal of the case. Our time could have been more productive because each of us Service providers has tons of works to do in our offices.*

5. Challenges and barriers experienced in:

a) Reporting and investigation (PNP/ VAW Desk)

*PNP: there are some cases wherein we are having a hard time in making a report because of the complainant's literacy level.*

b) Prosecution and legal assistance (Prosecutor's office, PAO, VAW Desk)

*The Prosecutor shared to the group that there are cases that can be resolved at the Police station but complainants are advised by the PNP to go to the Prosecution office. The challenge in this case is misleading functions of each agency.*

c) Providing support services (MSWDO, CSWDO, WCPUs)

*Majority of the officials especially the Barangay officials are not knowledgeable in the VAW Desk.*

6. What are the best practices?

*The Service providers suggested that it would be a best practice if each agency will be capacitated on their functions and barangay officials should request to the CHR for re-orientation and continuous seminar so that they can provide a fast and quality assistance to the community.*

### III. Flow of case management

1. What are the entry points for GBV cases to come formally into contact with the government services?

*All of the Service providers including the Prosecution office and PAO told that most of their client's entry point is by walk-in.*

2. The CHR asked the Service providers about the available services they provide for GBV survivors.

*The representative of the DSWD told the CHR that aside from counselling, they give financial assistance for those who are willing to start a livelihood project.*

3. Which among the available services offered by the service provider are most often accessed by women? What are the possible factors affecting their choice of what to access?

*They said that getting a blotter in the Police station and participating to livelihood projects in DSWD are services that are most often accessed by women.*

4. At which point in the process of GBV intervention do women often exit the formal helping system of the service providers?

*The PNP said that women exit the formal helping system of their office after they endorsed them to the Fiscal, while the prosecutor and PAO said that clients exit the formal helping system of their agency after the appeal.*

#### **IV. Documentation**

1. When does documentation of GBV complaints start?

*Vanessa, Nurse II of Municipal Health Office, said that upon the referral of the PNP and DSWD, they will make medical exam for investigation and documentation. Like, the rest of the Service Providers, their documentation begins upon contact with their agency.*

2. Could the CHR ask for a copy of forms? What is the standard information asked of a woman who accesses the service being provided by the agency?

*PNP: We have orders to follow in terms of sharing documents to others but as long as the CHR or anyone has the requirements we require, we allow access to our documents.*

*The rest of the Service providers said that their agencies are willing to allow CHR access their documents for a purpose of doing fair investigations.*

3. How are these information filed and stored? How long will they be kept on the average? Does agency have an electronic data base for the case?

*Atty. Pierre of PAO said that their files are saved as documents through tally and MS excel while the rest of the Service providers have bulks of documents stored at their office for 10-15 years.*

4. How are the information used? Does the agency publish summaries or reports of cases received?

*The Service providers said they publish summaries of the cases they receive.*

5. Who can access these files? Are other offices/ helping agencies allowed to have direct or full access to them? Researchers? What is the protocol for this, if any?

*The PNP together with the legal authorities of PAO and Prosecution office said that they also comply with the Data Privacy Law. However, in such cases, their office allows other government agencies to access their files for a transparent flow of a certain investigation.*

6. What information are made public and how at the local level, if at all (e.g. website, publications, statistics) are used in community education?

*Atty. Sherwin: We have the general data of every client but there is no information that should be made public for a reason that our office also values the safety of our clients.*

## **V. Recommendations**

Atty. Pierre from PAO recommends the CHR to have prosecutorial power. He said, "Ako mismo ang lilipat sa CHR once you have prosecutorial power." While Atty. Sherwin of the Prosecution Office said that the CHR should implement laws that would lead certain agencies and offices that will protect and handle the rights of every person just like a Doctor who has specialized field.

## **FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION**

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*Open forum: Community women*

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) prepared questions regarding on their awareness in GBV policies, how they cooperate with the authorities, how they document GBV cases, how they store files of GBV and other related questions on GBV. Questions of the CHR together with Community women's answers are as follows:

### **I. Gender equality situationer in Echague, Isabela**

1. Are you aware of any local gender equality or GBV policies in Echague? Do you know if you have a GAD code or an Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Catcalling ordinances or of their barangay counterpart?

