

PROFILE OF IRIGA CITY



Iriga City is located about 400 kilometres (250 mi) south-east of Manila, and about 33 kilometres (21 mi) south of Naga, Camarines Sur. Iriga is bounded by the town of Buhi in the east, by the municipalities of Baao, Nabua and Bato in the west, by the province of Albay in the south, and by the municipalities of Ocampo and Sangay in the north.

Comprising of 36 barangays, it has a total land area of 17,400 hectares or 174 sq. kilometers classified into the following land uses: 78.31% agricultural, 14.96% residential, .065% commercial, .05% industrial, .27% institutional, and .033% parks & open spaces and 6.32% timber/forest land.

Iriga is politically subdivided into thirty-six (36) barangays. In the 2015 census, the population of Iriga was 111,757 people, with a density of 810 inhabitants per square kilometre or 2,100 inhabitants per square mile. It has a total of 21,717 households.

Sex distribution data, per 2010 National Statistics Office (NSO) Survey, shows that out of the 105,919 population, 53,224 or 50.25% are males while 52,695 or 49.75% are females. As to age distribution, 51,244 or 48.38% account for the 19 years old and below, while 54,675 or 51.62% comprises the 20 years old and above.

As a 4th class component city in the province of Camarines Sur, Iriga City has a poverty incidence of 28.42% (2015)

Process Documentation on the Regional
Mapping of Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
Legal Referral Mechanisms



Virtual Focus Group Discussion
on the Gender Based Violence Legal Referral Mechanisms
with Government Service Providers in Iriga City

September 16, 2020 Online Focus Group Discussion on Gender-Based Violence Legal Referral Mechanisms for Government Service Providers

The participants are the following:

1. Atty. Arlene Alangco, Regional Director of CHR Regional Office 5
2. Geneva Avila, Information, Officer II of CHR Regional Office 5
3. Jecca Mae Hermogeno, City Health Office
4. Associate City Prosecutor Neryl Deris, City Prosecutor's Office
5. Asst. City Prosecutor Antonette Beriña-Bance, City Prosecutor's Office
6. Atty. Joy Rivera-Sabaybay, Public Attorney's Office
7. Josephine Bongon-Serdeño, Social Welfare Officer III, CSWDO
8. Leah Fatima Barbonio, City Social Welfare and Development Office
9. Darling Eurea Abion, City Social Welfare and Development Office
10. PB Princes Nachor Orbon Monsalve, San Miguel, Iriga City
11. Sharon L. Tud, SWO I and Special Case Division Head, CSWDO

The Focus Group Discussion started at 1:15 in the afternoon and was facilitated by Ms. Geneva Avila.

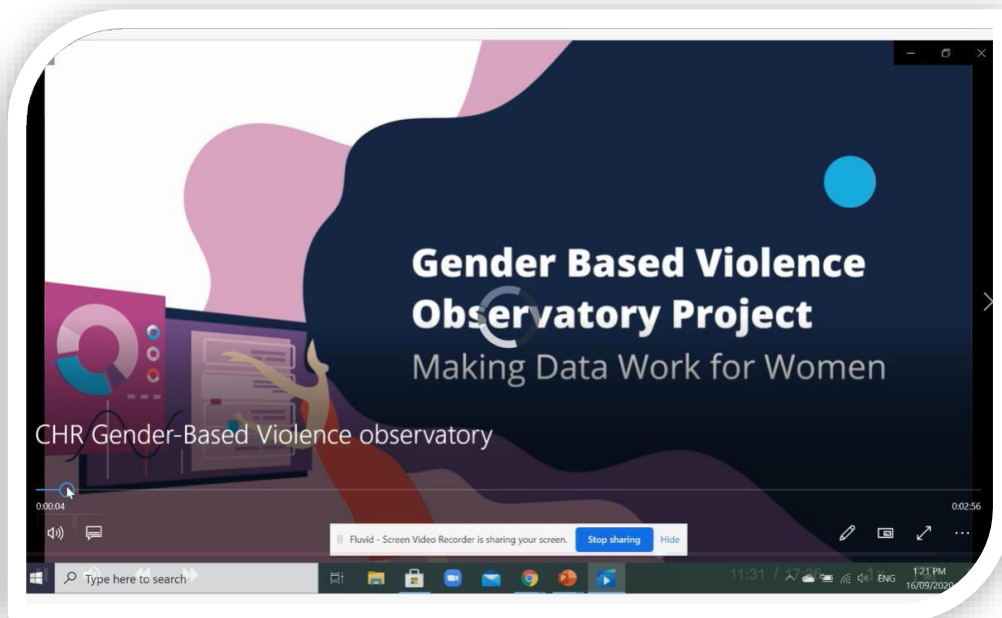
The context of the FGD was discussed by Avila as a jump start for the FGD.

It was followed by the welcome remarks of Atty. Arlene Alangco, the Regional Director of CHR. She said that *"she hoped that through this FGD CHR can come up with possible mechanisms together with the other service providers and draw out path how to go about it in carrying out the office mandate."*

Documentation on GBV Mapping
Commission on Human Rights (CHR)



Atty. Arlene Q. Alangco, CHR 5 Regional Director, welcomes the participants to the FGD. After which, Avila presented the video of the background of this FGD, entitled Gender Based Violence Observatory Project despite technical and internet connectivity. She further explained that GBV Mapping is done in order to gather data from CHR, DOJ and DSWD, government duty bearers, monitoring of women’s human rights, come up with information mechanism on how to go about it and referral mechanism as an avenue to close in the gaps in referring cases, data needed in order to do our roles in the GBV.



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Video presentation on the Gender Based Violence Observatory Project.

