

REPORT PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGIONAL SUMMIT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Viajera Cafe and Dine
Koronal City
November 25, 2019

THE REGIONAL SUMMIT
AGAINST GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE

Virginia Gate and Dine
Korona City
November 25, 2019



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Welcome Address by Miguel A. Penaloza Chief, Investigation Division, CHR 12

In his speech, CHR Chief Penaloza cited the recurring violence against women according to the results of the National Demographic Health Survey in 2018. He said, “research shows that 1 out of 4 women has experienced violence with their partner; 1/3 of women sought help, 2/3 did not — these women may have just endured the pain and applied some hot compressed on their bruised faces. He added that the common source of help is with the women’s family; the remaining 85% sought help from their friends.”

What can you expect from that? *May mga anak na pag nagsumbong sa nanay nila, they just give this advice... “agwantaha lang day, ana jud kung maminyo ka.”* (Some daughters complained to their mothers and usually get this type of advice — just bear with it, it’s the case when you get married). The report came from the 2017 National ethnographic gender and health survey. From 2017 up to the present, the numbers have not gone down. This needs to go down.

This report is inconsistent with the global survey where our country is being highly regarded as a gender-equal country in Asia. We have good leaders, but despite this highly esteemed position, we have many unresolved VAWC cases. There is an apparent disconnect with our current laws on gender and development and Magna Carta for women.

In this case, we still have a long way to go in reaching our “corrective” goal, which is to establish and maintain a society that respects, protects and fulfill the rights of women.

So, on behalf of our Regional Director, Atty. Deluvio; on behalf of the men and women of CHR Region 12, we welcome you all to this Regional GBV Summit. Thanks again for coming!

Introduction of Participants

Overall, the summit was moderated by Loreto Condesa, from the Promo Division of CHR 12.

To start the workshop, LCondesa acknowledged the participants who came from various regional government line agencies, local government units, and civil society organizations.

1. KAAGAPAY, Cotabato City
2. OFW Children, Cotabato City
3. CHAN Change, Cotabato City
4. Mindanao Women’s resource center
5. Alliance of Sri-People for the advancement of Human Rights
6. POPCOM region 12
7. DENR 12
8. Bureau of Fire and Protection 12
9. DA Region 12

10. PNP Region 12
11. Dep Ed Region 12
12. CSC Region 12
13. DSWD Field Office 12
14. PAO 12
15. Sultan Kudarat State University
16. CENTRO SOCSARGENT
17. Palembang MSWDO
18. Palembang LGU
19. Palembang CSO
20. San Roque CSO
21. Social Welfare Officer of Palembang
22. Federation of Day Care Workers, Palembang

explained that the participants from Kidapawan City were not able to come due to earthquake calamity that hit Kidapawan City in surrounding areas. The participants are currently all occupied with attending to the needs of the victims in the evacuation centers at the moment. He further explained that Kidapawan was one of the study areas of the GBV study.

Inspirational Message from DSWD

On behalf of DSWD Regional Director of Region 12, the Head of the Protective Services Division, Ms. Nyra Aratol delivered the message.

Good morning. I was asked by our Regional Director to represent him since he is busy attending to the Earthquake victims in Kidapawan City; he is now visiting all evacuation centers and all other disaster operation activities.

Our partners from the different line agencies, VWC desks, NGOs, partner LGUs (Palembang), everyone, good morning.

Our RD's message reads:

DSWD as the lead agency in social protection and poverty alleviation, we continue to serve the interest of the vulnerable sectors of our society, particularly, the women and the children.

The reenactment of the RA 9262 or the anti-VAWC act of 2004; the Republic Act against children and the Exploitation and Discrimination Act and its IRR — are examples of true reform, implemented for the protection and improved quality of life of women and the children.

This is also one of the milestones established, in addition to the refutable linkage, between and among line agencies, LGUs and CSOs, — hand in hand we work together to deliver the services and mainstream the interest of women and children.