*We have ordinances that are adopted from the VAWC law. We made a flow chart of how to give proper assistance to women victims.*

*Last June, we updated the local VAWC ordinance of Echague, and also the GAD code. We made a follow-up in the Philippine Commission on Women that the rights of the LGBT community shall be included in their GAD code.*

2. Have you and your organization participated in the development/passage of these policies?

*Yes, the Barangay Captains of Echague attended the public hearing and it was then discussed with the Barangay officials and VAW Desk officers.*

3. Have you ever access GAD funds of the barangay

*Majority of the community women told the CHR that they never knew about GAD funds, while there were two (2) Barangay officials said that they openly use GAD funds for their seminars and trainings.*

4. Is the VAW Desk in your barangay functional? (Established, trained officials, able to record VAWC cases, able to respond and issue BPO)

*Yes, VAW Desk in every Barangay is functional. We are able to record and respond to VAWC cases.*

## **II. Gender-based violence (GBV) in Echague**

1. What are the common forms of GBV in Echague?

*The Community women said that the common forms of GBV violence in Echague are Physical and Economic abuse.*

2. What are the challenges /barriers women experienced in:

- a.) Reporting and investigation of cases of GBV (PNP/VAW Desk)

*victims are not knowledgeable in the process and there are some unfortunate victims who do not have money for transportation.*

*Whenever complainants report to the police station, the PNP will turn them back to the Barangay.*

- b.) Prosecution and legal assistance (Prosecutor's office, PAO, VAW Desk)

*Some of the lawyers do not entertain low-income people.*

- c.) Support services (MSWDO, CSWDO, WCPUs)

*They are not firm with their decisions. After causing a scene to the Barangay, they always withdraw the case they filed.*

3. What are the groups of women that are most affected by GBV forms?

*Low- education women and women farmers are the groups of women that are most affected by GBV forms.*

4. What are the specific challenges/barriers experienced by women in seeking legal remedies in cases of GBV?

*lack of knowledge that discourages them to seek legal remedies.*



5. What are the challenges specific for women in the marginalized sector?

*most women in the marginalized sector are from rural places in Echague. It is very hard for them to seek legal remedies because aside from being poor, there are no interpreters present in every agency that could understand them.*

6. What have been the observed trends in GBV cases received in the past 5 year? What are possible economic, socio-political, cultural and other factors affecting this/these trends?

*Economic abuse has been a trend GBV case for the past 5 years until now. The factor affecting this trend is low-income occupation that forces them to be an OFW.*

### III. Flow case management

1. From your experience, what is often the entry point for women who seek report cases of GBV with the government services?

*their entry point to us is from the time they go to our office and complain about the violator.*

2. What are the available services for GBV survivors are women often aware of?

*Most of the women in our community know that we can provide them assistance and counselling.*

3. Which among the available services offered by the service provider are most often accessed by women and the possible factors affecting their choice of what to access?

*medical assistance and counselling*

4. Are there services that women victims survivors of GBV seek and often unable to access from government offices?

*Yes, in the Public Attorney's office. Lawyers choose who to serve. We encounter an unfair Judge who takes side with the fortunate ones.*

5. What services are they most frustrated/disappointed?

*Majority of the Community women told that they are very disappointed with the legal service of PAO and the Prosecution office.*

6. At which point in the process of GBV intervention that women often exit the formal helping system of the service provider, and what do you think are the underlying reasons for these?

*at the time when the complainant is already endorsed to a specific agency. But our monitoring is continuous because there are instances that they keep on coming back to us asking for assistance. So we can truly say that they exit the formal helping system when the case is done.*

#### IV. Documentation

1. Does your organization conduct documentation/research on GBV in your area? Can you provide a brief description of the documentation/research?

