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SUBJECT : GUIDELINES ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING (GM) STRATEGIES FOR THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES EXTENSION (AFE) SYSTEM

In the interest of service and to promote gender equality and empower both women and men in the agriculture and fisheries (AF) sector, this document is hereby issued to operationalize the different GM strategies in the development and implementation of AFE-related policies, programs activities, and projects (PAPs) that may apply to the various AFE stakeholders and partners across the country.

I. RATIONALE

GM in the AFE system refers to the systematic integration of gender perspectives and considers them in the stages of designing, planning, budgeting, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies and PAPs. This is aligned with the continuous growth and development of the AF sector and the achievement of food and nutrition-secured Philippines. Also, it involves recognizing and addressing the different roles, needs, priorities, and constraints faced by women and men along the value chain of the AF sector, especially the farmers and fisherfolk. This aims to promote gender equality, empowerment, and sustainable and equitable development. Also, it is an important aspect of good governance, contributing to social, economic, and cultural progress. This leads to greater fairness, equity, and justice for women and men, thus, enhancing the accountability of the government to achieve results for all citizens.

This supports efforts and the significant strides to eradicate gender inequalities in the AF sector in which various initiatives have already been undertaken consistent with the Philippine Development Plan of Women, Women in Development and Nation Building Act, and the Magna Carta for Women, among others. This recognizes that employing GM strategies is not simply a matter of human rights, but is key to eliminating poverty and hunger and that closing the gender gap will enable sustainable agriculture and rural development.

Specifically, for the country's AF sector, various literature, and studies revealed that specialized gender roles are prominent for both women and men across the different stages of the AF value chain systems. It was explained that women and men have specific roles and duties in different AF-related activities wherein men are found to be more involved in the heavy labor tasks such as land preparation, applying chemicals, fertilizers, and mechanized work during the pre-and production stages. On the other hand, women have bigger roles in the planting, weeding, and harvesting, as well as post-production activities such as threshing, processing, and marketing.

However, even with the acknowledged significant contributions of women in the AF sector, gender inequality remains a problem that is often observed in the imbalance in the distribution of resources, power, and privileges, as well as access to social and economic opportunities. First, there is a significant disparity in the ratio of women and men

employed in the AF sector, wherein it is comprised of 7.46 million males and 2.24 million females in 2019 (PSA, 2022). Second, wage disparity exists with women known to be paid less compared to men for doing the same farming activity or task. Connected to this, there are some burdens of unpaid domestic labor, by doing household chores alongside farming responsibilities.

Third, there is also a disadvantage regarding ownership and control of productive assets and capital due to property rights and inheritance laws. Fourth, there are issues about women's limited participation in agricultural training and education, inadequate registration in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA), and lack of representation to farmer groups. It is observed that the country's AF sector is still male-dominated, which leads to poor recognition of women as farmers. It also limits agricultural productivity and efficiency and undermines the achievement of AF goals due to misguided interventions implemented.

Given these gender inequality concerns, this document is developed to institutionalize application strategies that highlight the importance of inclusivity toward the equitable growth and development of the AF sector. It aims to improve the operations of the different AFE stakeholders and the delivery of their respective programs and services. This recognizes the role of agricultural extension and advisory services in contributing to reducing the gender gap, promoting gender equality, increasing the role of women in the agricultural value chain system, and ensuring equal access to resources, information, and opportunities.

Further, by considering the proposed GM strategies to improve AFE modalities and approaches, it is expected that better quality AFE programs and services will be delivered, which will further empower the general AF workforce toward being productive, resilient, and competitive, as well as to achieve food and nutrition security in the Philippines.

Also, this recognizes that GM is a transformative approach with a great potential for social change that will enable the achievement of the country's Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) goals and contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly on poverty reduction and sustainable rural development and the stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

II. LEGAL BASES

In support of the development of the guidelines on the GM strategies for the AFE system, the following legal bases and mandates are presented as follows:

a. Under the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Article II, Sec. 14) the State recognizes the role of women in nation-building and shall ensure fundamental equality before the law of women and men.
b. Republic Act (RA) No. 7192 or the "Women in Development and Nation Building Act", promotes the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation-building and for other purposes. It mandates all government departments and agencies to review and revise all regulations, circulars, issuances, and procedures to remove all gender biases that may exist within their organizational scope.
c. RA No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women, particularly Section 20 recognizes the contribution of women to food production and shall ensure its sustainability and sufficiency with the active participation of women. Also, Section 36 mandates all government offices, including GOCCs and LGUs to adopt gender mainstreaming as a strategy for implementing the law and attaining its objectives.