She cited the general objectives of the FGD, which are the following:

- ◆ Harness the capacities of the Commission and Regional Offices in monitoring functionality of referral mechanisms, providing recommendations, and influencing enhanced functionality and responsiveness of local inter-agency mechanisms to respond to VAW; It aims to strengthen the Commission's mandate as Gender Ombud; and
- ◆ Gather regional data on GBV during the COVID-19 Pandemic and the new normal, particularly highlighting trends, gaps, challenges, best practices, and key recommendations to enhance response.

Then continued by presenting the following specific objectives:

- ◆ Document and map GBV legal referral mechanisms during the COVID-19 crisis and the impact of the pandemic on legal referral mechanisms;
- ◆ Partner with duty bearers and community women, women CSOs/NGOs in the conduct of mapping of legal referral mechanism during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- ◆ Identify the most prevalent forms of GBV during the ECQ and post-ECQ period and observable trends in GBV and GBV response, i.e., case types, sectors, areas more prevalent, increase or decrease in reporting;
- ◆ Document how the referral systems adopted to or failed to adopt to the ECQ period and the new normal in responding to cases of GBV (cite best practices);
- ◆ Document key challenges posed in responding to GBV during ECQ and new normal at the Barangay level, the Women's Desk level, Prosecution level and also from the perspectives of community women and women's organizations;
- ◆ Identify lessons learned from the Pandemic in terms of improving GBV response; and
- ◆ Forward key recommendations to inter-agency mechanisms mandated to address different forms of GBV

After explaining all the objectives, Avila proceeded with the FGD proper. When asked about the demographics of records on GBV, Serdeño of CSWDO, said that GAD data is available in their office and, in fact, CSWDO has a Special Case Division that keeps records for submission purposes to respective offices.

When Avila asked about the GBV related case or complaints received during the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ), Ms. Sharon Tud said that *“there were no reported cases during that time, in case, there were it was very minimal only.”*

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Prosecutor Bance shared that *“there were cases filed in their office, but the data was limited to personal circumstances of the victims and respondents; but ethnicity was not specified. For this year 2020, from January to March 3 relative to GBV, there were 16 cases. And from May to August 2020 there were 21 cases. I cannot say kung madami o kumunti.”*

Avila said that it’s not conclusive to say that cases have diminished during the ECQ and this was supported by Prosecutor Bance by saying that *“Yes, because we started receiving cases only in May 2020 after the ECQ but in March we did not receive any case based on the report.”*

Prosecutor Neryl Deris added that during the ECQ what they received are about 3 inquest cases for rape and acts of lasciviousness then after the ECQ we continued with the regular investigation process.

Also, Atty. Joy Sabaybay reiterated that it’s very rare for them to receive complaints because usually, the records are kept by the individual lawyers.

Then Avila asked about the current state of the GBV demographics recorded by the CSWDO.

According to Serdeño of CSWDO, from January to date, there were 25 cases with sex segregated data. There were even no rescue operations conducted so we can conclude that the GBV cases have decreased significantly.

According to Atty. Sabaybay, there was no focal person identified in their office. *“We entertained our clients through window transactions during the quarantine and the officer of the day receives them. It was rather awkward because there was no privacy, and the complaints would be heard outside, but we had no choice since our office was small. The program was not emphasized and taken as a priority because there would only be trainings conducted every four years and there were no reminders about it. The hiring and trainings were centralized, and we know nothing about the screening process, we only receive notice about the hiring.”*

Prosecutor Bance added that they only attended in 2015 or 2016 in a sponsored training on GAD policy but there was really no GAD focal person that were assigned.

In the case of CSWDO, a focal point person was identified through the office of KALIPI local council on women and even the LGBT community.

When Avila asked about a local ordinance adopted particularly on GBV concerns, CSWDO pointed out that it was already included in the Gender and Development Code in Iriga, but there was no separate policy about this and on trafficking, as well. Though there was an executive order on local special bodies as GAD focal point person or VAWC because it was fully functional.

Then Avila asked if there was a representative from the PNP, majority of the participants said that there was no representative.

Regarding budgeting, the participants affirmed that they did not have experience in the process or deliberation because their budget was centralized but Prosecutor Bance confirmed that there were seminars conducted during the regional convention.

In the case of CSWDO, the budget for GAD is included in the Information Education Campaign item in the annual budget for the schools, barangays, and other support services.

As to the imposition of curfew hours, its impact and possible declining effect to GBV cases, CSWDO shared that during the first part of 2020 before the pandemic there were many cases of rape and acts of lasciviousness, plus several violation of RA 9262. This was supported by Atty. Sabaybay, she further explained that the violation of RA 9262 was mostly caused by economic abuse and this are the most common cases we received before the pandemic. Then, Sharon Tud added that there were 6 sexual abuse and 15 physical abuse filed before the pandemic but during the ECQ there was a significant decrease.

Avila probed what could be the possible reason of the decrease in the documented GBV cases during the ECQ, CSWDO emphasized that the restriction to go out and problems in transportation can be the two major reasons of the decrease of GBV incidence. The source of their data comes from police blotter, CSWDO and WCPD comparing it before the ECQ.

This was supported by Prosecutor Deris because before the pandemic, there were more than 10 cases, but during the post ECQ, the numbers were almost similar. But even though it decreased, there were inquest cases during the ECQ. Mostly on rape and acts of lasciviousness but not much on the violation of RA 9262.

Prosecutor Bance, further explained that during the pandemic, they receive inquests. For the regular filings which were not filed in the police and sworn statements, they were filed after the ECQ and the most common cases were rape within the family, incest or statutory rape.