*we have VAWC logbooks in the Barangay. We get their general data for us to have a record so that we can share our record to the other helping agencies.*

2. Do you document cases of GBV that your organization or you assist or respond to? How is the system of documentation?

*Yes, aside from having VAW logbooks, we do interview for documentation and sometimes, we take pictures but again, we comply with the Data Privacy Law.*

3. From experience, is there a government good practice in responding to GBV?

*it is a good practice that they provide trainings on how we can contribute in GBV cases.*

4. Is there also cases that showcase difficulty in accessing justice/legal remedies in cases of GBV in Echague?

*Majority of the Community women told the CHR that the legal system in their city is biased especially when you belong to the low-income group of women.*

#### V. Recommendation

1. Are there information on GBV and women's human rights which could be of use to, and you would like to be available to your organization?

*we hope to have a copy of women's human right together with its policies and examples so that we can gain more knowledge about women's human right. We also need to have a continuous lecture and FGD like this wherein we can share our insights and update the CHR of our Barangays' condition.*

2. Are there information on GBV and women's human rights which you feel women vulnerable to GBV need to have more access to?

*the community needs a lawyer that gives just and fair service.*

*I agree. We also need psychosocial services that will help the victim recover from depression and traumas.*

3. Are there information on GBV and women's human rights which you feel the local population in general need to have more access to?

*we have to raise more awareness on Women's human rights.  
training on self- defence to prevent physical abuse.*

4. Other recommendations to the CHR as the gender ombud as mandated by the Magna Carta of Women

*We need a once a month Focused Group Discussion. With this FGD, we are able to gain information that will contribute to the growth and improvement of our community.*

### **END OF FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)**

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#### *Plenary Session:*

The two groups participated well during the Focus Grouped Discussion (FGD), which was followed by a closing remark. Lunch followed.

#### **Closing Remarks**

In closing, Atty. Marcos thanked the 25 participants for their fruitful discussions and active participation during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). She assured them that the independent report that the CHR will be drafting next will contain the participants' rich experiences and insights. She added that the successful regional consultation will not be the last but is only the first step towards giving a voice to everybody particularly the women of Region 02.

Below are the pictures taken during the Focused Grouped Discussion (FGD) at the SB Conference Hall, Municipal building, Echague, Isabela



## DOCUMENTATION REPORT

**Title of Activity** : Making Data Work for Women: Mapping of Legal Referral Mechanisms on Gender Based Violence (GBV)

**Venue/Location** : Amulung, Municipal Hall, Cagayan 3500

**Date Conducted** : September 11, 2019

### Participants:

The twenty-two (22) participants were composed of nineteen (17) females and three (5) males representing various sectors which include service providers, community women and the LGBT community.

	Name	Age	Sex	Description	Sector
1	Jennica	34	F	Assistant Provincial Prosecutor	Service Provider
2		51	F	Housewife	Community women
3		36	M	Punong Barangay	Community women
4		48	F	CDW	Service Provider
5		43	F		Community women
6		57	F		Community women
7	Nico	29	M	CNB President	Service Provider
8	James	53	M	Punong Barangay	Service Provider
9	Ravena	40	F	Police Major; WCPDPNCO Amulung	Service Provider
10		62	F	Senior Citizen	Community women
11		30	F	Housewife; resident of Barangay Cordova	Community women
12	Albert	49	M	PNP/COP	Service Provider
13		51	F	Housewife	Community women
14		47	F	Centro/ Icag	Community women
15	Francielle	29	F	Attorney at the Public Attorney's Office (PAO)	Service Provider
16		22	M	Youth; Member of the LGBT community; Barangay volunteer	LGBT Member
17		29	F	Housewife	Community women
18		35	F		Community women
19		27	F	Licenced Professional Teacher; MSWO staff; Social worker	Community women
20		52	F		Community women
21		43	F		Community women
22	Myrna	61	F	Senior Citizen; DSWD Representative	Service Provider

### **Preliminaries:**

Ms. Daquioag, the Public Information Officer of the CHR Regional Office 02, welcomed the participants to the Regional mapping of legal referral mechanisms on Gender Based Violence (GBV). She explained the flow of the program and asked the participants to introduce themselves to all the people present at the hall. Afterwards, Atty. Grace R. Marcos then explained the definition of Gender Based Violence (GBV) to the participants. She said that despite the passage of key legislations such as the Anti- Violence Against Women and their Children Law (RA 9262) the amended Anti-Rape Law (RA 8353), and the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710), Gender-based violence (GBV) remains pervasive in the Philippines. That is why the CHR with funding support from Go Just, undertook its GBV Observatory Project. The GBV observatory project contributes to the monitoring of the state's obligations in addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV). It aims for a deeper and wider understanding of GBV, enhancing women's access to justice, and in general, making data work for women. She said that their activity with regards to the GBV Observatory Project will serve as a starting point of the CHR to fulfill their mandates and that this report will be submitted on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November in time for the 18<sup>th</sup> day Campaign to end VAW.

