



CHR: DIGNITY OF ALL

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN IN DETENTION

July 23, 2019

Sultan Kudarat District Jail-Female Dormitory, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat

DOCUMENTATION REPORT

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FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN IN DETENTION
Sultan Kudarat District Jail-Female Dormitory, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat
July 23, 2019

PROGRAM

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 - National Anthem
 - Opening Message
MS. RIZALYN C. ISNANI-CONCHA
Special Investigator III, Focal Person on Gender and Women
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- III. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROPER**
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To be facilitated by: **MS. RIZALYN C. ISNANI-CONCHA**
Special Investigator III,
Focal Person on Gender and Women
 - **ELDERLY WOMEN GROUP**
To be facilitated by: **MS. HAIZIAH B. LAUBAN**
Special Investigator I,
Focal Person on Children
 - **LBT GROUP**
To be facilitated by: **MR. LORETO B. CONDESA**
Information Officer II,
Focal Person on LGBTI
- IV. QUILT MAKING**
To be facilitated by: **MS. GLENDA T. CHIVA**
Training Specialist
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FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN IN DETENTION

CHR REGIONAL OFFICE XII REPORT

I. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE OF THE ACTIVITY

Jail congestion rate in the Philippines has reached 612% by the end of 2017 as reported by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).¹ The ideal capacity of jail population is 20,653, however, it has reached up to 146,302 which is 126,493 more than its capacity.² This overcrowding of jails does not conform to the United Nations minimum standard of treatment of prisoners such as giving a jail inmate at least 4.7 square meters of space³ and also to the BJMP Manual on Habitat, Water, Sanitation, and Kitchen in jails. The worsening state of jail congestion could be attributed to the government's intensified campaign on crime particularly on illegal drugs. About 67% of the inmates were detained due to drug-related charges and that 13% of this number are women. While there is no question that men outnumber women in places of detention, women face gender specific risks and vulnerabilities during detention including physical and sexual abuse, mental and health issues and the general insensitivity of prison systems to take into account women's specific needs and experiences.

The Commission on Human Rights under the 1987 Philippine Constitution is mandated to exercise its visitorial powers over jails, prisons, or detention facilities. It is also currently designated as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) against torture, clearly bringing within the ambit of the Commission's core mandate the situation and conditions of persons deprived of liberty. As the Gender Ombud under the Magna Carta of Women, the Commission recognizes the vulnerable situation that women in detention experience and their status under said law as women in especially difficult circumstances.

Despite consistent monitoring of jails, prisons, or detention cells using the human rights-based approach checklist of the Commission's Visitorial Office, there are still gaps to be addressed particularly with respect monitoring the situation of women PDLs and on compliance with United Nations treatment of women prisoners and non-custodial measures for women offenders or the Bangkok Rules. There is also no baseline as to the situation of women in detention, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

This 2019, the Commission, through its Center for Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights (CGEWHR) and its 16 regional offices will focus on women in detention. Two related programs will be undertaken: (a) Multi-Stakeholder Consultation on the Development of Bangkok Rules Monitoring Tool; and (b) the 'Inside Stories: CHR National Situationer on Women in Detention.' The first entails series of Focus Group Discussions and consultation with government, CSOs and CHR and the eventual conduct of a write

¹ Pantl, Llanesca T., (July 4, 2018). "Jail congestion up 600%" The Manila Times. <https://www.manilatimes.net/jail-congestion-up-600/415638/>

² Ibid.

³ ABS_CBN News, (2018). "Overcrowded PH jails don't meet UN Standards, admits BJMP official". <https://news.abs-cbn.com/focus/07/01/18/overcrowded-ph-jails-dont-meet-un-standards-admits-bjmp-official>

shop on the Bangkok Rules; the latter is national in scope and seeks to surface the situation of women in detention and the conduct of capacity building with detention facility officers on the Bangkok Rules.

The Region selected the Sultan Kudarat District Jail-Female Dormitory on the basis of expediency and practicality. The Female Dorm has 101 female persons temporarily deprived of liberty (PTDLs).

From among the one-hundred one (101) female PTDLs, the Team selected seventeen (17) Female PTDLs and categorized them into three groups: women; lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBTs); and the elderly. The whole duration of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was facilitated by Focal Person for Gender and Women/SI-III, Ms. Rizalyn C. Isnani-Concha, with the help of Acting Jail Warden SJO4 Marivic R. Verona.