Prosecutor Deris reiterated that one of the reasons why it decreased was because their office was closed, and they were not able to entertain regular cases. *“We only report to office if there are inquests. We were open to receive cases but there were none filed. This was probably because of limited or no access to transportation in going to the police for the cases were mostly from far flung barangays or the mountain areas in Iriga.”*

Avila further probed that although there were high cases of GBV, the reporting process were still low during the pandemic.

Serdeño from CSWD affirmed that the victims were coming more from the regular women than the marginalized ones. This was supported by Atty. Sabaybay by saying that *“Urban women ang karamihan lalo na pagka nawalan ng trabaho. Sa rural women mababa or para ngang wala.”* Prosecutor Bance, also, confirmed that GBV cases were more violations of the RA 9262 since the wife had no work and economically disadvantaged women or plain housewife and totally dependent to their husbands. The rape cases happened to mostly minors or children.

According to Prosecutor Deris, since there were limitations because of the health protocols, like face to face dialogue between the complainant and the perpetrator, that could be one of the reasons why cases filed have decreased significantly. But she said that despite the limitations, they even conducted a dialogue last September 2 with the PNP in order to capacitate the implementers handling GBV related cases and to avoid confusion in terms of handling this concern.

Serdeño of CSWDO explained that it was hard during the ECQ if there were requests of rescue or transfer to other places due to the different protocols of each municipality. The situation was almost the same during the GCQ because the guidelines regarding the travel pass were not that clear and the process became two weeks instead of just two days. Though it was assisted by the PNP and the prosecutor’s office.

In the case of trafficking, CSWDO mentioned one case but only referred to them from DSWD Zamboanga. This was referred to them from Region 9 and which they were able to facilitate the victim’s coming home here in Iriga and that they provided after care which included psycho-social and livelihood assistance.

When asked about barriers and limitations, Atty. Deris mentioned about the health protocols and mobility restrictions are the most challenging in the conduct of their services. She further explained that even as of now, for their walk-in clients, their privacy was compromised because we are only accepting window transactions and the hot weather outside adds up to their client’s discomfort and even to them handling the case. The only help they could give them was advice, which was referred by the CSWDO and the PNP.

Regarding challenges in issuing Barangay Protection Order (BPO), according to Monsalve they did not encounter problem or difficulty in the issuance of BPO. *“Our barangay is always ready, and we have trained professionals in-charge.”*

When Avila probed more about the challenges encountered, Prosecutor Bance reiterated that on their part, there were a lot of challenges. Court trials for example, were always rescheduled because the courts were closed, too, so a lot of cases were pending. The major challenge is the difficulty to conduct clarificatory hearing due to absence of respondents from far places. There was also a problem in the implementation of social distancing in the facility because our office was small. Sometimes, we improvise and look for other areas in order to maintain confidentiality. So, the

major challenges were the inability to secure attendance and the difficulty to file a counter affidavit.

Atty. Sabaybay shared that even video conferences were not reliable because it was not clear due to slow internet connection and power interruptions guidelines were not conveyed properly.

In the case of CSWDO, the provisions on social services are a bit restricted especially on case conferences because operations were limited to window transactions only and the personnel cannot even distinguish client expressions due to the masks that they were wearing. The fact finding was on a house to house basis.

Regarding the best practices of the CSWDO, Serdeño emphasized that their social workers were on call 24/7 during the pandemic and even until now. There was also the Iriga City Crisis Intervention Center which served as a temporary shelter for their clients. This was confirmed, too, by the Public Attorney's Office and the City Prosecutor's Office because even if their offices were closed but the delivery of their services were not interrupted even during the ECQ.

As to the flow of case management, according to the City Prosecutor's Office, if the case comes from the PNP that will definitely be elevated to them once the case was already filed to the PNP.

While the PAO, created a Facebook account that can refer cases to regional, provincial offices and forwarded to district offices.

CSWDO said it depends on where the GBV was committed. If it were on a barangay level, it would pass through the VAWC and since it is functional, it can be settled there. But we recognize the need for capacity building that will equip the persons handling GBV related cases even the police assigned in the WCPD (PNP). There is also a need for psychosocial intervention like counseling.

Avila pointed out that based on the sharing, there were no interruption of services during the ECQ. It did not matter whether it is ECQ or GCQ because there was a ready template on what to do. Service providers were on call but cases may have decreased because maybe it was the first time that the family was complete during the start of the ECQ and in June, when they started losing their money and other resources, the conflicts started.

Monsalve of San Miguel, Iriga City, said their services is 24/7 and we were able to confirm it because of the quarterly report and it was discussed during the regular meeting about VAWC because the member in-charge who was a member of KALIPI. The services were not interrupted and there was no difficulty on their part. There was no case filed during the ECQ. BPO was explained to them and understood and there were no problems encountered.

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This was supported by CSWDO saying that the usual services were uninterrupted. There was continuous service offered though the mode of giving was changed. They shifted from face to face to window transactions while observing social distancing and other health protocols.

Prosecutor Deris affirmed that even though their office was closed during the ECQ, services were uninterrupted. In some case where the investigation process was interrupted because of the implementation of ECQ in March like psychological abuse, the investigation did not prosper because the family lost interest in pursuing the case and decided to settle the dispute among themselves.

The legal services mostly accessed by women services during the ECQ, was more on legal advice. If they have not filed a case yet, they advised them on the veracity if the case will be filed. In this case, legal advices were available even during the ECQ because our office was open and they had a hotline. Most of them decide not to file a case after getting educated about filing cases.

There was a case that at the onset of reporting, the complainants were really decided to file a case in court but during the course of the trial, or halfway of the trial, the women victim would request for dismissal even if the trial is ongoing. *“In that case, if the complainant requests for the dismissal of the case, then we cannot do anything about it. We only advise them that they can always file it again. There was even a case of a battered wife.”* She first filed a case because she was always getting beat up her husband. The husband apologized and the victim requested a dismissal for the case but she filed it again because it happened again that she almost died. She probably had a battered wife syndrome.