Atty. Marcos also mentioned that in the region, the CHR monitors the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women (MCW), the Anti- Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), and other related laws on women.

She stressed the significance of the regional GBV mapping as an avenue where the CHR can gather inputs and insights from women across various sectors on the implementation of Gender and Development. Atty. Marcos encouraged everyone to participate actively in the group discussions and assured them that their sharing will be kept confidential.

### **Activity Mechanics:**

The activity was composed of a lecture and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The lecture on the Magna Carta of Women and CHR as Gender Ombud was delivered by Atty. Grace R. Marcos of the CHR.

After the lecture, the participants were asked to answer the questions in the focus group discussion guide to solicit their insights and inputs.

### **Activity Proper:**

*Lecture: Overview of Gender Based Violence (GBV)*

Lecturer: Atty. Grace R. Marcos, Regional GFPS, CHR RO2

Atty. Marcos of the CHR introduced the GBV Project to the participants as a resource hub for GBV, a repository of GVB data including normative standards on GBV from international to domestic level, as well as GBV researches particularly looking at how laws on GBV are implemented, and how GBV manifest in the lived experiences of women. She stated some of the provisions of Gender Based Violence and described many forms of discrimination against women through distinction, exclusion, or restriction. To make the participants fully understand the rampant discrimination against women, she cited some examples such as:



- Allied Health departments in some Universities are implementing female students to undergo a Pregnancy test. Those who will have a positive result in the Pregnancy test will not be allowed to study in the University.
- The removal or dismissal of pregnant women from their jobs (i.e. women who work in private institutions lose their jobs when they get pregnant)
- LGBT communities are being rejected in applying for a job for a reason that employers see their identity as a hindrance to give excellent service to the company's clients (i.e. some clients prefer to be accompanied by employees with the same gender as they are.)

She also gave a brief discussion of the CHR's mandate as Gender Ombud and she stated the objectives of the GBV observatory project are as follows:

- Gather regional data on GBV, particularly highlighting issues faced by the most marginalized and 'excluded,' a focus on intersectionality, and an analysis that looks into women's lived experience of GBV.

Afterwards, the participants were asked to form two groups according to the sector they represent (Service Providers or Community women) or to the topic where they can share their rich experiences or insight. Before the groups will begin with their FGD, the CHR seek the consent of the participants, explaining the data privacy compliance notice of the Commission, and introducing the consent and profile forms that the participants are requested to fill up. The CHR said that the participants will be assured on the office's compliance with Data Privacy Law in the handling of their personal information. The CHR said that the results of the mapping will form part of the Commission's Gender Based Violence Observatory and will be presented during the Regional GBV mapping schedules on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2019. Follow through activities may be planned with the service providers as a result of the issues and gaps raised during the FGDs.

## **FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION**

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### *Open Forum: Service Providers*

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) prepared questions regarding how Service Providers handle GBV cases, how they cooperate with other agencies, how they store documents of GBV cases and other related questions on GBV. Questions of the CHR together with Service providers insights are as follows:

### **I. Gender equality situationer in Amulung**

1. Basic demographics: for instance gender disaggregated data on per capita income, life expectancy, labor force participation or literacy available?

*Police Major Luis told that literacy level is sometimes a hindrance for them in getting complainant's statements and in filing a police blotter. While all of the participants in the Service Providers said that everybody is being assisted regardless of their status in life.*

2. Apart from National laws and international human rights instruments, what important gender equality policies in place at the local level? How are the policies operationalized by the local agencies?

