



CHR: DIGNITY OF ALL

**SITUATION OF WOMEN FISHERFOLKS AND WOMEN AND GIRLS
AT RISK OF TRAFFICKING
AND OTHER FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE NEW NORMAL**

Documentation Report

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FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN FISHERFOLKS
and
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW WITH GOVERNMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS

CHR REGIONAL OFFICE XII REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY

On October 13, 2020 the **Commission on Human Rights – Region XII** in coordination with Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (SENTRO) – General Santos City Chapter conducted the Focused Group Discussion (FGD) on the Situation of Women Fisherfolks and Women and Girls at Risk of Trafficking and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) During COVID-19 Pandemic and New Normal in General Santos City. The venue was provided by SENTRO - Gensan who also facilitated in the identification of Women Fisherfolks who attended the FGD. The FGD was conducted through face-to-face since the participants do not have access to the internet. However, the same was conducted following the minimum health protocols so as to protect both the participants and the facilitators. Participants were provided with face mask, face shield and a small bottle of alcohol as part of the training kit.

A total of sixteen (16) women fisherfolks attended the FGD who were divided into two (2) groups to observe the minimum health protocols implemented in the city.

Prior to the FGD, an orientation on the mandates of the Commission on Human Rights as Gender Ombud was given in plenary. After which, the Focal Person on Gender presented to the participants a situationer on women fisherfolk. She likewise discussed the rationale and the objectives of the activity.

On the part of Government Service Provider, a Key Informant Interview (KII) was conducted. The questionnaires were sent to identified and selected Regional Line Agencies (RLAs) and were collected back for consolidation. However, a face-to-face KII was conducted to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources - XII by the CHR-XII Gender Focal Person.

The following are the objectives of the activity presented to the participants;

General objectives:

- Establish a baseline pertaining to the roles and participation of women in small scale fishing, and of the issues of women fisherfolks including trafficking and GBV, the implementation of MCW provisions on women fisherfolks, and the impact of the pandemic;
- Gather regional data on women fisherfolks and GBV during the COVID-19 Pandemic and the new normal, creating partnerships with communities and CSOs and strengthening CHR regional office's situation monitoring on women in the marginalized sectors as Gender Ombud in their respective regions;

More specific objectives:

1. To render visible and document the roles and tasks undertaken by women fisherfolks in the household and in the community;

2. To monitor the implementation of MCW provisions on women fisherfolks by looking at: women's roles, economic participation and recognition, access to information, resources, and food production; Experiences of marginalization, discrimination; Gender Based Violence;
3. To document the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Women fisherfolks;
4. To document awareness of and availment by women fisherfolks of government programs in response to COVID-19;
5. To gather recommendations from the ground.

After the Focused Group Discussion with Women Fisherfolks, they were given food assistance and relief and communication allowance. This was facilitated by the secretariat.

FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN FISHERFOLKS

1. ROLES

- Anong dagat, lawa, ilog, fish pond etc, ang malapit sa inyo? Ano – ano ang mga pinagkakakitaan o ibang kahalagahan ang nakukuha ng komunidad sa mga yamang tubig na ito? (fishing, aquaculture, tourism, transport etc)
 - *The respondents are living along the coastal area of Calumpang, General Santos City. While some of the respondents are working at the coastal area, others are working in mangroves preservation area.*
 - *They derived their income from gathering sea shells, planting seaweeds, harvesting crabs and sea urchins, and planting mangroves.*
 - *One participant shared that there is an existing organization, where she is a member, that is developing a mangrove preservation area for tourism. Most of its members are women.*
- Sa iyong pamilya, ano ang pakinabang ng mga anyo ng tubig sa inyo – pinagkakakitaan/ trabaho, pinagkukunan ng pagkain, pahingahan etc.
 - *It serves as source of income and other livelihood activities.*
 - *It is where they derive their food for their families.*
- Bilang babae na nakatira sa isang fishing community, ano ang typical na araw sa iyo? Ano ang iyong mga ginagawa sa bahay at sa labas ng bahay? (Note reproductive work, pre-production work and processing work, and other community work).
 - *Doing household chores, attending to the needs of the family and participating in community works such as those initiated by civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations.*
 - *Food and fish vending to help husband and to augment family's income.*
- Ang asawa, anak na babae o anak na lalaki mo ba ay nasa pangisda din? Ano ang kanilang ginagawa? Magkano ang kanilang kita dito?

