



QUICK FACTS ON THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN THE PHILIPPINES

Women in Population

The Philippine population was last counted in 2000 with 76.5 million. With an average annual increase of 2.34%, today it stands at 86 million. This birth rate remains one of the highest in the Asian region. Women are practically half of the population.

The literacy rate of women is 92.47%, slightly higher than that of men which registers at 92.10% in 2003.

Women in Labour Force

Participation of women in the labour force has been increasing. Out of the total labor force of 35.2 million, 13.3 million are women or 37% and 21.9 million men or 62.2%. Labor force participation rate of women is 49.2% as compared to men with 79.3%. There are 1.02 million unemployed women as recorded by NSO in 3rd Quarter of 2006. The same labor force survey showed the number of unemployed men as higher at 1.8 million. This is mainly due to the women's dominant presence in the informal economy.

There were 3.92 million union members in 2003 of which women account for about 33%. There were about 26% of women in the trade union leadership.

According to the 2006 ILO Yearbook of Statistics there was an overall increase in the number of managerial workers but the number of women remains the same. In 2001 women legislative officials, government administrators and managers represented 30% and in 2005 this decreased to 25%.

Domestic Workers

Data on the number of domestic workers in the country vary considerably. In 1987, NSO estimated the number of household helpers at 569,000. The next labor force survey in 2002 revealed an increase to 766,000 of domestic workers. At the same time the

survey showed 1.3 million "households with employed persons". The same survey revealed that household respondents claim to have at least one household help.

On the premise that employment of domestic help is a practice that is historically embedded in Filipino culture, the Visayan Forum however, estimates the number of household helpers at 2.5 million. Although the exact number of domestic workers is unknown, it is clear that the majority of them, both child and adult, are females. It is clear that domestic work represents a large proportion of work available to women.

The Girl Child

In 2001, the Philippines had 4 million working children aged 5-17 years, 70% of them work in the rural areas and the rest are in urban areas. These children are totally helpless and vulnerable to maltreatment, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation and hazardous working conditions. Around 2.4 million of the total number of working children work without pay.

Working girls are estimated to reach 1.460 million, or 36% of the total working children. These girls are mainly found in domestic work, pyrotechnics and the sex industry.

Women Overseas Workers

Overseas work deployment is generally on the rise for both sexes. Government records reveal an increase of 34% in the number of Filipino overseas workers since 1995. In 2006, there are about 1.33 million OFWs. Among this number, 50.3% or approximately 667,000 were males while 49.7% or about 660,000 were females.

Although the difference in number between male and female OFWs is quite small, male OFWs remittances account for more than that of female OFWs since

these women is likely to end up in jobs that are low-paying and often unprotected. Surveys show that 56% of women who went abroad for work are laborers and unskilled workers.

Male OFWs have a median age of 35 years, higher than that of the female OFWs with 29 years. This simply means that half of the male OFWs are below 35 years of age and half of the females are below 29 years old.

Women in Politics and Governance

Government statistics reveal that since 1995 elections, the trend of women elected to local government positions is 16.5% or 2,776 out of 16, 600 LGU positions all over the country. This trend persisted up to the last elections in 2004. In the upper house of the Philippine Legislature, starting 1995 during the 10th Congress up to 2004's 13th Congress, an average of 3-4 female senators served in the Senate as against that of the male senators' average of 20. The same trend was seen in the same period in the lower house for congresswomen whose ratio was around 30 to 190 congressmen. Committees in the Senate headed by women senators reflect gender role stereotyping. These committees are Youth, Women and Family Relations; Urban Planning and Resettlement; Education, Arts and Culture; Tourism; Health and Demography; and a host of other least-influential committees.

In the last four elections, turn-out of voters was generally high especially during presidential elections. Turn-out rate of women voters was 71% while men's rate was 70.3%.

Since the passage of Absentee Voting Act in 2003, female OFWs have been able to vote while working abroad. Despite this enabling law, turnout of migrant women voters remained low compared to men due to various geographical and logistical factors.

Violence against Women

This phenomenon persists up to today despite measures by government and other sectors of society. Violence against women and children is pervasive across a broad spectrum; from verbal sexual harassment to trafficking and prostitution, to rape and murder of women. There were 7,805 reported crimes against women and children in 2003. Rape constitutes less than 13% of cases reported to authorities; the more common cases are physical

abuse and wife battering. Almost the same number of acts of violence are inflicted on children.

Of the 7,303 cases of violence against children, 46% were victims of rape including incestuous in nature, the rest of the cases accounted were acts of lasciviousness and physical abuse.

Women in Judiciary

In 2004, out of 15 Supreme Court Justices, four were women, in Court of Appeals, there were 10 female judges and 41 males, at the Sandiganbayan's 15 judges, 12 were males as opposed to 3 female judges. In Regional Trials Courts, there were 728 males judges and only 30 were females while Shariah Circuit Courts, all judges were men.

Legislations Relevant to women

- R.A. 7877 – Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995
- R.A. 7941 – The Party List System Act of 1995
- R.A. 8353 – Anti-Rape Law of 1997
- R.A. 8505 – Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998
- R.A. 8972 – Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000
- R.A. 9189 – Absentee Voting Law 2003
- R.A. 9208 – Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003
- R.A. 9262 – Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act of 2004.

Snippets

In 2004, the only woman captain in the commercial airline sector flew her first flight to Cebu City with an all-women crew.

In the school year 1999-2000, there were 257 women who passed the admission exams of the Philippine Military Academy in Baguio City.

In the period 1998 to 2001, TESDA trained women in non-traditional jobs such as welding and automotive. These women excelled highly in Skills Olympics conducted in other countries in the Asian region.

Sources:
An analysis of the Situation of the Filipino Domestic Workers, Nicole Sayres, 2003.
2nd Philippine Progress Report on MDG, June 2005
Southeast Asian Women in Politics and Decision Making, an FES publication, 2005, Second Edition
ILO Yearbook of Statistics, 2006
NSO survey on Working Children 2000-2001
www.ncrfw.gov.ph
www.nscb.gov.ph
www.census.gov.ph
www.bles.dole.gov.ph
www.supremecourt.gov.ph