DSWD's accomplishment includes: serving 21,092 women and 500 thousand children served through our programs such as Bangon for the Bangsamoro, recovery reintegration program for trafficking in persons, minors traveling abroad, alternative rehabilitation care programs and center residential care facilities.

Under our VAWC program, we served 28 women and children under the residential care facilities and the Pantawid program; others were provided with auxiliary services, community-based rehabilitation, assistance with an individual in a crisis, livelihood training and capital assistance, and job placement assistance for women with disabilities.

For this year's 18-day campaign to end VAWC from November 25 to December 12, with the slogan "Change starts with me" — we plan to also put up referral pathways in our evacuation centers - as there are cases of trafficking observed inside the evacuation centers. This will provide a better referral mechanism for our IDPs.

SESSION 1: What is Gender-Based Violence

Ms. Zia Lauban gave a presentation on the salient aspect of Gender-Based Violence

The following points were highlighted in her presentation:

Laws on violence against women in the Philippines

- Before 1995 - women's interest and rights were not so protected
- After 1995: women's rights movement took a progressive turn as laws were enacted and amended to better protect women's welfare
- In the case of the Anti Rape Act of 1997; there was an added provision on marital rape...i.e. "The 1997 amendment allowed the legal recognition of **rape** of males, both by other males and by females. However, **rape** against males is only considered by law as **rape** by sexual assault, which carries a lesser penalty of six to 12 years as opposed to the same **act** against females which are penalized by life imprisonment."

Refer to Annex A for a detailed discussion on the presentation.

SESSION 2: CHR, Its Role as Gender Ombud

This session was presented by Rizalyn C. Isnani-Concha, Regional GAD Focal for CHR Region 12.

Ms. Concha presented the highlights of the GBV Mapping project conducted in the Municipality of Palembang and the City of Kidapawan.

To give a background, Ms. Concha gave a brief presentation about the work of CHR and CHR as a Gender Ombud.

She mentioned that the participants from Kidapawan City could not come to the GBV Summit because of the much recent unfortunate event that transpired in the area — the series of strong earthquakes that ravaged the city's infrastructure and the casualties that is now seeking shelter in the 26 evacuation camps. She added that the Women's Federation in Kidapawan City also helped in responding to the EQ disaster.

In this case, she highlighted the need to strengthen the implementation of GBV in a humanitarian setting, as this is a rather new area that has not been given much attention and which should also be prioritized.

Highlights of the presentation include:

- All CHR regions have Gender Ombud where this is integrated into all CHR offices and as well as its functions.
- There are penalties for non-compliance
- It's been 10 years since the passage of Magna Carta for Women but not all line agencies are compliant.
- CHR monitors compliance to performance of line agencies in terms of women empowerment and putting in place Institutional mechanisms to fully implement gender and development.
- CHR conducts yearly monitoring of VAWC desks and that there are still some LGUs who was not able to comply fully
- Gender Ombud Guidelines 2015 provides implementation policies and serves as guidelines for line agencies
- CHR GEWHRC - offers services depending on the needs of the regions such as GBV mapping for region 12, FGD women in detentions centers and women in labor especially the entry of EPZ in Gen San.
- Strengthening NHRI and Gender Ombud Mandates here in Region 12 and a consultative meeting on Reproductive Health was recently conducted.

A short video presented about GBV Observatory Project

- this is currently being launched by CHR and the results of our GBV summits will be presented under the observatory project.
- GBV summit presents gaps and challenges per municipality - represented by CSOs and LGUs

Ms. Concha also reported on the series of FGDs conducted in the Municipality of Palembang and Kidawan City (for detailed information please refer to Annex B).

She highlighted the common issues encountered by the two areas:

- Lack of Shelter: although this is available in Region 12 this is too far for many communities and survivor victims; the need to establish shelters in the Barangay is being pushed by service providers
- Cultural practices hinder the effective implementation of VAWC laws.

SESSION 3

Best Practices, Current Trends, Emerging, Trends and Issues, Continuing Challenges and Concerns Panel Speakers

1. Member of RIACATVAW (PAO XII), Atty. Dinah, Cornejo

Atty. Cornejo linked her topic to the earlier presentation on GBV by Zia Lauban, CHR Region 12 Focal for Children.