For the conduct of the regional FGDs and capacity building, the following are the objectives:

1. Document human rights issues and lived experience of women in detention;
2. Provide space for women in detention to discuss their experiences on (a) their situation during detention; (b) their security and protection from all forms of violence; (c) access to health services, including reproductive health services; (d) needs for family contact, including children.
3. Monitor the government's compliance with its obligation with respect women in detention and to draft corresponding recommendations to promote the rights and dignity of women in detention in accordance with international standards;
4. Surface gendered nature of detention through women's lived experiences and to provide a space for women in detention to express their hopes and dreams through creative expression – quilt making

Objectives of the Capacity Building with Detention Officers:

- Enhance the knowledge of detention officers on the human rights-based approach to detention, through a review of the standards set under the Mandela rules;
- Provide an overview of the gendered nature of detention and to discuss the relevance of Bangkok Rules in ensuring gender sensitive and human rights-based approach to detention;
- Gather recommendations from detention officers and staff on how to improve the situation of women in detention including recommendations pertaining to the situation of detention facilities and to detention officers and staff.

II. OPENING STATEMENT & WELCOME REMARKS

The Focus Group Discussion formally started at nine forty o'clock in the morning with the Persons Temporarily Deprived of Liberty (PTDL) of Sultan Kudarat District Jail Female Dorm, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat, with greetings from Information Officer, Loreto B. Condesa, followed by a prayer led by one of the female PTDLs.

The Acting Jail Warden SJO4 Marivic R. Verona warmly welcomed the Commission on Human Rights Regional Office XII personnel together with Female Persons Temporarily Deprived of Liberty (PTDLs) of Sultan Kudarat District Jail-Female Dormitory (SKDJ-FD). She was grateful to have the CHR XII personnel carrying out their mandate in informing the rights of the people, particularly the Persons Temporarily Deprived of Liberty (PTDLs). She emphasized to the Female PTDLs that *"You (PTDLs) still have the rights, pero yun nga lang, wala kayong liberty"*. After which, Ms. Rizalyn I. Concha gave a briefing to the PTDLs on the rationale of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) highlighting the possible crafting of policy recommendations that will create a long-term solution for the female PTDLs. She too emphasized that the information and stories that will be gathered hopefully will make an avenue for probable welfare programs for their benefit, with utmost consideration of confidentiality of their shared (Female PTDLs) opinions, suggestions, and reactions.

III. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROPER

After the opening preliminaries, the participants from the three groups started out the activity by filling-out the consent forms. The FGDs aimed to know their current conditions whether the government is undertaking its mandate in fulfilling its duties and obligations by affording and providing the basic needs and entitlements of the PTDLs.

The selected female PTDLs were divided into three groups and the "kwentuhan" discussed the following issues, to wit:

A. WOMEN GROUP

1. Preliminary Questions

- a. *Alin sa mga emosyon ang iyong pangkarinawang batid sa pang-araw araw dito sa bilangganan? Bawat babae ay may 2 sticker, ilagay sa 2 emosyon na madalas nararamdaman sa loob ng kulungan)*

Supposedly, there was supposed to be some prepared stickers for the PDLs to stick on the back of their consent forms, and since there wasn't, they were instructed to draw the emotions that they usually feel inside the prison. Based on the drawings, majority of them felt sad, some felt happy and a few said they were angry.

One of the PTDLs said that she was angry because her family doesn't bother to visit her, while crying she said that *"Galit ako kasi, di ako dinadalaw ng mga pamilya ko, siguro kasi dito na ako sa loob nang kulungan. Minsan binubully din ako dito ma'am, nagagalit po ako pero iniiyak ko lang"*.

b. Ano nag pinaka-maigting na issue ang iyong kinakaharap bilang babae sa loob ng kulungan?

Each of the PDLs have different issues inside the prison. The problems they commonly share inside, being a woman, is their responsibility of being a mother for their children outside the prison.

One PDL said that *"Di po alam ng anak ko nandito ako, kasi po pag tinatanong po sya ng kaklase nya sa school, sinabihan lang ng nanay ko na nagtratabaho ako sa labas(abroad)"*.

Another problem is the lack of medical assistance and services inside the prison, one PDL stated that, *"Sa dito mam meron man may pumupunta na doctor pero tanungin lang kami mam, kung ano sakit namin, sinasabi lang namin sa kanila mam, tapos gamot, yung lang mam ma ano namin. Taposyung issue-issue nila mam na sabihin nila na "hindi naman totoong nagka sakit" mga ganon."*

2. Situation

Food, Water, and Space

a. Sapat ba ang supply ng pagkain at tubig sa loob ng kulungan? Ang espasyo?