d. RA No. 8435 or the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) of 1997 stipulated that extension covers four (4) major services: trainings, farm and business advisory services, technology demonstration, and information, education, and communication (IEC) support services. It mandates the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) to encourage the participation of stakeholders in training and other complementary extension services, especially in community organizing, use of participatory approaches, popularization of training materials, regenerative agricultural technologies, agribusiness, and management skills.
e. Executive Order No. 348, Series of 1989, Approving and Adopting the Philippine Development Plan for Women for 1989 to 1992, enjoins all government departments, bureaus, offices, agencies, and instrumentalities to take appropriate steps to ensure implementation of the fundamental equality before the law of women and men.
f. Executive Order No. 273 dated 8 September 1995, Approving and Adopting the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development 1995-2025 directs the institutionalization of Gender and Development (GAD) efforts in government by incorporating GAD concerns in their planning, programming, and budgeting processes.
g. CSC Memorandum Circular No. 12, series of 2005 encourages the use of non-sexist language in all official documents, communications, and issuances as part of the government's efforts to promote gender sensitivity in the bureaucracy.
h. Memorandum Circular No. 48, series of 2013 directs all concerned government agencies to adopt the gender equality guidelines in the development of their respective media policies and implementing programs to promote gender mainstreaming.
i. PCW Memorandum Circular 2018-04 provides the guidelines and procedures in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the multiyear GAD agenda as the basis for the annual agency GAD Plan and Budgets (GPBs).
j. Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, as the overall blueprint and plan for the deep economic and social transformation, highlights the importance of gender equality and gender mainstreaming strategies across different key sectors.
k. GAD Agenda of AFE agencies/institutions, which highlights the range of gender-responsive PAPs aimed to support the achievement of GEWE goals. It embodies the needs, interests, and voices of women, especially the marginalized sectors, to address their specific needs and concerns, with goals of enhancing organizational capabilities in designing, executing, and assessing gender-inclusive PAPs, facilitating the entry of economically disadvantaged small-scale female and male farmers and fishers into the realm of financial possibilities, and expanded economic prospects for both women and men participating in the production of AF goods and services.

III. PURPOSE

This document aims to serve as a reference in integrating gender perspective effectively into all aspects/stages of a program/project cycle to promote and institutionalize gender equality and women's empowerment as integral aspects embedded in the operation and culture of each AFE stakeholder. This includes incorporating GAD concepts in the design, planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of AFE PAPs. It also aims to ensure that gender issues are considered, analyzed, and addressed in the policy and decision-making process, rather than being treated as separate or secondary issues.

As the capacity builder, knowledge bank, and catalyst of the AFE system, the ATI intends that this document can be adopted not only by the ATI but also by other AFE stakeholders, especially the agricultural extension workers (AEWs) from other national government agencies (NGAs), local government units (LGUs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), and private AF extension service providers (PAF-ESPs).

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

As a guide in understanding the concepts in this document, the following terms are defined as follows:

- AFE system - the network of organizations and institutions that provides agricultural extension services to farmers and fisherfolk; may also be referred to as the National Extension System for Agriculture and Fisheries (NESAF), which includes the national government agencies (NGAs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), local government units (LGU), and private extension service providers (ESPs).
- Client-focused - refers to external beneficiaries such as farmers, fisherfolks, local government units, state universities and colleges, and other national government agencies who have concerns arising from the unequal status of women and men particularly, disparity over benefits from contribution to a policy/program and or project of the organization.
- Gender — refers to socially constructed rather than biologically determined roles of women and men as well as relationships between them in a given society at a specific time and space. They are usually unequal in terms of power, freedom, and status, as well as access to and control over entitlements, resources, and assets.
- Gender Analysis - a framework to compare the relative advantages and disadvantages faced by women and men in various spheres of life, including the family, workplace, school, community, and political system.
- Gender Audit - refers to a form of "social audit" or "quality audit" which determines whether the organization's internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective, reinforcing each other, and are being followed. This tool or process assists organizations in establishing a baseline, identifying critical gaps and challenges, and recommending ways of addressing them.
- Gender and Development (GAD) Agenda – the agency's strategic framework and plan on gender mainstreaming, and achieving women's empowerment and gender equality
- GAD – refers to the development perspective and process that are participatory and empowering, equitable, sustainable, free from violence, respectful of human rights, and supportive of self-determination and actualization of human potential. It seeks to achieve gender equality as a fundamental value that should be reflected in development choices; seeks to transform society's social, economic, and political structures and questions the validity of the gender roles they ascribed to women and men; contends that women are active agents of development and not just passive recipients of development assistance; and stresses the need of women to organize themselves and participate in political processes to strengthen their legal rights.
- GAD Corner - serves as a resource center that provides information and education on policies and advocacy of an agency on gender equality and women's empowerment
- GAD Focal Point System (GFPS) - is an interacting and interdependent group of people in all government instrumentalities tasked to catalyze and accelerate gender mainstreaming. It is a mechanism established to ensure and advocate for, guide, coordinate, and monitor the development, implementation, review, and updating of GAD plans and GAD-related programs, activities, and projects (PAPs).
- GAD Planning and Budgeting - GAD initiatives aimed at tackling gender-related matters and challenges will be developed and put into action as plans, programs, projects, and activities with appropriate budget requirements for implementation.
- Gender Equality — refers to the principle asserting the equality of women and men and their right to enjoy equal conditions realizing their full human potential to contribute to and benefit from the results of development, and with the State recognizing that all human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