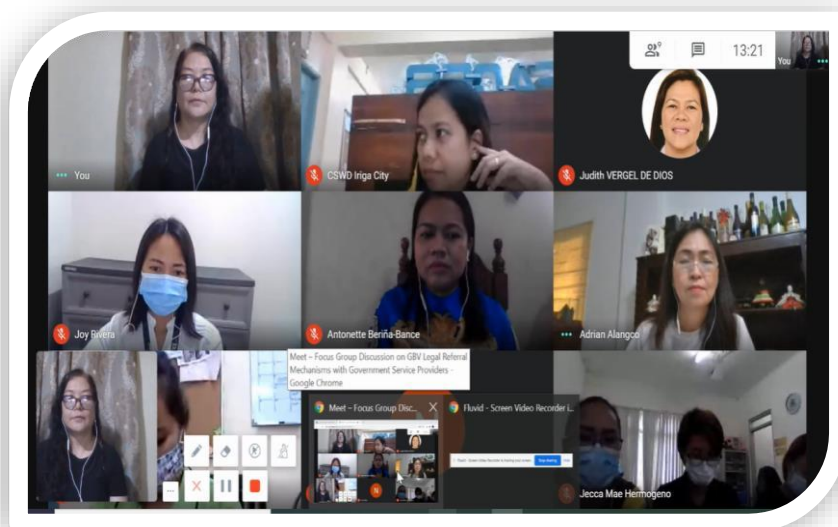
The other one was a couple who was married for 30 years. The husband had another woman. Along the course of the trial, the husband apologized, and the wife forgave him and they didn't attend the hearing so the case was dismissed.

Avila emphasized that it is the hope of CHR that the interagency like PAO, CSWDO and PNP can share data but we are limited because of the confidentiality clause.

Atty. Sabaybay recalled that it was only the Office of the President and DOJ who have requested data through the CHR regional office.

Documentation on GBV Mapping

Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

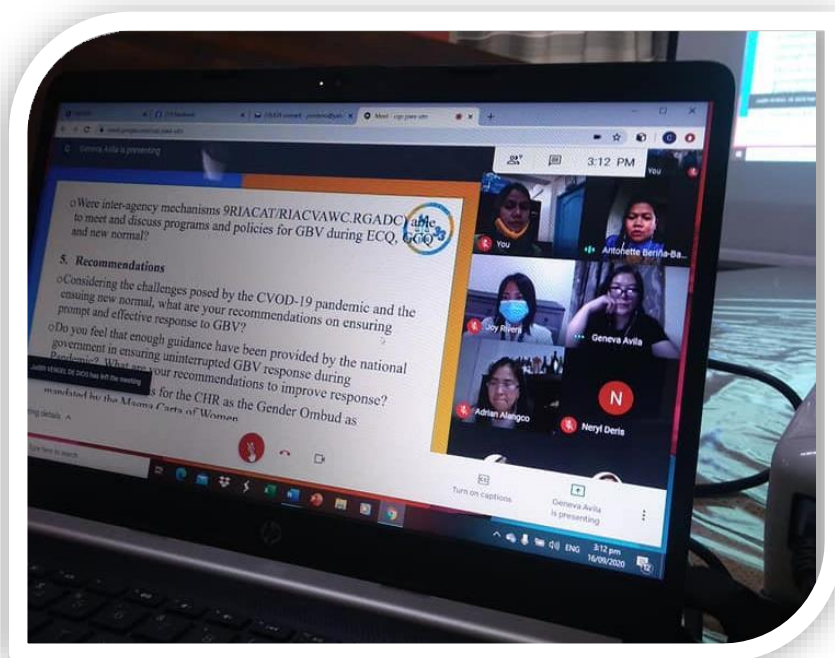


Atty. Joy Rivera Sabaybay of the Public Attorney's Office responds to a question.

But the inter-agency committee meets. In fact, in April or May, one of the agenda discussed was the local concerns of women and children in the locality. But sometime in September 2, we had a face to face dialogue which was limited to 12 participants only, right after ECQ, with CSWDO, WCPD Officials, Barangay Officials and Councilors handling women and children cases. The meeting wanted to lay out a referral and coordinating system in handling VAWC cases, plus the making of affidavits and lists of documents to be prepared.

For the recommendations, CSWDO mentioned that webinar series should be continued because it was a big help for them but there is a need to improve the internet connection. Also, to provide capacity building trainings and seminars in order to equip the service providers with the necessary knowledge and skills in handling GBV related cases.

Prosecutor Bance, focused on the continued collaborative partnership among duty bearers and improve facilities and internet connectivity, power supply and physical offices itself.



Asst. Prosecutor Antonette B. Bance recommended the continued collaborative partnership among the duty-bearers.

When Avila asked if there was enough guidance provided by the government on this, Prosecutor Bance said there was not enough guidance because they focused more on pandemic. Though some agencies responded like CSWDO and PopCom to the programs of GBV. Particularly for CHR, perhaps CHR continue to coordinate with other agencies with similar projects like CSWDO and PopCom. They can innovate policies and programs that will address cases related to GBV to be able to adapt to the new normal. CHR can also sponsor capacity building to the duty bearers and be part of the taskforce in responding to the GBV cases.