Regarding to the space, majority of the PTDLs complained because there is no enough space for each person in the cell, and they don't have enough ventilation inside their cells. One PTDL stated that *"Masikip po talaga mam, tsaka mainit po sa loob. Sa selda namin mam, 27 po yung sa taas at mga 30 plus po sa baba"*.

In terms of food, they stated that their breakfast is usually *okra*. One of them said that *"Minsan yung ulam namin mam okra, minsan yung okra mam, yung matanda na gud mam, di na makain, pero yung kanin ok naman po yung kanin"*.

b. Ano and kondisyon ng palikuran? (komportable ba kayong nakakaligo etc.)

Some PDLs complained that their cell doesn't have a comfort room, one PDL said that *"Sa selda namin wala po kaming CR, mahirap po pag gabi. Pag mag CR kami mam sa kabilang selda pa kami mag CR"*.

They also said that they go in groups, usually by four, when they take a bath. A PDL said that "*Pila-pila lang po mam, minsan apat yung pumapasok, masikip na po kung lima. Tapos sabay-sabay po kami naliligo*".

- c. *Natutugunan ba ang espesyal mo na pangangailangan bilang babae? – may nakukuha ka ba na sanitary napkins, underwear and bra, sabon, toothpaste?***

Based on the interview, they usually get their supplies whenever they are visited by service providers. One PDL said that "*Mga December po ma'am, pag may occasion po mam, maraming service providers*".

Security

- a. *Nararamdaman nyo ba na kayo ay ligtas mula sa karahasan at sa ano mang porma ng pang-aabuso sa loob ng kulungan? Kung hindi, bakit?***

Majority of the PDLs said that they felt safe from physical harm inside the prison. One problem only is that, sometimes there can be discrimination inside, but only among themselves, not including the officers.

- b. *Pag may nagkasala sa kulungan, Ano ang klase ng parusa ang pinapataw? (ipaliwanag ang uri ng parusa, pag search sa selda o sa katawan etc)***

Based on the interview, the punishment when they cause major trouble inside the prison is "house-arrest" for six months. One PDL explained that "*Halimbawa kung nag away po kayo mam, andun sa six months po na house-arrest po kayo mam. Di ka po makalabas, dun ka lang po sa selda*".

Sometimes, for minor violations, their punishment are squatting and pumping, the heavier the violation, the more squats and pumps they'll do.

Health and Sanitation

- a. *Ano ang nakukuhang nyo na serbisyong medikal sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng gamot at anong serbisyo?***

According to the discussion, there is lack of medical assistance and services inside the prison. One PDL stated that, "*Sa dito mam meron man may pumupunta na doctor pero tanungin lang kami mam, kung ano sakit namin, sinasabi lang namin sa kanila mam, tapos gamot, yung lang mam ma ano namin. Tapos yung issue-issue nila mam na sabihin nila na "hindi naman totoong nagka sakit" mga ganon.*".

One of the PDLs also complained that they lack medicines inside the prison. She stated that *"minsan po pag inatake po ako, minsan wala pong gamot, minsan nahihirapan din po kami dito, lalo na po sakin."*

b. Kung may medical emergency na nararanasan, paano ito natutugunan ng mga opisyales? (gaya ng labis na pagdudugo, diabetes, high blood etc)

According to one of the PTDs, it was hard for them to get an immediate medical assistance inside the prison. Sometimes it takes a long time before they are allowed to be sent into a hospital. One PTD explained that *"Kailangan pa namin mag hintay na ma ok para makapag check-up kami. Lalo na din po sa mga may sakit mam, kumbaga, between life or death na kailangan na kami isugod sa hospital, mahirap po samin yun mam na ganon na sitwasyon."*

c. Natutugunan ba ang inyong pangangailangan sa reproductive health tulad ng buwanang pagdudugo, dysmenorrhea at pagpapa examine ng STD or HIV bago mai-admit sa kulungan?

According to them, they only got their reproductive health check-up last year's Women's Month. One of the PTDs stated that *"Yung last year lang ma'am, yung Women's Month, isa-isa po kaming inexamine"*. According to them, they haven't got STD or HIV examination before they entered the district jail.

d. Meron bang nakatalagang doktor o nurse sa kulungan? Kung meron ano ang kasarian?