- *Children as young as 14 years old are already helping to earn for the family and are engaged into fishing. As a result, some of these children dropped-out from school.*
- *Some of the participants shared that their husbands are doing dual work just to provide for the needs of their family.*
- **Tinatawag mo ba ang sarili mo na kababaihang nasa pangisda? (women fisherfolk) Bakit oo? Bakit Hindi? (Ano ang tawag mo sa sarili?)**
 - *One participant shared that she just learned, during the FGD, that women can also be called fisherfolk because of the belief that only men can be called as such.*
 - *Because of the realization, they now come into agreement that they also have the right to be called as fisherfolks because of what they are doing.*
- **Sa panahon ng COVID-19 may nagbago ba sa iyong mga gawaing mag-asawa? Pamilya?**
 - *A lot of changes had happened because of the pandemic. It affected especially their source of income. Because of this incident, women were forced to go fishing and help their husband to earn additional income for the family.*
 - *They were restricted to enter the fish port where they usually get their products which they sell in the market. Because of this restriction, their income was greatly affected considering that the support which they receive from the government are not enough for the entire family.*

The participants considered themselves women fisher folk engaging in small-scale fishing. For them, fishing has been their source of living – provide fish for direct consumption within their households, communities, and in the markets.

The participants were asked about how is their typical day during the pandemic. Some of them answered:

a. *“Ngayon na may pandemic tayo, pegado...pegado talaga. Hindi basta basta makapasok sa fishport kasi maraming proseso...”* (During this time of the pandemic, we are struggling. The entry to fish port is controlled due to requirements needed.) *“Tuloy pa rin ang trabaho, pero konti-konti lang. Makabili naman minsan ng bigas, pero pangbigas lang talaga.”* (We can still go to the fish port, and earns minimum amount just enough to buy our basic needs.)

b. *“Akoang trabaho, nagalibud ko ug isda... lisud Sir karon na pandemic, kung walay isda, walay suroy.”* (I usually peddled in nearby communities. The situations during this pandemic made it hard for us to do our fishing activity.)

c. *“Ang akong tinda nasa Alabel... border man, di kami makapasok. Wala gyud, down gid tu sa akong negosyo.”* (Due to border lockdown, I could no longer sell in the market. It has caused a huge impact on my economic aspect.)

Their fishing activity has declined. They could no longer sail every day because of restrictions imposed in their community. They could not sell in towns due to border lockdown.

2. ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND RECOGNITION

- Sino ang kinikilalang kasama sa pangisda sa inyong komunidad? May mga babaeng nasa pangisda ba? Ano ang ginagawa nila (role in fisheries)? Saan nila ginagawa? (space) Ano ang mga gamit nila (equipment)?
 - *Husbands are usually the one recognized as fisherfolks in the community. Women are the one who are task to sell the fish.*
 - *Some women are into fishing as well especially those who are living near the coastal area. They use fishing rods and other fishing equipment to catch fish which they sometimes sell for additional income.*
- Sa iyong ginagawa sa pangisda (pre-production, during, post) – magkano madalas ang iyon kinikita? Saan napupunta ito?
 - *Women who are helping in the production are given 3 kilos of fish, the most, as payment for their services which they also sell. The proceeds of which are used to buy for their family needs.*
- Ang iyong asawa, magkano kinikita nya sa kanyang ginagawa sa pangisda? Saan naman napupunta ang sahod nya?
 - *It depends on the amount of catch. Sometimes what is left, after deducting cash advances, would not suffice to support the family. Thus, women are forced to look for ways to help the family.*
- Ikaw ba ay nakalista bilang woman fisherfolk sa tala ng gobyerno (BFAR or DA)? Sino sa pamilya ang nakalista? Ksama ba kayo sa 4Ps?
 - *One participant shared that because of her membership to the organization which is registered under DOLE and accredited by the LGU of Gen. Santos City they were entitled to assistance given by the government.*
 - *Some of them were only recognized as women fisherfolks under the DOLE but only during the pandemic.*
 - *There were participants who were not beneficiaries of the 4Ps for reasons which are not known to them. Accordingly, they were excluded because they own appliances.*
- May organisasyon ba ng pangisda sa komunidad? O mga bantay dagat? Mga fish warden? Sino – sino ang mga miyembro nito? May mga kababaihan ba?
 - *There are existing organizations in the locality where some of the participants are currently members of the said organizations.*
 - *There are also women who are fish warden whose task is to report illegal activities.*
- Sa mga organisasyon ng pangisda – ano ang ginagampanan ng mga kababaihan? Bahagi ba ang kababaihan sa desisyon/pagpapasya? Bakit?
 - *One of the participants responded that they are involved in mangrove planting and preservation and currently into aquaculture livelihood program such as*