It was supported by Atty. Sabaybay that there was not enough guidance from the government and, in fact, they were always the last to know perhaps because it was assumed that we will be implementing the usual. There were no specific guidelines regarding GBV. Responsibilities doubled so the GBV issued were set aside because the same people were handling the cases. For recommendation, Atty. Sabaybay said *“Since this is my first time to attend in this particular issue so I hope CHR can sponsor more FGDs like this. Advocacies are not CHR’s best suit. People are not aware about the programs offered by CHR, IBP, PICPA and other agencies. There is also no suboffice here in the rinconada area so if they could put one field office here, maybe it can be placed here in Iriga.”*

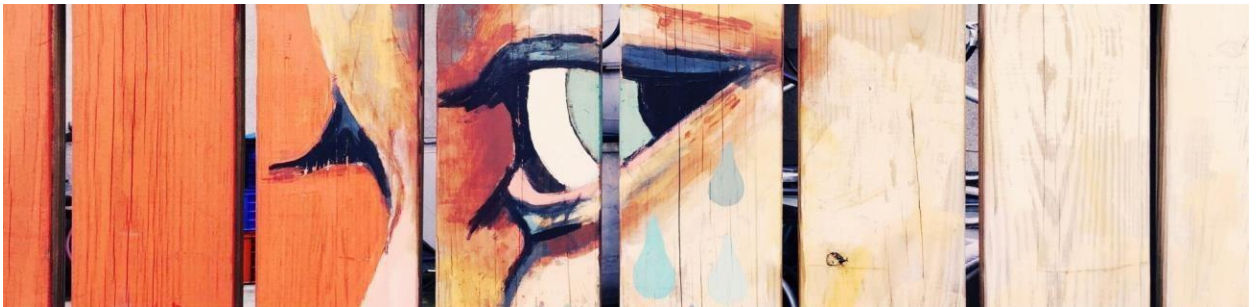
According to CSWDO, the CHR regional office was always there for support. They respond immediately anytime they needed them. Webinar series and seminar should also be continued. The

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GBV issues were set aside because issues on health was the prioritized and that is why there were no specific guidelines which are well-defined and simplified down to the barangay levels.

The FGD ended at 4:49 in the afternoon.

Process Documentation on the Regional Mapping of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Legal Referral Mechanisms



Focus Group Discussion
on Gender Based Violence Legal Referral Mechanisms with
Community Women, Women NGOs/CSOs in Iriga City

September 17, 2020 Online Focus Group Discussion Documentation on Gender-Based Violence for Community Women, Women NGOs and CSOs

The participants are the following:

1. Atty. Arlene Q. Alangco, CHR Regional Director
2. Geneva J. Avila, Information Officer II of CHR 5
3. Respondent A, KALIPI Focal Person
4. Respondent B, LCW Focal Person
5. Josephine B. Serdeño, CSWDO GAD Focal Person
6. Respondent C, KALIPI Officer
7. Respondent D, KALIPI Member
8. Respondent E, KALIPI Officer
9. Respondent F, KALIPI San Vicente Sur, Iriga City
10. Respondent G, KALIPI Sta. Cruz Sur, Iriga City
11. Respondent H, KALIPI San Andres, Iriga City
12. Respondent I, La Zumba Officer
13. Respondent J, PWD Representative
14. Respondent K, KALIPI La Trinidad, Iriga City
15. Respondent L, La Trinidad Iriga City
16. Respondent M, Representative of Joggers in Iriga City
17. Respondent N

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) started at 1:31 in the afternoon.

Ms. Geneva Avila, the main facilitator of the FGD presented first the video on the GBV mapping then proceeded with the giving of the context of the FGD on the GBV.

It was followed by Atty. Arlene Alangco's opening remarks. To quote a part of her message she said *"The Commission on Human Rights would to thank all of you for participating in this FGD despite the challenge in connectivity and technical concerns. This FGD will help us close the gaps in our referral mechanisms and hopefully answer and gather the necessary data needed. We will appreciate your honest opinions and answers about the questions that will be asked from you. Thank you very much."*

After this, Avila introduced the participants. Majority of the participants came from the different barangays of Iriga City of the KALIPI Organization. There is also coming from the City Social Welfare Development Office as the focal person for GAD concerns.

Avila continued by presenting first the video on the GBV Observatory Project.

Then, the background of the FGD was shared by Atty. Alangco. According to her, *"this GBV Mapping is under the Magna Carta for Women. CHR's mandate Women Ombud that will respond*

to the issues of GBV. CHR considered as an advocate to strengthen Gender capability among the women sector. The office will contribute to the monitoring of women and children in armed conflict, IPs Women, Women with Disability and Rural women. We would like to come up with guidelines and legal remedies that will assist in the filing of cases and submits requirements for reporting. Recently, CHR was able to assist in the fact finding and data gathering in Sorsogon City as part of the national inquiry on a particular woman that was dismissed from work because she was pregnant. In the 2017 demographics, we were able to document instances of women who have experienced physical and sexual violence. This is CHR commitment to family and we would like to know who are using the information. We are thankful that you are part of this project in order to improve more the services that the office has already been providing to the region.”

After which, Avila presented the general and specific objectives of the FGD.

She cited the general objectives of the FGD, which are the following:

- ◆ Harness the capacities of the Commission and Regional Offices in monitoring functionality of referral mechanisms, providing recommendations, and influencing enhanced functionality and responsiveness of local inter-agency mechanisms to respond to VAW; It aims to strengthen the Commission’s mandate as Gender Ombud; and

Documentation on GBV Mapping

Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

- ◆ Gather regional data on GBV during the COVID-19 Pandemic and the new normal, particularly highlighting trends, gaps, challenges, best practices, and key recommendations to enhance response.
- ◆ Then further presented the following specific objectives:
 - ◆ Document and map GBV legal referral mechanisms during the COVID-19 crisis and the impact of the pandemic on legal referral mechanisms;
 - ◆ Partner with duty bearers and community women, women CSOs/NGOs in the conduct of mapping of legal referral mechanism during the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - ◆ Identify the most prevalent forms of GBV during the ECQ and post-ECQ period and observable trends in GBV and GBV response, i.e., case types, sectors, areas more prevalent, increase or decrease in reporting;
 - ◆ Document how the referral systems adopted to or failed to adopt to the ECQ period and the new normal in responding to cases of GBV (cite best practices);
 - ◆ Document key challenges posed in responding to GBV during ECQ and new normal at the Barangay level, the Women's Desk level, Prosecution level and also from the perspectives of community women and women's organizations;
 - ◆ Identify lessons learned from the Pandemic in terms of improving GBV response; and
 - ◆ Forward key recommendations to inter-agency mechanisms mandated to address different forms of GBV

Then, Avila proceeded with the FGD guide questions.