*we have VAWDESK but even though they are oriented, they are still not knowledgeable enough to give an actual service to the complainants.*

*Atty. Francielle: The people's perception is that to file a Barangay blotter is enough. Barangay officials should encourage the complainants to also get a police blotter. The barangay officials should be capacitated from time to time.*

## II. Gender- based violence (GBV) in Amulung (In relation to gender-based violence)

1. What are the common forms of GBV received by the Service Providers?

*All of the Service providers in Amulung told the CHR that the common forms of GBV cases that they are receiving is Physical abuse. Nico, the Liga Ng Barangay President, said that most people are not knowledgeable in terms of economic abuse.*

2. Which groups of women are most affected by the GBV forms identified?

*Jennica, the Assistant Regional Prosecutor, reported that most victims are low-income women.*

*The Municipal Doctor said that most of the victims are women with disabilities. In fact, she had mute patient brought by an orphanage that is suffering from suspicious gastritis. They found out that the PWD is pregnant and were raped by her own father. While most of the Service providers told the CHR that most of the complainants/victims are housewives.*

3. What have been the observed trends in gender-based violence cases received in the past five years and what are possible economic, socio-political, cultural and other factors affecting this/these trends?

*The Service Providers told the CHR that the observed trends in gender-based violence cases received in the past five years are Physical and Economic abuse. They stated that the factor affecting these trends is lack of knowledge in their rights and obligations as a person according to their roles in their families and in the community.*

4. The Service Providers shared the cases to the CHR that they find as difficult case

*Doc: a rape case of a 5 years old PWD girl. The authorities had a hard time filing a case because there was no evidence. The family didn't bring the child immediately because of the threats they are receiving and lack of money for transportation.*

*Atty. Francielle: Rape case by her father and other men.*

5. Challenges and barriers experienced in:

- a) Reporting and investigation (PNP/ VAW Desk)

*PNP: During some investigations, it's heart-breaking for us to interview hungry and unfortunate victims. We get money from our own pockets to help complainants fill their empty stomach so we can interview them smoothly.*

b) Prosecution and legal assistance (Prosecutor's office, PAO, VAW Desk)

*Prosecution's office: Some are going to our offices asking assistance to cases that can be resolved at the Police station. An example of that is a crying woman asking for assistance because people call her witch.*

c) Providing support services (MSWDO, CSWDO, WCPUs)

*PNP: We find it challenging when a battered wife files a Physical abuse case against her husband and afterwards will withdraw the case and pay her husband's bail. It happens most of the time.*

*PAO: it's a challenge for us, women lawyers to defend violators of VAWCE and MCW.*

6. What are the best practices?

*The service providers said that it is a best practice for all of the agencies including CHR to encourage complainants to decide carefully before filing a case.*

### III. Flow of case management

1. What are the entry points for GBV cases to come formally into contact with the government services?

*Atty. Francielle of PAO told the CHR that their entry point for GBV to come formally into contact with their service are complainants referred by the PNP.*

*Other service providers including also PAO told that most of GBV complainants/victims come formally into contact with them through walk-in.*

2. The CHR asked the Service providers about the available services they provide for GBV survivors.

*The Public Attorney's Office (PAO) said that they give free legal assistance while the DSWD sponsors the fare of unfortunate complainants and provides counselling for their mental health issues. The municipal doctor also informed CHR that they also give free medical and physical exams, laboratory exams (except ultrasound), check-ups and vitamins for the baby.*

3. They were also asked what available services they offer that are most often accessed by women

*Among the service providers, Atty. Francielle of PAO said that most of her clients are women who ask for legal advice. She observed that a factor affecting their choice of what to access*

*is that women tend to trust more in PAO considering that in some cases, violators have connections with other agencies that hinder them to access their rights to file a case.*

4. At which point in the process of GBV intervention do women often exit the formal helping system of the service providers?

*The DSWD told that their clients exit the formal helping system of their agency when their client will testify to the court. On the other hand, the prosecutor and PAO said that clients exit the formal helping system of their agency after the appeal.*

#### **IV. Documentation**

1. When does documentation of GBV complaints start?

*All of them reported that their documentation starts upon contact with their agency, when a client seeks assistance whether it is legal or medical assistance.*

2. Could the CHR ask for a copy of forms? What is the standard information asked of women who access the service being provided by the agency?