crab fattening, etc. sponsored by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

- *Women as members are included in the decision-making of the organization such as income sharing.*

- Sa tingin mo ba sapat ang atensyon na binigay ng sector ng mga mangingisda sa mga kababaihan? Bakit?
 - *Not enough attention is given to women fisherfolks like distribution of relief assistance from the government because most of the time only men fisherfolks are recognized.*
 - *Fishing equipment were given to ineligible recipients and those who are supposed to benefit were neglected due to some unfair practices and unorganized distribution.*

These women engaged in small-scale fishing are not well-recognized by the government. According to one participant, fishing tools and equipment provided before were insufficient. She said that support from the government are limited to those who are dependent on fishing activity. In some Purok, there are members of Bantay Dagat Organization, but there were no women's participation as of the moment.

One of the participants is engaged in Alamang Production, but since the onset of the pandemic, she barely has customers. Approximately, the fisher folk earns P300 a day which is far meager compared to how much they have been earning before i.e. P5,000 per day. All of them said that the income they earned are spent for daily expenses. Their husbands earned a minimal amount from driving and fishing.

3. ACCESS TO INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND FOOD PRODUCTION

- May kaalaman ka ba sa mga karapatan at mga benepisyo sa batas ng mga mangingisda?
 - *Aware of the benefits for fisherfolks such as SSS, Philhealth, PAG-IBIG and the likes both of small-scale and large-scale fishing.*
 - *However, there are some fisherfolks especially those in the small-scale fishing who are still not enjoying the benefits because some owners of small fishing boat are not providing benefits as provided under the law.*
- Nabasa o alam mo ba ang mga karapatan ng mga kababaihan sa pangisda na nasa Magna Carta of Women?

Hal: pagkakapantay-pantay sa pag-access, pag-manage, pag-talaga bilang bantay ng mga yamang tubig ng ancestral domain/komunidad; pagkakapantay-pantay sa mga benepisyo na nakalaan para sa pangisda (lease agreements, stewardships), pagkakaroon ng 'women friendly and sustainable agriculture technology through consultation; Karapatan ukol sa production at post-production (marketing etc.)

 - *Not aware of the rights of women fisherfolks as provided under the Magna Carta of Women. It is only during the FGD that they were made aware of such.*

- Saan nanggagaling ang mga kaalamang ito? Kung walang alam – bakit kaya di mo ito nalaman? Wala ba pagkakataong makadalo ng meeting etc?
 - *During consultations in the community, only the Punong Barangay is being oriented and sometimes this information was not relayed to the constituents. Some women fisherfolks were not given opportunity to attend to such activities.*
- May nakukuha ka bang benepisyo sa gobyerno bilang kababaihan sa pangisda? Ang iyong asawa? (look for access to benefits – kanino nakapangalan?)
 - *No benefits were received from the government.*
- Ngayong COVID-19 Pandemic – anong mga benepisyo o ayuda ng gobyerno para sa sector ang alam mo? Alam mo ba ang SURE COVID AID?
 - *The participants unanimously responded that they are not aware of the SURE COVID AID of the government and that they only knew of the program during the FGD.*
 - *One participant shared that there were seaweeds fisherfolks that were given cash assistance by BFAR.*
- Nakatanggap ba kayo ng ayuda sa gobyerno? Ano ang mga ito? Sapat ba?
 - *Only food relief assistance from the LGU but none from other government agencies which according to most of the participants were not enough for the entire family.*

According to all, they do not have access to information, resources, and food production. They do not know anything about the rights of women in fisher folk. They were never invited to seminars or trainings on fishery. The community where they lived do not have programs for women fisher folk. They did not avail the Survival and Recovery (SURE) Aid Program of Department of Agriculture-Agriculture Credit Policy Council (DA-ACPC).