There's always a present female nurse whenever they need assistance inside the prison. One of the PDL said that *"Yung nurse po namin dito mam, lagi naman po nag-aano samin dito mam, tinatanong po kami kung kamusta po yung mga karamdaman namin"*.

e. Mayroon bang regular na screening para sa breast cancer at papsmear?

They had only pap smear procedure once last 2017.

Maternal Needs

a. Mayroon ba sa inyo na nagbuntis o nanganak sa kulungan? Kung OO, ano ang iyong karanasan?

One of the PTDs who was once pregnant inside the jail said that *"Mahirap po na buntis dito sa jail mam. May times na kailangan mo mag pa check-up immediately. Di po makapag check-up pag walang order na galing sa court, or galing sa mga dito sa mga officers namin mam."*

- b. Sa mga may anak, kapatid, pamilya sa labas ng kulungan, paano nakaapekto ang inyong pagkakulong sa inyong pamilya? Sa iyong pagiging ina?**

Majority in the Women Group were mothers and they share a common problem which is the lack of their presence in raising their children. One of the PDLs said that "*Kahit po nasa labas yung parents ko, di po talaga mapunan ang pagkukulang ng isang nanay, ang hirap po talaga, especially sakín ngayon mam na lumalaki na yung mga anak ko, kailangan po talaga nila mam ng attention ko bilang nanay.*"

- c. (Para sa mga ina) Paano mo tinutugunan at nagagampanan ang iyong pagiging ina sa mga may layang anak? Regular mo ba nakakausap at nakikita ang inyong mga anak?**

One way they can support their children inside the prison financially is they create bags, keychains, and pouches made of twine and beads, which are then sold outside or whenever there are visitors inside the prison.

Some also gives manicure and pedicure services for their fellow PDLs inside the prison.

B. ELDERLY WOMEN

1. Preliminary Questions

- a. Alin sa mga emosyon ang iyong pangkarinawang batid sa pang-araw araw dito sa bilangguan? Bawat babae ay may 2 sticker, ilagay sa 2 emosyon na madalas nararamdaman sa loob ng kulungan)**

There was a certain portion at the back of the consent form that was intended for the stickers and since there were no stickers, the Persons Deprived of Liberty or the PDLs were instructed to draw what were their emotions and feelings inside the detention cell. Most of the Elderly PDLs are hoping and that they could get to see their families again and to have a peaceful living outside the detention cell. "*Gusto ko na talaga na makauwi nako samén Maam. Gusto ko na din sila makita... yung pamilya ko. At para narin mabuhay na din ng maayos.*"

- b. Ano nag pinaka-maigting na issue ang iyong kinakaharap bilang babae sa loob ng kulungan?**

The most intriguing issue of the Elderly PDLs were about the plea bargaining. They wanted to plea so that they can get out of the detention cell in few months' time. The problem is that, their lawyers and the judge do not appear at a specific time. Sometimes the lawyer is not present and there were times that the judge is not present therefore making and putting

their plea at halt. *"Problema kasi... kung minsan wala si judge. Tapos kung minsan wala yung si attorney. Eh ang gusto sana namin mapadali yung paglabas namin. Eh kung wala naman sila mag pa re-sched naman ng another date na naman."*

2. Situation

Food, Water, and Space

a. Sapat ba ang supply ng pagkain at tubig sa loob ng kulungan? Ang espasyo?

Their problem was their supply of rice and most of them are NFA rice. This kind of rice badly affects the condition of the elderly PtDLs and since they cannot eat those rice, most of it are wasted. If there is a good amount of budget, they can eat commercial rice instead of those NFA rice.

One of the PtDLs stated their experience in eating those variety of rice anxiously said, *"Nung nakaraan kasi walang NFA, kaya nakakain kami ng commercial rice. Ganito kasi, ito lang ang nangyari dito kasi marami ang natatapon kasi marami ang hinde na magkain kasi iba ang lasa ng NFA. Hinde na maano ng tiyan kaya nagkakasakit sa tiyan. Yung may mga kaya na bumili ng bigas, bumibili sila ng bigas."*

Another problem in their food was their breakfast is only *okra and bagoong*. Sometimes they get to taste dried fish and slices of cucumbers, and lastly, they get to eat chicken meat once a month. One felt half-heartedly and said, *"Dalawang okra lang at bagoong. Kung minsan bulad, pipino ang kasama nun. Minsan sa isa sa isang buwan nakakatikim din kami ng manok."*