*Service providers said that each agency maintain confidentiality. In the case with the PNP, they have a pink blotter that remains confidential and a general blotter that can be accessed by other authorities for an investigation of a case.*

3. How are these information filed and stored? How long will they be kept on the average? Does agency have an electronic data base for the case?

*PNP have an electronic database for their files while PAO, like the other agencies keep their records regardless of how long the case was finished.*

4. How are the information used? Does the agency publish summaries or reports of cases received?

*Service providers told the CHR that despite of their tons of records at their office, every agency is publishing summaries of cases received in compliance to their documentation policies.*

5. Who can access these files? Are other offices/ helping agencies allowed to have direct or full access to them? Researchers? What is the protocol for this, if any?

*As the service providers said, they maintain confidentiality but they are open to partner with CHR to access their files only for the betterment and investigation of the case.*

6. What information are made public and how at the local level, if at all (e.g. website, publications, statistics) are used in community education?

*General data can be accessed but are not made open to public especially in websites and publications.*

## V. Recommendations

*Majority of the Service providers recommend CHR to capacitate Barangay officials from time to time (i.e. re-orientation and continuous trainings) since they are the nearest agency to the community that can provide solution to an issue.*

### FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION

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*Open forum: Community women*

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) prepared questions regarding their awareness in GBV policies, how they cooperate with the authorities, how they document GBV cases, how they store files of GBV and other related questions on GBV. Questions of the CHR together with Community women's answers are as follows:

#### I. Gender equality situationer in Amulung

1. Are you aware of any local gender equality or GBV policies in Amulung? Do you know if you have a GAD code or an Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Catcalling ordinances or of their barangay counterpart?

*The community women shared to Atty. Marcos that they feel secured to have Anti-Tsismis Law in Amulung because this is causing quarrels among women.*

2. Have you and your organization participated in the development/passage of these policies?

*yes, there is a public hearing wherein we agreed for the passage of these policies.*

3. Have you ever accessed GAD funds of the barangay

*Community women: "No, we did not know we have GAD funds."*

4. Are the VAW Desk in your barangay functional? (Established, trained officials, able to record VAWC cases, able to respond and issue BPO)

*The community women told that they have trained Barangay officials who give assistance to VAWC complainants. They also give assistance to file a complaint to the prosecutor's office.*



## II. Gender-based violence (GBV) in Amulung

### 1. What are the common forms of GBV in Amulung?

*Physical and economic abuses are the common forms of GBV in Amulung as stated by the Community women.*

### 2. What are the challenges /barriers women experienced in:

- a.) Reporting and investigation of cases of GBV (PNP/VAW Desk)
- b.) Prosecution and legal assistance (Prosecutor's office, PAO, VAW Desk)

*The community women shared their challenges that hinder them to file a complaint to the authorities. They cited examples like:*

- *Complainants are threatened by violators (which is usually their husbands) that if they will proceed to the filing of case against them, they will stop giving support to their family.*
- *Violators have connections in the Barangay, Police stations and high authorities. They are given less priority than others and that usually result to dismissal of the case.*
- *Victims, specifically in barrios, do not have money for transportation to go to the Barangay/Police station.*

c.) support services (MSWDO, CSWDO, WCPUs)

*The community women who assist victims are being humiliated if there are cases that a certain complainant is not firm with her decision that leads to the withdrawal of the case after all the endorsements.*

### 3. What are the groups of women that are most affected by GBV forms?

*The Community women reported to the CHR that they have observed that women that are farmers and women with disabilities are the group of women that are most affected by the GBV forms.*

### 4. What are the specific challenges/barriers experienced by women in seeking legal remedies in cases of GBV? What are the challenges specific for women in the marginalized sector?

*the lack of knowledge in their rights as a person, more specifically as a women serves as a hindrance for them to seek legal remedies especially in cases of GBV. How can the CHR disseminate information on Human Rights to the PWD if the interpreters are very few?*

### 5. What have been the observed trends in GBV cases received in the past 5 year? What are possible economic, socio-political, cultural and other factors affecting this/these trends?