As women in their community, they had access to benefits. Most of them have received assistance from the government such as SAP (Social Amelioration Program), and food items from the barangay. The assistance they received from the government has augmented their basic needs.

4. EXPERIENCES OF MARGINALIZATION, STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION

- Sapa ba ang kinikita ng pamilya para sa pangangailangan? Nakakakain naman ng 3 beses isang araw sa lahat ng pagkakataon?
 - *Income is not enough to meet the needs of the family. While most of the participants are able to eat three times a day, one participant shared that because of the pandemic they sometimes forego their breakfast.*
- Maayos ba ang trato sa inyo ng barangay, ng gobyerno, ng mga ahensya ng gobyerno kung kayo ay nagtatanong o nag aavail ng mga benepisyo para sa mga mangingisda?
 - *Some of the participants shared that they receive unfair treatment from the barangay because of favoritism. Only those who are considered allies benefit most of the time.*

- *Fisherfolks are discriminated and are treated lowly.*

When asked about their experiences, two of the participants shared what they have experienced when they made an inquiry with regard to availing the government assistance. According to them:

“...Kung imo kapitan... iya kapitan... sa time tung kay _____ ba, nagsulod kami didto sa barangay kay magkuha mi sang barangay clearance, gihambalan niya kami... ‘Atin ba yan?’ Tapos pag hindi sa kanila (kapartido) matagal ang pag entertain.” (When we requested a barangay clearance, we received an unfair treatment from the barangay. We heard them questioning our loyalty to the current barangay administration. There were instances as well when residents were deprived of prompt services from the barangay.)

On the other hand, others have experienced unfriendly manner from the DSWD staff when they made clarifications with regard to SAP. According to them *“...Giubanan nako sya (igsuon ko) sa DSWD, kay nag adto mi didto...Nakatilaw pa mi ug kasaba didto Sir uy, kay ang ingon sa amua didto. ‘ay dili gid ka pwede makadawat Ma’am!’ Gihilak pud ko didto Sir ba sa sulod sa DSWD. Unta daw, wala na lang mi nagsumbong... Wala mi nagsumbong, nangayo mi ug tabang kung kinsa among pwede duulan...”* (I accompanied my sister in DSWD Office and we received a reprimand. They told us that we cannot avail the said assistance. I was in tears inside the office. Our intention was only to seek help from them.)

5. TRAFFICKING AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- Bago pa man ang pandemya, may naririnig na ba kayong karahasan laban sa kababaihan sa inyong komunidad? Ano ang mga porma nito?
 - Hal: (a) may pambubugbog ba ng asawa?; (b) may nagaganap ba na trafficking o prostitusyon ng mga bata o babae? (sex kapalit ng pera o bagay o iba pang benepisyo); (c) panggagahasa o ibang pang aabusong seksual?; (d) online sexual violence/cybersex dens; (e) pang-aalila – pagtrabaho na walang bayad. Pambayad utang atbp.
 - *Prior to the pandemic, there are already cases of cyberbullying, child prostitution and trafficking. Out-of-school youth as young as 14 years old are forced into fishing.*
 - *There are also cases of domestic violence in the locality.*
- Ano sa tingin nyo ang ugat ng karahasan? Ba’t sya nangyayari?
 - *Poverty*
 - *Lack of support from the government*
 - *Lack of proper implementation of the laws by the barangay leaders*
- Paano tinutugunan ng komunidad at pamahalaan ang iba’t ibang porma ng karahasan?
 - *No action from the barangay if there are no complainants even they are already aware of the situation.*
 - *Impartiality by some barangay leaders in dealing with cases raised before the barangay for mediation.*
- May mga anyo ng karahasan ba na nangyari sa panahon ng lockdown? Ano ang mga ito?
 - *Children are traumatized and are afraid to see policemen.*

- *Health protocols implemented by the barangay are not properly disseminated to the constituents.*

6. GENERAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Paano kayo, bilang manginigsda, naapektuhan ng pandemya?
 - *Income generating programs of some women fisherfolks were greatly affected. Some of the activities were limited due to some government restrictions.*
 - *Catch fish were sold at a lower price, thus, unable to meet the expenses incurred in fishing.*
 - *Income were lessened because children who used to help in selling their products are no longer allowed to go outside.*
 - *Women fisherfolk who used to knit fishing nets are no longer allowed to do so because of the restrictions.*
- Kumusta ang gawain mo sa bahay sa panahon ng pandemya, gumaan ba o bumigat?
 - *House chores become more burdensome especially with the new educational system because it provides additional work load among mothers. Some have to attend to the modules of their children.*
- May naranasan ba ng mga panghaharass, paglabag ng karapatang pantao sa komunidad sa gitna ng lockdown o ECQ? May naapektuhan bang mga kababaihan sa pangisda?
 - *The participants never experienced abuses and harassment during the lockdown, however, they have noticed that older women who are still able to go fishing can no longer do the same because of the restrictions, thus, denied of the means to help earn for their family.*
- Sapat ba ang pagtugon at ayuda ng gobyerno?
 - *The participants unanimously responded that the assistance they receive from the government is not enough.*
- Paano nalampasan ng pamilya ang kahirapan na dulot ng pandemya? Paano nagtulungan nag komunidad ng mga mangingisda?
 - *Prayer and survival ways and means. Look for strategies to survive one day at a time.*
 - *The community buy the fish and other sea products they sell.*

The COVID-19 Pandemic has affected the economic condition of women fisherfolks. Their income from fishing has declined because they could not sail whenever they want to due to COVID-19 protocols in place in the community. Others could not sell fish in towns thus, they have to sell their fish at a low-cost in nearby communities. These situations seriously affected their economic aspect.

Since all of them are mothers, most of their time are spent at home doing household chores, assisting their children's modular classes and among others. According to them, the government's response and assistance such as food items were enough yet unhealthy when

consumed every day. Despite the current situation they are facing, everybody is hopeful that this pandemic will soon end.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ano ang rekomendasyon nyo sa pamahalaan para:
 - ✓ Mapabuti ang kalagayan ng mga mangingisda?
 - *Women fisherfolks are given access to microfinancing with lower interest.*
 - *Catch fish be sold at a fair and reasonable price.*
 - ✓ Mapabuti ang kalagayan ng mga kababaihan sa pangisda?
 - *Women fisherfolks be given attention by the government and let their voices be heard.*
 - *Small-scale fishing industries to provide small fisherfolks benefits.*
 - *Owners of fishing boats be also given orientation with regard to existing laws for them to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations to their workers.*
 - ✓ Para matigil at matugunan nag karahasan laban sa kababaihan;
 - ✓ Paano mai-angat ang sector pagkatapos ng pandemya o sa pagharap ng New Normal?
 - *Recognition and provision of capital to women fisherfolks.*
 - ✓ Ano ang mensahe bilang kababaihang mangingisda sa sector ng pangisda?
 - *We wish to convey to the government that women fisherfolks be given proper recognition and be given attention especially those who are unemployed and are not earning anything.*
 - *That the voices of women fisherfolks will be heard by the government and that a concrete plan of action will be implemented that will be felt by the sector and will benefit their family and the community.*
 - *Hoping that women fisherfolks and their husband be given help and assistance by the government by providing proper benefits and that their fish be sold at a fair and reasonable price.*

To improve the economic condition of women fisher folk, government sustainable programs and support were the recommendations they believe could alleviate and improve their social condition to include SURE Aid Program, financial/capital assistance for putting up small business; livelihood assistance for every woman engaged in small-scale fishing; and access to employment.

According to them, with the skills they possess as women fisher folk and with the support from the government, they are positive to surpass all adversities. They believe that patience and hard work are keys in surviving life amid COVID-19 Pandemic and New Normal.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (KII) WITH GOVERNMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS

There were three (3) Government Service Providers (GSPs) that responded to the Key Informant Interview. Although efforts were made to solicit responses from other GSPs who look after the welfare and situations of women fisherfolks.