As for their water, they have supply of water from the water district and every month they contribute for their drinking water and some of their contribution goes to their emergency fund. Their emergency fund is used when one of their co-PTDLs are sick and if they really need it badly. According to one of them, *"Yung naiipon sa mga collectibles namin, yun yung monthly namin. Kumbaga sa kalahatan na namin yun. Kalahatan kasi, in case may emergency, pwedeng may bigyan ka doon, 'pag may magkasakit"*

As for the space, the cells are congested and there was one case of death due to hypertension. *"Yun nga Ma'am, masikip kasi may nakahiga pa sa amin sa lapag. "yan, parang infirmery kasi ang selda nila, para sa may mga sakit. Ikaw nalang magdepende sa sarili mo. Pag may ubo, ikaw nalang ang mag takip."*

Security

a. Nararamdaman nyo ba na kayo ay ligtas mula sa karahasan at sa ano mang porma ng pang-aabuso sa loob ng kulungan? Kung hindi, bakit?

There was problem regarding the inspection of food like coffee. The pack is sometimes stripped or cut just to check what's inside it. Another case was that there was a visitor that brought a coconut and the jail officers did not let him in and they suggested that the coconut should be extracted first before it was allowed inside.

As for their relationship with the jail officers, there is a good bond between the PTDLs and jail officers and they treated them like one of their own families.

One of the PTDLs angrily stated the problem about the inspection of food, *"Nung nagdala dito yung bisita ko ng niyog na pang gata, ayaw nila papasukin, kailangan daw muna pigain bago ipasok dito sa loob. Tapos yung sa kape, pinag gugunting nila para makita yung laman. Kape na mismo 'yan ha"*.

Health and Sanitation

a. Ano ang nakukuhang nyo na serbisyong medikal sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng gamot at anong serbisyo?

Medicines are provided inside the jail and there is a nurse that works there. Most of the PTDLs did not avail Philhealth, SSS and 4Ps. Some of them availed the 4Ps but their account were cancelled. It is because they were detained and the card was no more use for their family anymore.

Sometimes, there are medical missions to check the health of the detainees. Another situation that the PDLs cited was there was only one resident nurse stationed in the jail and they are only visited by a doctor occasionally. *"Mayroon kaming nurse dito. May doctor din naman na pumupunta. May medical mission man sila dito kung minsan."*

b. Nakaranasan nyo na bang magkasakit sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng sakit at paano ito natugunan?

Most of the elderly PTDLs have hypertension and the congestion inside the jail makes it worst. Even though there are cases of hypertensive ailments to the elderly PTDLs, the jail officers always give them medical attention. One of the elderly PDL said: *"May sakit man siya gani Ma'am, highblood, pero hinde naman problema ang gamot basta magsabi kalang sa kanila"*.

c. Kung may medical emergency na nararanasan, paano ito natutugunan ng mga opisyaes? (gaya ng labis na pagdudugo, diabetis, high blood etc)

They have no problem when it comes to provision of medicines. Jail officers provide help when the elderly women needed to. *"Ay, wala namang problema dito. Magsabi kalang sa kanila,"* one elderly woman said.

1. Situation

Food, Water, and Space

a. *Sapat ba ang supply ng pagkain at tubig sa loob ng kulungan? Ang espasyo?*

One of the PTDs in this group stated that for them, the food is not enough due to the huge number of PTDs in the cells. One of them stated that *"sa akon, kulang gid sir... Gamay gid sir"*. Therefore, food supplies are not enough to sustain all of the PDLs in the jail.

b. *Ang espasyo?*

There are times that the cell became congested due to the large number of PTDs contained in the dorm that's why the space became narrow and for them it is one of the problems of the cell. *"Dati nakaabot kami ng 70+ dyan sir. Masikip na yun sir, wala kang madaanan papuntang cr"* stated by one of the PDLs.

c. *Ano ang kondisyon ng palikuran? (komportable ba kayong nakakaligo etc)*

For the women PTDs, the comfort room is not enough because there is only one comfort room in the dorm. They need more comfort rooms. When they were asked, all of them chorused. *"isa lng ang cr sir"*.

One of them laughingly stated that *"Minsan sir may nagccr may na liligo. Minsan sir apat, Lima yung nasa loob ee. Minsan ang aga pa naliligo. Mga ala una, alas dos"*. They are struggling to use the comfort rooms because it is not enough for a large number of PTDs in the dorm.

d. *Paano ka naapektuhan ng kalagayn sa kulungan bilang lesbyana, biseksual, o transgender?*

The LBT PTDs happily stated that their gender orientation does not affect or not an issue to the women in the cell. They stated that *"Di naman naging issue sir ang pagiging LBT ditto."*

e. *Bilang LBT sa loob ng kulungan, ano ang pinakamahirap na karanasan para sa iyo?*

Being a member of the LBT is not an issue in the dorm and there is no incidence of discrimination. *"Wala man problema sir,"* justified by one of the PTDLs.