She added that laws provided substantial coverage in protecting women and children but the specific context and situations of survivor victims make the implementation of the laws challenging for PAO.

Atty. Cornejo shared stories of VAWC cases she has encountered as PAO:

- Anti-trafficking in persons act 2003: refers to recruitment and transportation for employment abroad, usually in Mindanao; the Philippines ranks 2nd worldwide for sexual exploitation and organ donor. Then the Expanded trafficking law in response to recruitment in the guise of overseas work employment. Under RA 9262 refers to women and children, ormer wife and former husband.
- Economic abuse is the reason why victims do not file complaints. In many instances, the husband is the only one working and the wife does not have the economic capacity to defend herself. More often than not, a week after the husband's imprisonment, they ask us to released their husbands "*kasi mamamatay sila sa gutom* (they will die from starvation)." But it's not that easy, it takes 3-4 months to release the husband upon the Judge's confirmation. A VAWC case requires a bail bond of 60-80 thousand pesos (Php 60-80,000). Most of them cannot afford the bond, especially for families in the low-income bracket. Their children drop out of school and have no food to eat. — that is the reality. So, the survivor victim will be forced to seek her husband's release. But most often I ask this question to the victim...what if he will hurt you again? But, the victim is left with no choice — for the future of her children she has to make a sacrifice, she will accept the set-up.
- We also have come across cases of sexual abuse. It's the same set-up, a 14-year-old girl from Isulan, filed a rape case against her father and she left the house and stayed with her relatives for a while. But her mother got sick and needs medicine — her 2 siblings are still young and in school. So, her mother asked her to withdraw the case and to release her father from detention. They approached us for help on this and I told them that it will take 6 months to process the appeal and whether the court will grant it. I advised the victim to pursue the case, but she replied, "*Hindi ko naman kaya pakainin yung nanay ko...or bilihan ng gamot* (*I have no means to feed my mother nor buy her medicines*)."
- In another case, after she was raped, the victim went to Tacloban and lived with her aunt. After a year, she returned home but her father, the perpetrator, was still there. Her mother said she will pursue filing a case. But as PAO, I cannot file it without the victim's testimony, the victim said, "*pinatawad ko na*"(I already forgave him). She did not say, he did not do it. I asked, why are you letting him off, she replied, "my siblings and my uncles will be mad at me; we are staying under our uncles home." The father belongs to the middle-class family. Those are the realities, what can we do? The mother was bent on pursuing the case and said, "*pag yan di mo kinasuhan ako ang lalayas, sabi ng bata, magpapakamatay na lang ako...*" (the mother threatened to kill herself if her daughter refuses to file a case). The mother said she will leave the house if she will not pursue the case and the child said she will kill herself. The child is confused, she does not know what to do, she's just about 14 years old then.

- Incest cases are rampant — usually, the victims bow out of the case at the initial state, they file a case and withdraw right away.
- Psychological abuse — several cases on stalking, damage to property and marital infidelity. As often the case, we have cases involving police and military servicemen. There's this case of a policeman who was being asked to provide for monthly stipends for his children with his wife and 3 other women. But then his salary is not enough to fully provide for everyone — our dilemma was how to apportion his salary everyone.
- Economic abuse: I usually handle at least 5 VAWC cases a day. To hasten the process, when my clients come to me for this type of problem, these are the things I ask right away... *gusto mo ba ipakulong (do you want to imprisonment for the perpetrator)?* What do you want to happen? However, these are the usual remedies asked by my clients... monetary support, legal separation or protection order.
- Core practice for us as a rule, when the victim comes to us needing protection order, we respond right away. The TPO must be filed in court right away —this is our highest priority... *"baka tomorrow patay na yun complainant, we never know.* We do this within the day and the court is mandated by law to issue a TPO within the day. It is good for 30 days until a permanent protection order will be issued. In all instances, on the choices I have mentioned, *"ang hindi namin kaya ibigay ay mahal in sila ulit ng asawa nila. Pero hindi naman kami therapist and we just say, other choices can be offered, so choose those options (I would often tell my client that one thing I cannot help her with is to make her husband love her again — I am not a therapist)."*
- Sometimes both wife and child are being abused. We had this case of a mother who worked abroad for her family; the husband was left with their daughters. One time, the eldest daughter had to be brought to the hospital for a check-up, it was found out that the reason for her illness was that she just went through an abortion. Then it was also found out that her father was abusing her and it went on for many years starting when she was 13 years old. We asked her why she did not alert anyone about her situation — she said that she did want her sister to be abused by their father as well. However, the sister got pregnant as well with their father's child. Her aunt was the one who filed a case, but she was also crying because she also wanted to help her brother, the perpetrator. These are cases that make things complicated and families are divided with their sympathies... as to who will help first?