The following were culled out from the responses of Government Service Providers who responded to the Key Informant Interview that were sent to them via email based on the following guide questions;

1. SITUATIONER OF WOMEN FISHERFOLKS

- Does the office have sex disaggregated data of fisherfolks in the region? How many are the recorded women fisherfolks?
- Based on agency data, what the current state of fisherfolks in the region? (explore kinds of fishing, numbers, income of the sector)
- What issues of fisherfolks are particular to the region?
- What about women fisherfolks? Are they recognized as fisherfolks independent from their fisherman husbands?
- Does the agency have data on GBV/trafficking in fishing communities? What are the identifiable trends?

2. POLICIES AND PROGRAMS;

- Are there policies adopted by the agency pertaining to fisherfolks? Women fisherfolks?
- What are the general programs of the agency for fisherfolks before the ECQ?
- Are there specific programs for women fisherfolks in accordance with the MCW?
- Does the sector currently benefit (in terms of program and benefits) from the GAD budget of the agency?

3. COVID 19 IMPACT AND PROGRAM

- During ECQ, what programs were developed to assist fisherfolks during crisis? How many beneficiaries are there to the programs?
- How many beneficiaries were able to avail?
- Are these programs available for women?
- What impact of the pandemic on the sector have you documented?

I. SITUATIONER OF WOMEN FISHERFOLKS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS and COVID 19 IMPACT AND PROGRAM

▪ DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT – XII (DILG-XII)

The DILG Region XII has no existing sex-disaggregated data, records, policies and programs related to local fisherfolks in the Region. Nonetheless, the DILG XII is closely monitoring LGUs, especially coastal cities/municipalities, to have an updated Ecological Profile wherein the comprehensive data about the LGUs, including specific sector prevailing, must be reflected. The profile is an essential document in the Comprehensive Development Plan

(CPD) for cities and municipalities and Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) for Provinces.

Moreover, the contribution of the Department as reviewing agency of LGU GAD Plan and Budget (GPB) is to ensure that the existing gender issues particularly pertaining to women fisherfolks for coastal LGUs will be included in the GPB ad, of course, addressed through responsive programs or projects, like livelihood, capacity development trainings, and other interventions. Worthy to mention, the DILG XII also has been one of the evaluators for couple of years to the “Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan” program of DA-BFAR which aims to recognize he coastal community with worth replicating practices on maintaining the cleanliness and bounty of its coast.

▪ **BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES – XII (BFAR-XII)**

A. Situationer of Women Fisherfolks

i. Based on agency FshR data, the following were reported as of November 3, 2020;

Province	Female	Male
Sarangani	4,519	14,514
Cotabato	5,395	14,342
South Cotabato	9,507	19,111
Sultan Kudarat	5,846	13,398
Cotabato City	2,528	4,543
Total	27,795	65,908

ii. In Cotabato Province, women fisherfolks are engaged in the selling of fish in the market and doing post-harvest like drying and tilapia lamayo, while in Sarangani Province, the kinds of fishing are hook and line, gill net, Fish Aggregating Device (FAD), motorized and non-motorized boat.

The number of fisherfolks are almost the same since their children are into fishing as well and most of these fisherfolks are below the poverty level.

iii. In Cotabato Province, it is the lack of capital while in Sarangani Province, most of the fisherfolks are under-educated (elementary level only) and they don't have skills to look for other jobs and if they do, they work as laborers or as construction workers. Further, they also experience low catch and high production cost, i.e. fuel, ice, gears, etc., and unstable selling price of the fish especially during this pandemic.

In South Cotabato, it's the high cost of feeds (aquaculture), shortage of supply of fingerlings/crablets (bangus and crabs).

Based on the information from the Reduction in Trafficking in Person/Fisherfolk and Communities (RTFC) located in General Santos City, there are **ninety-four (94)** repatriates from Indonesia, all of them are male.

- iv. *In Cotabato Province, they work hand in hand with their husband. In Sarangani, however, women fisherfolks are into fish vending and processing while some are working in aquaculture, i.e. ponds and fish cages*
- v. *Unfortunately, the Agency does not have any data on GBV/trafficking in fishing communities.*