For the first question under Gender Equality Situationer in the City of Iriga, Avila asked the participants if they are aware of any local gender equality or GBV policies in their city and if there is a GAD Code, Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Cat-Calling Ordinances or counterpart of these in their barangays.

According to Respondent K, in their barangay in La Trinidad, there was already an existing GAD code and policies regarding gender issues which were adopted from the City ordinance. Also, VAWC desk was also established in the structure of the Barangay Council to ensure that the rights of women and children were protected but they did not make another ordinance specifically for this concern. This is considered as the counterpart of the barangay.

In Brgy. Sta. Teresita, what the barangay council have adopted was the imposition of the curfew time which was first promulgated by the LGU of Iriga in the city center. She emphasized that because of the curfew, women and children were protected since no one was allowed to go out especially in the evening, there was liquor ban so the fathers just stayed at home together with their children and wife. There was no case filed during the ECQ in our barangay.

In Bgy. San Vicente Sur, they also had VAWC as part of the structure in the barangay council for the protection of women and children even before the ECQ.

Respondent C further said that there were no cases reported as regards GBV during the ECQ because it was the first time that all the members of the family were intact. All families were provided with their needs through the relief goods from the LGU Iriga. Because of the lockdown their interpersonal relationship was developed and strengthened. Problems came out after the ECQ because there was no money anymore and then the reality of poverty manifested in the daily concerns of the family.

Avila further probed the participants if the quarantine really helped in protecting women and children in their respective communities. Majority of the participants said yes and it helped protect women and children during the ECQ period.

In the third question, Avila asked if the VAW desks were already functional even before the ECQ. She further explained that when she says functional, she means that VAW Desk was already part of the barangay council and that there was an appointed focal person who handles GBV cases, could issue Barangay Protection Order (BPO) and rescue victims of GBV in their barangay.

Respondent J reiterated that the VAWC desk in almost all the barangays in Iriga City was functional even before the ECQ. She explained that the barangay made sure that they were able to apply what they have learned from the seminar given us specifically on the women's rights and children in their barangay. Though seminars were not so frequent because they only had one seminar last year but it was helpful in making them aware of their rights and it empowered them in handling similar GBV cases. This was supported by all the participants with a resounding yes.

The OCW provided Information and Education Campaign materials and even conducted seminars in our barangay. This structure has been functional since its inception, the barangay made sure that if there is a new member who will implement this policy, seminars and trainings are conducted first to empower the staff especially the VAWC Desk officer.

With this shared information, Avila further asked the group if there were GBV cases filed during the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and before the pandemic.

Majority of the participants affirmed that there were no GBV cases filed during the ECQ.

According to Respondent C, as KALUPI President, a CSWD staff was always invited to attend in their regular meetings or even during emergency meetings because they always seek for guidance from them. Though the CSWD staff would be different in terms of representation but what was more important was their presence in their meeting. Pertaining to the cases filed in their barangay, several cases were no longer referred to CSWD because they always believed that it could be

Documentation on GBV Mapping

Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

resolved already in their level through dialogue and amicable settlement. Most of the cases just needed counseling and guidance, the complainants and victims just needed someone to talk to like a peer counseling set up. But it was clear on their part that there should be no arrangement as regards GBV cases.

Respondent C further said that all cases were recorded and part of our required quarterly report because if they did not do the documentation, they will not also receive their honorarium.

Most of the common cases were the violation of 9262, mostly psychological blackmail like the spouse holding a knife in front of his wife. And the barangay right away issues BPO in order to protect the complainant. There was even a case where the wife went to the barangay to seek assistance just to be able to talk to her husband and the barangay mediated for them then after that they were able to resolve their differences, as reiterated by Respondent C *“loving-loving na ulit”* after it was facilitated by the barangay. She further said that *“what they just need are psycho social support from the community.”* But during the ECQ there were no case filed.

But, in Bgy. Sta. Teresita there was a case filed in their VAWC desk. The husband physically inflicted pain to the wife. The barangay rescued the victim but during the investigation, the only thing that the wife asked the council was that *“Ang gusto ko lang naman na kausapin ninyo ng masinsinan ang asawa ko at huwag na niyang ulitin yung ginawa niya. Sana po pagsabihan ninyo ang asawa ko na makukulong siya pagka inulit pa niya ang pananakit sa akin at sa mga bata. Mangako siya sa harap ng barangay na hindi na niya gagawin ulit yun.”* The complainant just wanted to warn her husband and explain that he will be put to jail if he will do it again. The focal person provided counseling and facilitated a heart to heart talk between the complainant and the perpetrator in order to resolve the problem. This was not referred to the CSWD because this was resolved in the barangay level. Both parties would not want their case to be referred to another level like the CSWDO. With this, Avila probed further if GBV cases had significantly increased or decreased during the ECQ.