Barangay Protection Order and support from DSWD are sometimes not available in poorer local government units or areas. A third class municipality in most cases lacks the needed resources to establish a shelter for victims who needs protection.

For battered women, if they happen to kills their partners for grave reasons, the court can rule it out as self-defense. It's going to need the help of a psychologist who can certify and provide proof of an actual imminent threat. There's what we call a "battered wife syndrome". With BTS, even if the imminent threat is just in the mind of the victims, it can be considered as self-defense, *"baka papatayin niya ako bukas, so uunahan ko na sya. Hindi niya kailangan, hintayin na patayin sya, kasi nag escalate yan, dati binubugbog lang sya."*

I have several clients in this type of situation...one of my clients used to submit copies of her yearly medical certificate for 10 years to my office. The time when she was badly hurt because

her husband banged her head on the wall, that was the time when she finally decided to file a case.

With BWS, you can do it immediately, as long as you can show that you have been badly abused physically i.e. you were hospitalized or your life was endangered.

For some women, it's a cycle of emotional abuse...i.e. her husband keeps picking on her, having all sorts of complaints and then the woman does everything to appease her male partner. But then it escalates, the women get physically abused; she decides to leave her partner. This is the time when the guy begs for forgiveness and asked her to live with him again. This is also a problem encountered by our DSWD personnel, the women suddenly drop the case and say her husband has realized his mistakes and promised to change.

And it will go on and on — a cycle of violence. Our role is to provide counsel and what her rights are. The LGU officials provide a protection order including confiscation of the deadly weapon and escort the victim to the hospital. This is what needs to be done the local officials,

What are the consequences of having a protection order? The victim can drive an abusive husband from their house. It's an amended law that gives power to neighbors, PNP and local officials to intervene on a case that merits it. They can file a case even without the consent of the wife or victim — it's mandated under the law.

Why is medico-legal necessary? You are going to need it in the filing of the criminal case.

Commonly encountered problems in filing a case:

1. Filing a case needs certification from the doctor who provided the "medico-legal." It becomes complicated when you need the doctor in court — most often the medical doctor does not have the time to do this. Some of our rape cases get dismissed when the doctor does not come to provide an affidavit with the lawyer's presence and appear in court. I asked DOH on their response to this problem and they are grappling with this situation at the moment.
2. Getting a medical certificate needs resources and many women victims do not have the means to do this..." without a medico-legal she could not win."
3. Compared to the barangay local government units, DOH has yet to improve its referral mechanism on VAWC. Currently, when victims seek medico-legal, they don't voluntarily report grave cases to the PNP for further investigation. The DOH should proactively pursue this case...in their health assessment, they need to have certain degree of decision making on whether the case merits deep investigation on their part and case referral to PNP — *"dapat interviewhin na siya kaagad at pag nalaman ng pulis na tama yung assessment ng health personnel, hindi na yan sya pauwiin...may protection order na kaagad sya, sa atin hindi pa ganun; under the law dapat meron na ang DOH ng separate VAWC desk."*
4. The barangay center, LGU, and NGO must provide counseling. In big cities, like Gen Santos, they have a crisis center.
5. BPO means the husband is not allowed to enter the family house; he can be incriminated in court if found violating the protection order.
6. A separate logbook should be kept for VAWC cases. Barangay settlement should not be the case and they are not authorized to grant the settlement...It can be made at a higher level upon referral.