B. On Policies and Programs

- i. *The Agency allocated 5% GAD Plan of the total agency approved budget as per PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2012-01.*
- ii. *Before the ECQ, the Agency is already implementing the Fisherfolk Development Program such as provision of capture fisheries paraphernalia, distribution of seed stocks under aquaculture sub-program, provision of post-harvest equipment and provision of training and technical assistance.*
- iii. *The following are the specific programs;*
 - Under Extension Support*
 - ✓ *Education and Training Services, GAD Sensitivity Training for VAWC, Family Planning, AIDS Awareness and Post-Harvest Training*
 - For Fisheries Development Program*
 - ✓ *Provision of non-motorized banca, fish trap and crab pot*
 - For Fisheries Production and Distribution*
 - ✓ *Distribution of Tilapia and Hito fingerlings and seaweed farm implements*
 - For Provision of Post-Harvest Equipment*
 - ✓ *Provision of styrobox, fish vending materials, processing utensils and fish cooler*
 - Under Coastal Resources Management Extension Support Services*
 - ✓ *Coastal Clean-up and mangrove propagules*
 - Under Support to Operations*
 - ✓ *Training-Workshops on GST, HGG, and Magna Carta of Women*
- iv. *The sector identified is currently benefiting from the GAD Budget of the Agency.*

C. On COVID-19 Impact and Program

- i. *During ECQ, the Agency distributed seeds stock to ensure food sufficiency. It also distributed relief assistance to fisherfolks as well as fishing paraphernalia and established techno-demo (aquaponics). Six (6) techno-demo were funded by DOST as COVID-19 assistance to fisherfolk.*

- ii. *A total of two hundred twenty-five (225) beneficiaries for seed stock distribution, six hundred (600) beneficiaries for relief operation, one thousand two hundred sixty-one (1,261) for fishing paraphernalia and ten (10) beneficiaries for aquaponics.*
- iii. *All of these beneficiaries were able to avail and these were also made available for women.*
- iv. *The Agency was able to document an increase in the number of issuances of LTP and Food Pass in order to prevent hampered movement of fishery products. On the other hand, some projects and distribution were delayed due to restrictions brought about by ECQ.*

▪ **OFFICE OF THE CITY AGRICULTURIST - LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT OF GENERAL SANTOS CITY**

A. Situationer of Women Fisherfolks

The Office has its sex disaggregated data on fisherfolks and there are more than twenty-three thousand fisherfolks of which more than fifteen thousand are capture fishermen and majority of them are below the poverty threshold.

No municipal waters, informal settlement and poverty are some of the issues that are particular to these fisherfolks.

However, the Office has no data as to women recognized as fisherfolks independent from their fisherman husbands and on GBV/trafficking in fishing communities and its identifiable trends.

B. On Policies and Programs

The LGU of General Santos City has its City Fisheries Code and before the ECQ it is already implementing livelihood projects, technical assistance, regulatory services, trainings and seminars. Eventhough the Office has no GAD fund, it indirectly benefits through other Department's GAD Programs.

C. On COVID-19 Impact and Program

During the ECQ, the City established a Market linkage through the Agri-Fishery Products on Wheels (Online Marketing on Facebook and Messenger). With this program, more than ten fisherfolks were able to avail and these were also made available to women since everyone is welcome to sell their fishery products.

However, due to the pandemic, transportation and marketing of products were limited and their products were sold at a very low prices due to low demand.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

▪ **DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT – XII (DILG-XII)**

- i. DA-BFAR XII to ensure the inclusion of programs, projects, and services related to women fisherfolks to the Coastal Resource Management Plan (CRMP) of the LGUs.*
- ii. LGUs to conduct gender analysis in order to transparently identify the problems and concerns affecting women fisherfolks with attached MOVs to be submitted to the Department.*
- iii. DILG to ensure the submission of GAD Accomplishment Report to check whether the gender issues identified were addressed or not.*
- iv. DILG to ensure that LGUs strengthen their GAD M&E Team.*

▪ **BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES – XII (BFAR-XII)**

- i. Empower more women fisherfolks in financial management although the USAID Oceans already conducted a training to selected women fisherfolks in Sarangani and General Santos City.*
- ii. Technical assistance and access to Microfinancing Institutions.*

▪ **OFFICE OF THE CITY AGRICULTURIST - LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT OF GENERAL SANTOS CITY**

- i. Appropriate funds for programs and projects responsive to the needs of the women fisherfolks.*
- ii. Organize women fisherfolks*
- iii. Assist women fisherfolks in accessing capital and technical skills enhancement for livelihood activities.*
- iv. Incorporate gender-related policies into the City Fisheries Code.*