Respondent C said *“Walang kaso na naitala noong ECQ dahil for the first time intact kasi ang pamilya. Binigyan ng livelihood activities ang mga pamilya ang barangay kaya may mga family activities tulad ng distribution ng seeds para sa backyard gardening, may delegation pa ng household chores. Tsaka dahil mahirap kumuha ng quarantine pass kaya ang mga tatay sa bahay lang talaga. Bawal ang videoke at alak, kaya walang rason para mag-away ang mag-asawa. At siyempre dahil may curfew, maaga matulog ang mga pamilya. Kaya hindi kaso ng GBV ang tumaas kundi mga nanay na nabuntis hahaha.”*

Respondent C further explained that they could not really say if GBV incidence have increased or decreased. This was supported by other KALIPI Presidents of other barangays of Iriga City.

Documentation on GBV Mapping

Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

In terms of reporting a case during the ECQ, the only difficulty they were able to identify was the limited transport service. Since barangay halls are far from their abode then it would be hard for them to immediately report the case if there are any.

This was reiterated by the representative of Respondent M. She even used a bike during the ECQ for her to attend the zumba but when it was banned, their activities were totally stopped.

Despite no cases were reported, they were on call for 24/7.

If talking about the most affected group of women on GBV case, according to them, it is more of the Urban Poor Women, or women who are economically dependent from their abusers. Even if they were repeatedly abused, they still cling to their abusers.

Avila explained that women who have worked are strong willed and resilient and can fight back against their abusers.

In terms of documentation, the participants said that they do the usual documentation, but they were not involved in research.

Some of the recommendations that came out from the KALIPI presidents were the continuous conduct of capability building seminar for women, seminars for VAW desk focal person so that they would be educated in the proper handling of GBV cases, continuous distribution of education and information materials like flyers about women's rights and children but if possible to be translated in Filipino or vernacular so that it will be easily understood by the people in their barangay.

She said, "We, also, hope that these materials will be ready for distribution and will not ask us to reproduce because the barangay does not have budget for this. We believe that through continuous promotion we can sustain raising the awareness of the people in our community about the women and children's issues. We can maximize, too, the TV ads about women's rights since majority have television set in their homes."

"We can also continue using the Facebook page that we already did in our barangay because this is the easiest way to respond to GBV concerns since it is operating 24/7 and there is somebody who will respond right away with the concerns raised. A Group Chat account in different zones were also established for quick response through the councilor assigned." She added.

Avila said that this mechanism can be adopted by other barangays.

Respondent C added that livelihood assistance for women as concrete assistance for them should be considered like providing capital for small business enterprise but according to Avila, those mentioned are already available but through DSWD and DTI.

Respondent C once more shared that if the CSWDO can provide a specific area where internet connectivity is strong so that gatherings like this or webinars can be conducted easily and without stress. A training in conducting a webinar could also be given to them so that they can be trained and empowered on how to it.

Respondent C reiterated that in barangay San Miguel, they did not have difficulty in coordination with agencies like the CSWDO and other agencies of the government especially during the ECQ. She said *“It’s like calling a friend, Isang tawag lang andiyan agad sila, PNP ganun din ang bilis ng response nila. No problem po talaga. Ang problema lang siguro ay hindi nga kami makalabas pero meron naman kaming mga cellphones na 24/7 naman.”*

Lastly, Respondent C said that *“kailangan talaga iintensify ang mga gender sensitivity training tapos sana huwag naman masyadong matagal ang sunod na training kasi para ngang ang tagal bago masundan.”*

CSWDO in the continuous campaign for the protection of women and children’s rights.

Process Documentation on the Regional
Mapping of Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
Legal Referral Mechanisms



Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Interview with PNP -WCPD SPO2 Eugiene Alfelor
October 13, 2020

The meeting started at 9:45.

On the gender equality situationer in Iriga City, according to SPO2 Eugiene Alfelor who handles the Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD) of PNP Iriga, they have been segregating demographic data of the complainants and perpetrators even before the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was promulgated last March 2020. The data are available and can be gathered even in their record of blotter of cases filed.

PNP Iriga have a focal person who is WCPD officer who specifically facilitates GBV cases. The office also has the PICAD which used to be the Police Community Relation (PCR). All GBV cases were handled by WCPD even cases of LGBTQ like violation of RA 9262 where a lesbian can be filed a case if RA 9262 is violated.

Regarding the GAD budget, she cited that they do not participate in the deliberation of GAD because it was already part of the LGU but in PNP Iriga, 20% of their budget has been allocated to GAD concerns like Information Dissemination Campaign, Dialogue in the Barangay level. She cited that they even have a scheduled symposium in all barangays in Iriga for all barangay officials who handles GBV cases. It is imperative for them to know the proper handling of these related cases.

During the ECQ, they did not adopt new policies from the LGU because the system was already in place. The only additional activity they did was to help in the information dissemination campaign like distribution of flyers regarding health protocols, women's and children's rights.

Regarding the common GBV cases that their office has received even before the ECQ are usually violations of RA 9262 and RA 7610. They are the common forms of GBV issues committed before the ECQ but based from her knowledge, they did not receive a case on GBV during the ECQ that is why she cannot say whether it has decreased or not as to the number of cases.

But later in the conversation she remembered 3 rape cases filed, violation of 7610 and RA 8363.

The usual victims were unemployed women who were dependent on their husband's income.

There was no difficulty in terms of rescue and investigation because the system was already in place. The only thing that was added to the process was the health protocol considerations. But protective gear was provided to them especially if the area is identified to have cases of COVID19.

“The best practices that I can mention is the Free face mask for children that we distributed in priority barangays that we know there is a great need. We personally went to these barangays. The donors came from private sector and from the PNP personnel itself who want to give help.

Documentation on GBV Mapping
Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

Regarding the flow of case management, in our office we have the E-reklamo Account in our Facebook page and 2 Hotline numbers with 24/7 operation. This has been established even before the ECQ but was strengthened during the ECQ.”