2. Member of RGADC (DENR Region 12)

Mary Ann Tenorio, GAD Focal

When we talk of GBV, the "Culture of Silence" still prevails. Maybe you would ask why women refuse to come out? Maybe because of several reasons such as inadequate support system; *natatakot sila baka balikan sila* (fear of the consequences), *nahihiya sila ito ang pinakamabigat* (fear of being put to shame which is most often the prime reason). Also, there's the fear of not being believed in, being socially ostracised. These are the reasons why women keep things in silence.

Since March 2018, I have been assigned to the office of the Regional Executive Director of DENR. I came from the MGB office. When you are at the office of the RED, you sometimes act as counsellor...listening to complains, problems, disagreements, intrigues and gossips.

At your indulgence, I would like to share a few stories of women who encountered gender-based violence at work. These stories were relayed to me as GAD Focal.

Ms. S was invited to a dinner by a man who we call the mystery guy. While dining, the mystery guy moved to hold the hand of the woman...and started pinching it. Upon leaving the table, the mystery guy extended his arm to hold the woman's shoulder, *so parang MU sila*. But then they are not in a relationship. They are not even close friends. They had dinner together because the seminar they were attending did not serve dinner...so they went out to eat.

After that incident, Ms. S. was busy with work and deadlines that day, she went on overtime alone. So, she was approached by a man, casually asking her what she is doing. But then she was too busy to respond...after receiving no reply, she was told by the guy, "aka mo virgin ka..".

As she told her story to me, I told her that if you are not comfortable with what he's done to you...tell the guy that his act action is not okay to you. After that, before we parted ways, I told her to be careful next time.

Is it bad not to answer the question of a guy, if you are busy doing your work? No, right?

Are the guy's words appropriate? Is it offensive? Yes. Some people may treat this as a joke. But given the circumstances, *hindi talaga kasi may pagka seryoso* (this is certainly not a joke, the way the guy acted).

I developed concern and these stories made me feel alarmed. When women confide to you about this, how would you extend help to people in these instances? Some people might say "*palampasin mo na lang yan* (just let it slide)..."

In Feb 2019, I was designated as GAD Focal person. The function was not clear to me then and there are many things I didn't know. I didn't know that there is an online resource on GAD planning and budgeting. At least now, the PCW (Philippine Commission on Women) has developed a system on this. I did not know the engendering process such as integrating gender in the programs and projects of the office. I had to learn all of this upon assuming the post.

So, the regional's offices were required to attend the formulation of the GAD agenda. I attended and we were able to formulate 3 goals for our office.

As agreed by all DENR offices, the first 2 goals refer to our clients which is on resilience and priority programs of Sec. Cimatú. Goal 3 is the organizational focus which is on the strengthening of the organizational practices for gender equality and women empowerment. This requires equal participation of women in the decision-making process.

As the well-known women's advocate and writer Nayla Kabir puts it, "empowerment is the ability to choose what you need to do."

As a GAD Focal for DENR Region 12, I must steer the special order to protect, defend women who have experienced violence in the workplace and the house. We will assist and needed support groups that they can count on. Also, space where they can seek solace.

Our GAD Committee members already had some background on VAWC laws. We organized an orientation for our Focal Point System which Riza Concha of CHR 12 served as our Resource Speaker.

Our Focal Points are well represented from the DENR offices at the National to Sub-national level.

We want DENR to be a gender responsive environment.

Challenges that need to be addressed:

1. Behavioral and cultural change among the people in DENR
2. The need for support from down up. We saw the need to cascade protection and referral mechanism in every section of our offices — then problems arise this can be sorted out in their level first and to a large extent prevent GBV from occurring.
3. The need for capacity building and massive IEC work, so people will be made more aware of what is right and not right (i.e. abusive acts).
4. We need an in-house psychologist, we want this to be a healing process and facilitate psychosocial healing for victims of GBV in our office.
5. Cascade to the eight other offices of DENR Region 12 i.e. 8 CENROs and 4 PENROs.