Security

- a. *Nararamdaman nyo ba na kayo ay ligtas mula sa karahasan at sa ano mang porma ng pang-aabuso sa loob ng kulungan? Kung hindi, bakit?***

In terms of security, they are satisfied. They happily stated that *"Wala namang masamang nangyayari sir. Ok lang naman ang security"*. For them, the security is well operating in the jail. The security personnel that are tasked in the jail are friendly.

- b. *Kung may nangyari na karahasan o pang-aabuso sa loob ng kulungan, alam nyo ba kung kanino magrereklamo at kung ano ang proseso?***

The PDLs are using majority mechanism, a kind of mechanism where if there's an offense committed among the PTDLs, they need to consult it first in their *Mayor* (a PDL that is tasked to keep the cell peaceful). The mayor will be the one to report the offence in the jail guards. In this way, the offence will be addressed and solved systematically and efficiently. *"Meron din kasing naga hawak sa over all sir. Tapos sya ang nagrereport sa guards"* said by one of the PDLs.

- c. *Pag may nagkasala sa kulungan. Ano ang klase ng parusa ang pinapataw? (ipaliwanag ang uri ng parusa, pag search sa selda o sa katawan etc)***

Like other PTDLs, LBT members in the cell fairly receive sanctions if they committed an offence inside the cell. There is absence of discriminations experienced by the members of the LBTs. "

Wala man discrimination sir. If may sala (kasalanan), gina palaba ng trapo.. mga ganyan" said by one of the PTDLs.

- d. *Ano ang pinakamaigting na takot mo bilang isang LBT sa kulungan?***

There's no problem on the gender orientations within the PDLs. They are respected and treated fairly inside the cell. They stated happily, *"Wala man problema sir."*

Health and Sanitation

- a. *Ano ang nakukuhang nyo na serbisyong medikal sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng gamot at anong serbisyo?***

According to them, they have this *Bantay Kalusugan*. PTDL that serves as a pharmacist inside. She is the one who carries the medicine kits and distributing the needed medicine in the cell. "*May bantay kalusugan man sir. Siya ang nagadala ng gamot na binibigay sa mga PTDLs na nangangailangan,*" stated by one of the members of the group.

b. *Nakaranasan nyo na bang magkasakit sa loob ng kulungan? Anong klaseng sakit at paano ito natugunan?*

One of the members of this group experienced a surgical operation twice. For her, the operation is free but the medicines that needs to be maintained are not. Their family outside provides their maintenance to sustain the needed medicines. "*Na-operahan po ako sir. Kinuha yung matres ko. Yung opera po libre yun pero ang gamot na wala sa kanila sir dapat eprovide ng pamilya sa labas,*" stated by one of the PDLs.

c. *Natutugunan ba ang inyong pangangailangang pangkalusugan bilang babae, halimbawa sanitary napkins, gamot sadysmenorrhea, myoma at iba pa?*

The PTDLs said that they receive free sanitary napkins when there's a visit or some donations from different institutions. "*Minsan pag may mag bisita po or Christmas may nagbibigay po ng sanitary napkins. Tapos ngayon po malapit na po maubos*" stated by one of them.

d. *Na-eexamine ba kayo ng doctor o nars sa kulungan? Gaano kadalas at ano ang kanilang kasarian?*

"*May nagabisita din po na doctor. Minsan lang po.*" They stated sadly. There's a nurse in the cell who check them up but the doctor rarely seen in the cell.

Pangangailangan sa pamilya

a. *Tanggap at alam ba ng pamilya mo na ikaw ay LBT? Nakaka-apekto ba ang iyong pagiging LBT sa relasyon mo sa pamilya?*

Being a member of LBT for them is not difficult because they are being loved for who they are and what gender orientation they will choose to be. One of the PTDLs happily stated that "*Tanggap man nila kami sir. Di man problema ang pagiging LBT*"

b. *Sa mga may anak, kapatid, pamilya sa labas ng kulungan, paano nakaapekto ang inyong pagkakulong sa inyong pamilya? Sa iyong pagiging ina?*

All of them stated that it is hard to be separated from loveones and family. It's hard for a mother to leave her children behind to face her own

case. Most of them shed in tears while stating their own story, even the interviewer carried away to the touching stories of the PTDLs. One mother cried while stating that *"Mahirap talaga sir na malayo sa kanila.. sa mga mahal mo sa buhay"*.

c. (Para sa mga ina) Paano mo tinutugunan at nagagampanan ang iyong pagiging ina sa mga may layang anak? Regular mo ba nakakausap at nakikita ang inyong mga anak at pamilya?