“The only difficulty, though I considered it a minor concern, that I can see in the flow of managing GBV cases during the ECQ was the coordination between the Prosecutor’s Office and our office because they are on a skeleton formation though on call. But once you coordinate with them, they responded right away. That is why I can see that this flow was not disrupted during the ECQ.”

As to the documentation, PNP Iriga in the WCPD do not share the data and information to any agency unless there was court order given for a particular request. All the data were confidential whether from the complainant or the perpetrator. If the case came from the CSWDO then that is the only time that they share with them the information but only to that level.

For the recommendation, she cited that, since they lack personnel in the WCPD Iriga, to hire additional personnel so that work can be distributed given the load of work that they have in the office. They always do multi-tasking in the office.

“Then, perhaps CHR, can also consider the budget for the victims that come to our office and they do not have money for fare and even food. The PNP officer will be forced to shell out from his or her own pocket in order to respond to this concern. It usually happens every time the case is like this. Good thing that our salary was now increased by the government. Sometimes it’s okay to help out of mercy but I believe this should be considered in the allocation of budget. I just do not know if it should be coming from our office, CSWDO or CHR.”

She said that a temporary shelter specifically for the rape victims should be provided in their city. Even for the Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL) because they were already abandoned by their own families because they do not have specific programs for this in the city of Iriga.

“I am hoping that CHR can organize seminars specifically for the WCPD and investigators handling similar cases such as this because this will empower us and will always be given the chance to improve our system.”

The meeting ended 11:15 in the morning.

Interview with an IP Women Representative October 26, 2020

The meeting started at 5:15 in the afternoon.

When asked if she was aware of the local GBV policies or barangay ordinances about this, she said that she was aware and she attends gathering or meeting organized by their barangay. But in their IP community, there was no particular ordinance that they have adopted because there was no GBV cases to mention in their tribe. One thing she mentioned was the VAW desk in their barangay that handles GBV related cases.

The most common forms of violence committed against women and children were physical abuse and harassment, mostly by their abusive husband. She said that she cannot recall any GBV case filed in their barangay and even in their IP community. During the ECQ, the only difficulty that I can recall was about the mobility going to the barangay hall. Since transportation services were limited, the fare went double too. *“It was difficult on our part considering that many of us lost jobs.”*

The sole respondent said that for her, the most affected sector during the ECQ were the IP women since most of them were not able to work so they were forced to go to the city center to look for extra money in order to feed their children. It was also difficult to ask for help because their community was very far from the authorities and they had no money to pay for the transportation. Though in NCIP, once you reached their office, assistance was always there even legal assistance.

She affirmed that the best practices that she can think of was the reliability of the issuance of Barangay Protection Order (BPO) in their barangay when needed and even relief goods were readily given to survivors or victims of GBV. She further explained that a one-month period of assistance was extended by the barangay to the victims or survivors of GBV and if there was available livelihood assistance, they were prioritized by the barangay.

In term of documentation of GBV cases, she said that *“Dai man po ako kaibanan diyan sa proseso pero aram ko na dokumentado ang mga kaso na pigpapfile sa barangay mi digdi sa Sta. Teresita. Pero may naaaraman man akong kaso sa ibang barangay pero kadaklan dai na man ninda pigpapaabot pa sa CSWDO ta pigresolba na man sa barangay lang.”*

Further, she said that *“An pinakapektibo garo samuya sa mga IP women ay itong iextend and assistance lalo na duman sa mga suway na sa saindang mga agom.”* Maybe money for capital in small business enterprise would greatly in helping the survivor to start anew in her life.

During the pandemic, the government provided us with relief goods from rice to other necessities and they gave us seedlings to sustain our daily needs.

Documentation on GBV Mapping
Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

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For the CHR's program, the respondent said they just continue with what they are doing and strengthen the legal policies and remedies that will continue to protect women and children.

She also extended her gratitude to CHR for allowing her to participate in this endeavor.

The interview ended at 7:14 in the evening.

Interview with KALIPI Officer, Barangay San Antonio, Iriga City

The interview started around 5:45 in the afternoon.

When asked if she was aware of the GBV policies or ordinance in their city, she said that she was aware of the GAD Code in the LGU and that their barangay have adopted such city ordinance through the VAW Desk in their barangay council. There was a focal person who attends to GBV related cases filed in their barangay. She further explained that they did not create another ordinance in their barangay, instead they just adopted what the city ordinance has promulgated regarding gender concerns. The VAW desk have been in place and functional even before the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was enforced.

Most of the common forms of GBV is physical abuse brought about by the influence of alcoholism. During the ECQ, there were no cases filed that she could recall of perhaps due to the liquor ban and curfew that all the barangays have promulgated. All the members of the family were intact and just stayed at their homes.

“There were not many challenges or difficulties experienced during the ECQ. If there were cases about VAWC or GBV related case, women would come to us for advice and assistance. But before we can do something, they have already settled the problem among themselves.”

The most affected were the economically challenged women in the city, those who are dependent on their husband’s income.

The best practice that she mentioned was that their organization was available 24/7 during the ECQ and that they were ready to assist the victims whenever they could. But there were no cases during the ECQ perhaps because of the imposition of the curfew in all the barangays.

She further explained that they have adopted the services offered by the LGU especially for the livelihood assistance. But there were no specific services for the victims of VAWC or GBV during the ECQ.

The organization does not participate in research or documentation activity when it comes to GBV. The documentation was done by the VAWC desk in their barangay. As to the services specifically for GBV case, she said could not recall any.

“More seminars regarding VAWC and GBV should be conducted in barangays, so women will get educated about the issue. The authorities should also provide a shelter, even a small one, so the victims would have somewhere to go.”

The interview ended at 6:45 PM.