I end my talk with a saying... "one day you will tell your story about what you went through and it will be someone else's survival guide."

Sultan Kudarat State University
Dr. Suzie D. Daza, Gender and Development Director

Like what our reporter has mentioned, I also don't know why I became a GAD Focal... probably because of the trust and confidence of our University President. I teach Physics at SKSU and this role seems a little different from my line of work at SKSU.

It's been six (6) months since I have been assigned GAD Focal. And I can see best practices emerging from our efforts in this period already.

We have 8 campuses in the region; we have 8 GAD coordinators. Each campus has a GAD Office.

We conduct regular Women's Month Celebration and activities range from interfaith dialogue to feel good services for women such as massage, hair, manicure/pedicure for our teachers and staff. We also have men availing of the services.

We also have programs for our male members at the university. We now celebrate Father's Day" and this includes everyone — from our top officials down to our utility staff employees.

We were oriented on GAD Planning and Budgeting by the University of the Philippines. Afterward, we trained 50 key officials on Gender Sensitivity Training. We hope that these top raking employees will be able to cascade their knowledge to their respective employees.

Since August 2018, our Core program on GAD centers on values. This is based on the guidance of the Council for the Restoration of Filipino Values. As we cascade this program, we are focusing on strategies to restore the values of SKSU — from the officials, employees and down to our students.

Our Achievements:

1. Established the Values Restoration Program of SKSU
2. Prepared our GAD Action Plan for 1 year and approved by the President

Lessons

1. Heads should be very supportive of the program for it to succeed and prosper
2. Active participation in the National Capacity Building for VRP. This is anchored by the mandate of the Civil Service Commission on the Values Restoration Program.
3. Involvement of 500 teaching and non-teaching personnel; attended the VRP orientation. Everyone now is aware of their important role in the values restoration program of our university.
4. Beef up our GAD members by training more people. We trained 50 key officials and appointed them as VRO (Values Restoration officers). We already have 51 people who graduated as VROs, thus far.
5. As academe, we are more in strengthening values, when we do this well, this will cascade at home and harmonize our relationship with our families.

Challenges:

1. Funding — the need to beef up our resources for GAD to keep up with our slated activities

2. Good Values cannot be achieved overnight, we are fully aware that tangible changes take a while but we will not stop until we reached this point.
3. One of our topics is the anti-sexual harassment act. We have no complaints so far but actual cases may not be reported. I hope the victims will have enough courage to report, as this can potentially happen to our students.
4. Restoration of values is important for our student's protection. Our biggest problem is the high incidence of teenage pregnancy. We have students who bring their small children to school for lack of child minding options.

Lastly, our work and financial plan for 2020 highlights important activities such as Child minding activity; organizing boarding house owners as partners to care for our students; and organizing of solo parents;

4. CSO - Mindanao Tri-People Women Resource Center Senceridad Soler, Executive Director

Our program is mainly geared for grassroots women. As a leading advocate on women empowerment, we believe na that this is the most important aspect in our capacity-building intervention.

Since 2002, VAWC has been a critical issue — *mula nun lumalabas pa din ito* (it is still happening). And what CHR is saying about this is true, that 2/3 of violent incidents are not being reported. We often observe this in the local areas but are hidden or outside the radar of the local government units and the police authorities.

Most of these are cases of physical violence and is a cycle of violence. There are several instances where a case has been filed and revolved — it still happens again and again. In this particular instance, we advise that victims should file another VAWC case the second time.

But most women are still not confident about exercising their rights and that is why further awareness-raising is needed.

The most common issues encountered by women in the communities we have supported are sexual, rape and human trafficking issues.

What do we do?

- Awareness-raising for women; we have been doing this since 2002. We will keep on doing this until women we are empowered enough to protect ourselves.
- Despite the gender awareness training that women as attended, violence against women still occurs. This is why we make it a point to involve men and young men. We conduct gender education for men and deepen their understanding of violence against women.
- We also help in filing VAWC cases through referral. Despite our limitations on providing adequate legal services, we have several victims approaching us for assistance.