Most of the members of the group stated that sometimes, their children visit them to see their situation. One of the mothers in the cell said that the family of her husband hindered her to come near to her own daughter. She was threatened that if she happened to come near to her daughter again, she will be killed. She said that *"Sabi nila papatayin daw nila ako pag lumapit ako sa aking anak,"* while crying.

d. Anong pangangailangan mo ang hindi natutugunan?

All of them stated that their leading problem in the cell is the slow judicial processes. The postponement of their hearings can be the reason of delayed disposition of their cases. *"Minsan lang kasi ang hearing sir. Matagal po matapos,"* as they state it one after the other.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

The Focus Group Discussion, particularly the "kwentuhan" was heartbreaking but gratifying. It was filled with emotions. However, it in a way illustrated the tearful faces of hopeless PTDLs who turned into smiley expressions but yet buoyant and hoping for total freedom, to be with their family and loved ones.

Through this activity, the participants were able to share and have at least discharged and released some of their apprehensions, fretfulness, and even worries. It served as temporary relief and reprieve of their conditions and their feeling of hopelessness.

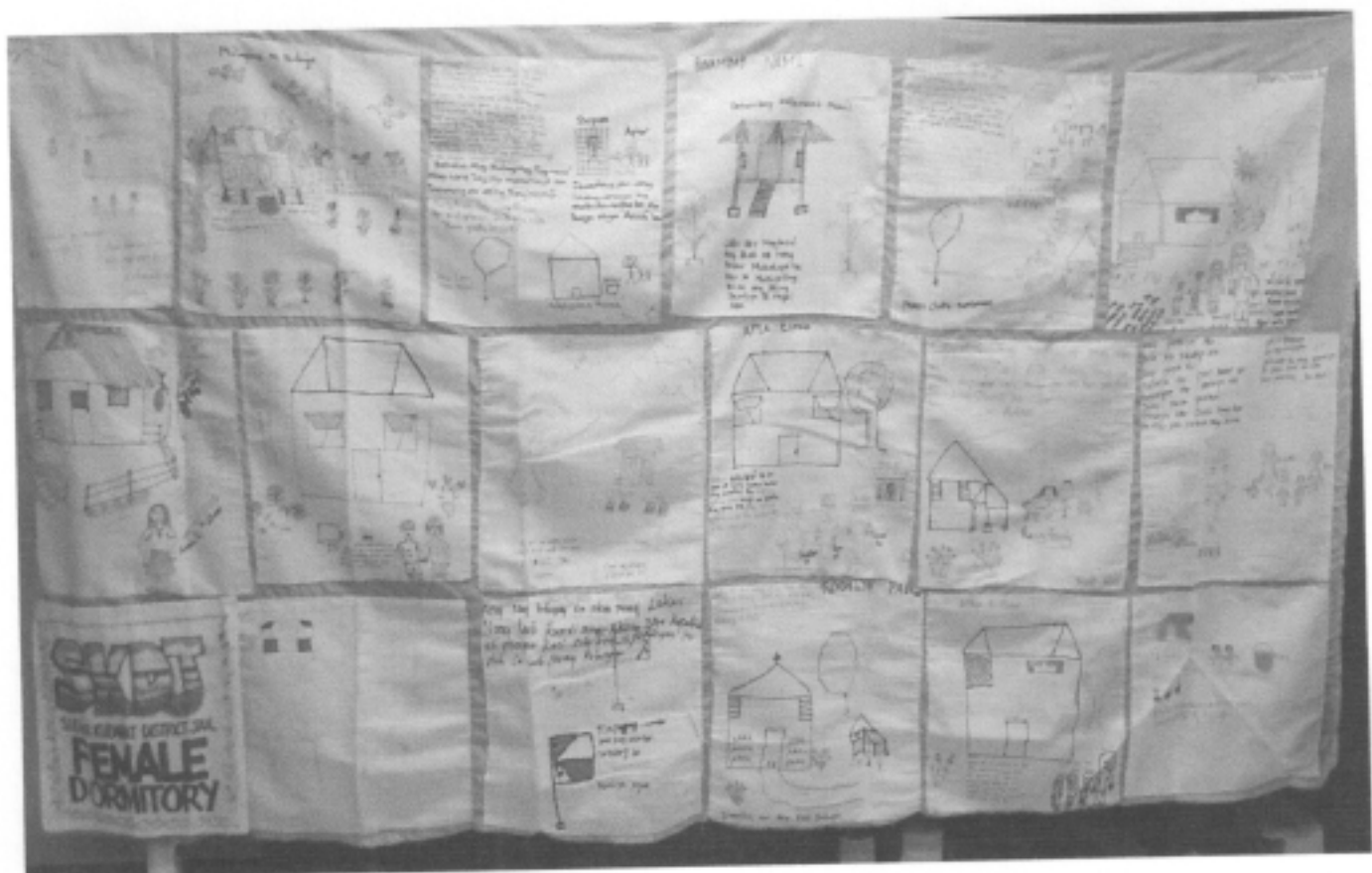
This tool of Focus Group Discussion brought optimism and added value to the work of the Commission as Gender Ombud and as the protector of the disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable, particularly the women in detention.