*Ever since, husbands that are OFWs usually commit adultery that results to Economic abuse to his family here in the Philippines has been a trend.*

*As a part of the LGBT community, growing up, I have been a battered child. I strongly believe that I am not the only one who experienced being beaten up for being a gay.*

### **III. Flow case management**

1. From your experience, what is often the entry point for women who seek report cases of GBV with the government services?

*As to the Community women, most of their entry point is by their concern to their fellow women. In an instances like seeing their friend having bruises and overheard stories of physical abuse from the victim's child. Afterwards, they do interview.*

2. What are the available services for GBV survivors are women often aware of?

*The community women are aware of the legal assistance that PAO offers and the counselling that the DSWD provide.*

3. Which among the available services offered by the service provider are most oftenly accessed by women and the possible factors affecting their choice of what to access?

*GBV complainants tend to seek legal assistance to a woman barangay official. We observed that the factor affecting to this is comfortablity and security. Women get relief if they know that authorities could really understand their situation.*

4. Are there services that women victims survivors of GBV seek and often unable to access from government offices?

*Majority of the community women said that most of the complainants find it really hard to access in the Police station because violators have a lot connection in the police station. They are very disappointed with the service of the PNP. Some are not being entertained.*

5. At which point in the process of GBV intervention that women often exit the formal helping system of the service provider, and what do you think are the underlying reasons for these?

*The Community women said that their exit point in giving assistance is when they refer the victim to the service providers. In most cases, their exit point with the victims is when the violator is already in jail. They said that the underlying reasons of why they assist the victim until the end, is that not all agencies provide biased services that is why they are still at the victims side to guide them until the resolution of the case.*

### **IV. Documentation**

1. Does your organization conduct documentation/research on GBV in your area?  
Can you provide a brief description of the documentation/research?

*Yes, we take pictures for documentation purposes only. We apply the data privacy law to maintain confidentiality with our files. On the other hand, we also have a log book for us to have a record of their general information. We have interview and in-take form, VAWC logbook*

2. Do you document cases of GBV that your organization or you assist or respond to? How is the system of documentation?

*Yes, we document cases of GBV and we also have VAWC forms to be filled up by the complainant/victim.*

*Other participants in the community women told the CHR that they only have VAWC logbook and they do not have VAWC forms.*

3. From experience, is there a government good practice in responding to GBV?

*Yes, we have seen a great improvement from other agencies giving good services to every complainant as the CHR does follow-ups dissemination of GBV policies and information to every agency.*

4. Is there also cases that showcase difficulty in accessing justice/legal remedies in cases of GBV in Amulung?

*Yes, women are threatened to seek legal assistance if the violators are in the agencies where they should make a report or file a case.*

## **V. Recommendation**

1. Are there information on GBV and women's human rights which could be of use to, and you would like to be available to your organization?

*the CHR should provide an emotional rebuilding program that helps victims heal from an emotional abuse. She further explained that in most cases, a victim's dignity was damaged and could still be damaged despite of receiving legal, medical and financial assistance.*

2. Are there information on GBV and women's human rights which you feel women vulnerable to GBV need to have more access to?

*women should participate continuously to every GBV seminars conducted by the CHR so that they can be an instrument of the CHR to inform and reach out more women about their rights as a human being.*

3. Are there information on GBV and women's human rights which you feel the local population in general need to have more access to?

*we hope to disseminate information about economic abuse to all women especially those who live in Barrios. They suffer a lot from poverty due to abandonment of their husbands.*

4. Other recommendations to the CHR as the gender ombud as mandated by the Magna Carta of Women

*The community women recommend the CHR to invite more men (especially husbands) to participate on Gender Based Violence (GBV) seminars and orientations since they are the top violators.*

#### *Plenary Session:*

The two groups participated well during the Focus Grouped Discussion (FGD), which was followed by a closing remark. Lunch followed.

#### **Closing Remarks**

In closing, Atty. Marcos thanked the 22 participants for their fruitful discussions and active participation during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). She assured them that their insights and the results of the mapping will form part of the Commission's Gender Based Violence Observatory and will be presented during the Regional GBV mapping schedules on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2019.

Below are the pictures taken during the Focused Grouped Discussion (FGD) at the Amulung, Municipal Hall