- We see the importance of coordination between and partnership among service providers, resources and expertise. We need to continue this sharing among service providers.
- In times of disasters, we also have responded by helping, studying gender-based violence and monitoring in the Marawi Siege humanitarian response. We reached out to 8 barangays, help settle GBV cases among our women IDPs. As a new area of work, much work on understanding the context is needed and of which we can draw lessons from in times of humanitarian response.
- In times of disasters, we see domestic violence increasing; mainly due to the situation and conditions in the evacuation camps.
- We also observed cases of trafficking. We formed the GBV core group among IDPs. Women find it hard to share their experiences in times of disasters...even more so than usual. We strive to provide immediate response and commitment to the communities on our campaign against GBV.

Challenges

Our challenge is providing adequate legal services as organisationally we don't have that expertise. So coordination among line agencies and sharing of expertise are important.

Another is research and documentation — we hear a lot of cases that are only being narrated to us and which do not get referred to the barangay and PNP. It is important to capture the reasons and circumstances and come up with comprehensive analysis and to adequately respond to our current problems.

Shelter for GBV survivors. We've had cases on and we had difficulties supporting the victims and finding a secure shelter. There were times when we had to move 4 times in one year for the security of the victim. Also, we need to secure the safety of the people supporting the victim.

We also collaborate with partners working on other sectors such as environment, human rights, and peace building. The majority of volunteers and supporters are women and we often grapple with finding adequate means to protect them when they do advocacy work on human rights and GBV in the community.

OPEN FORUM

DILG: question for PAO, we have heard sad cases on VAWC, what are the programs that are intended for our victims, to help them continue with their lives after going through great difficulties and give them hope?

PAO: in the way VAWC is structured, the obligation or extension of support is channeled through the barangay, police, DOJ, PAO and the courts. Most of the victims see placed a high priority on the education of their children. In most cases, victims asked for monetary support for their children; it gets even more difficult when the perpetrator is put in jail and no monetary support is given to the family.

Barangay: How do we validate paternity?

PAO: If the name of the father is indicated in the birth certificate, one can file a VAWC.

PNP WCPD: How do we file a case on economic abuse?

PAO: pwede mag file directly VAWC, pero may mga requirements.

VAW desk Palembang: we seldom seek to advise from PAO because our area is isolated; a woman asked us for help — the husband was detained in General Santos City for a year, and so the wife needs to be certified as indigent and help the husbands case which is drug-related. How can we support in this case?

PAO: we handle a lot of drug cases, but it's a little difficult to seek immediate release and depends on how much drugs were found under his possession.

Bureau of Fire: Do we need to have a BPO certificate when we file VAWC?

PAO: It depends on the situation - it can be medico-legal pr BPO. But you can go directly to the PNP. A BPO is powerful, compared to a criminal/civil case.

PNP Palembang: We are not able to exercise BPO...

PAO: You need to work this out with the DILG, the perpetrators will be incriminated if they don't obey the BPO.

PNP: Our barangay does not know to issue a BPO.

**Updates: Regional Research on the Functionality Level of VAW Desks in Koronadal City
By Dr. Susan Rolluqui, Notre Dame of Marbel University
Research and Publication Centre**

presented the aims of the study:

1. Determine the functionality level of the VAW desk in the following areas: establishment, resources, policies, plans and budget; and accomplishment;
2. Describe the provision of services to clients or victim-survivors by the VAW desks;
3. Determine the implications of the manner of services facilitation of the VAW desk officers to clients or victim-survivors;
4. Identify the implications of the experiences of victim-survivors as seekers of protection and justice, to the functionality of the VAW desks.

She also presented the research design, research instrument, and data analysis methodologies. The detailed report of her presentation can be found in the Annex report.

Participants did not have further questions on the research after the presentation.

The GBV summit ended with a message of appreciation from CHR 12.

- End of Report -