V. QUILT MAKING

After the Focus Group Discussion, the CHR XII Team provided the PTDs drawing materials for the quilt making that includes colored pens and a piece of cloth. They were given thirty minutes to finish their quilt. And while doing their quilt, they were served with "meryenda" and lunch.

This quilt making activity portrayed the emotions and feelings as well as the hopes and dreams of the selected female PTDs. Most of them drew a figure which resembles into a house with the people they loved. Their drawing depicted their eagerness and high hopes that one day, they will be able to see the outside world again, and to see a silver lining in their everyday lives inside the detention cell.

After a long day full of activities, the Commission on Human Rights XII bid a farewell to the PTDs which was led by IO-II Mr. Loreto Condesa. As they depart from the Sultan Kudarat District Jail-Female Dorm, they saw the smiles in their faces and the hopes in their eyes, wishing that someday they would be able to meet those persons who rekindled the light of freedom in their hearts again and to see the beautiful world outside the rusty bars of the detention cell.



VI. PROFILE

WOMEN GROUP

Name	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	Civil Status:	No. of Children	Highest Educational Attainment	Occupation (Before imprisoned)	Case	Duration of Detention
	20	Female	Ilonggo	Single	1	Elementary	N/A	Violation of RA 9165	2 years
	23	Female	Bisaya	Single	none	Grade 1	Farming	Violation of RA 9165	2 years
	39	Female	Ilonggo	Married	5	High School	N/A	Violation of RA 9165	3 Years
	31	Female	Ilonggo	Married	none	Alternative Learning System	Cashier	Violation of RA 9165	2 years and 7 months
	25	Female	Ilocana	Single	3	High School	House Keeper	Parricide	2 years and 5 months
	36	Female	Ilonggo	Married	4	Grade 5		Violation of RA 9165	2 years

LBT GROUP

Name	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	Civil Status:	No. of Children	Highest Educational Attainment	Occupation (Before imprisoned)	Case:	Duration of Detention
	36	Female	Ilonggo	Single	none	College	BAS (Contractual)	Violation of RA 9165	2 years and 10 months
	26	Female	Islam	Single	none	College (2 nd year)	N/A	Violation of RA 9165	3 years
	40	Female	Cebuana	Separated	4	ALS	Laundry Woman	Violation of RA 9165	2 years and 3 months
	24	Female	Islam	Married	3	ALS	N/A	Violation of RA 9165	2 years and 9 months
	24	Female	Ilonggo	Single	3	ALS	N/A	Violation of RA 9165	2 years and 10 months

ELDERLY GROUP

Name	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	Civil Status:	No. of Children	Highest Educational Attainment	Occupation (Before imprisoned)	Case:	Duration of Detention
	74	Female	Ilonggo	Widowed	4	High School	Farming	Violation of RA 9165	4 Months
	63	Female	Ilonggo	Young Status	6	Elementary	Laundry Woman	Frustrated Murder	4 Months
	55	Female	Maguindanaon	Married	1	High School	Businesswoman	Violation of RA 9165	4 years
	46	Female	Maguindanaon	Married	7	Grade 1	Housewife	Violation of RA 9165	2 years
	55	Female	Muslim	Married	3	College Graduate	Farming	Violation of RA 9165	4 years and 6 months
	45	Female	Maguindanaon	Widowed	3	N/A	Housewife	Violation of RA 9165	6 months