- Gender Equity — refers to the policies, instruments, programs, services, and actions that address the disadvantaged position of women in society by providing preferential treatment and affirmative action. Such temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between women and men shall not be considered discriminatory but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards. These measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.
- Gender-fair Language - Communicating verbally and in writing in a manner that avoids discrimination based on a specific sex, social gender, or gender identity, and refrains from upholding gender stereotypes.
- Gender Issue - issues or problems affecting women and men that result from society's perceived generalizations and beliefs on characteristics, capabilities, and behavior of women and men.
- Gender Mainstreaming (GM) – refers to the strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs in all areas and at all levels.
- Gender Mainstreaming and Evaluation Framework (GMEF) - is a tool to measure the extent of the gender mainstreaming efforts of organizations, both national government agencies and local government units. It is also meant to assist the GFPS members in measuring gains and successes, as well as pinpoint areas for improvement in the way they mainstream the GAD perspective in their respective organizations.
- Gender Responsiveness - planning and execution involves addressing gender barriers, embracing differences, ensuring sensitive structures and systems, promoting gender parity, and continuously striving to eliminate gender-based discrimination
- Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG) - a set of analytical concepts and tools developed for integrating gender concerns into development programs and projects. It ensures gender equality and women's empowerment results in programs and projects.
- Gender sensitivity - involves acknowledging gender concerns and enacting responsive actions to address them for both women and men. It entails recognizing how societal norms have generated distinct roles and unjust treatment, mainly affecting women, and advocating for equality, fairness, and non-discrimination in all aspects of human interaction.
- Organization-focused - refers to internal beneficiaries whose capability building is focused on integrating a gender dimension in its programs, systems, or structure.
- Women's Empowerment - is a goal and an essential process for women's advancement. It is the process and condition by which women mobilize to understand, identify, and overcome gender discrimination to achieve equality in welfare and equal access to resources. In this context, women become agents of development and not just beneficiaries enabling them to make decisions based on their own views and perspectives

V. KEY PRINCIPLES ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

A. Entry points Gender Mainstreaming

The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) developed the GMEF which introduced the four entry points of Gender Mainstreaming: Policies, People, Enabling Mechanisms, and Programs/Activities/Projects (PAPs) [1]

i. **Policies** - encompass official statements and declarations issued by an organization to demonstrate their commitment to integrating a gender perspective. These statements may take the form of department orders, special orders, administrative orders, memoranda, and executive orders. This also includes national and sectoral plans, specific guidelines, implementation manuals, and the Gender and Development (GAD) Framework or Strategic Plan. By releasing these documents, the organization acknowledges and accepts GM as a crucial and legitimate concern, even if the language used is broad or general. Continuous policy improvement and enhancement are encouraged, which involves incorporating gender-fair language and images. The ultimate goal is to develop a model GAD policy that can serve as a blueprint for replication and innovation in promoting gender equality.

ii. **People** - comprises the essential stakeholders responsible for carrying out GM efforts. The success of GM relies on the following key elements:
    - GAD Champions in Top Management: These are individuals in influential positions within the organization who actively and fervently support the GM program. Their commitment and advocacy are vital in driving gender equality initiatives throughout the organization.
    - Recognition of GFPS and Staff as GAD Experts: The Gender and Development Focal Point System (GFPS) and the organization's staff members who have expertise in gender and development play a significant role. Recognizing them as experts in this field empowers them to contribute effectively to GM efforts.
    - Engaged Clients (Internal and External): Clients, both within the organization and external stakeholders, are crucial participants in the planning, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation of programs, activities, and projects. Their active involvement ensures that gender perspectives are incorporated into the decision-making process.

iii. **Enabling Mechanisms** - encompass the organizational systems and mechanisms, as well as the allocated funds for GAD activities, such as the GFPS and Knowledge Management (KM) System. The success of GM efforts heavily relies on the presence of these resources and institutionalized mechanisms for their implementation. One notable enabling mechanism for GAD is the GAD Funds Audit conducted by the Commission on Audit (COA). This audit plays a vital role in ensuring that agencies and local government units comply with the minimum 5% of their total annual budgets allocated for gender programs, activities, and projects. By having these enabling mechanisms in place, the organization can better facilitate and monitor the effective integration of gender perspectives into various programs and initiatives.

iv. **Programs, Activities, & Projects (PAPs)** - represent flagship programs, activities, and projects strategically chosen as entry points to integrate GAD into an organization. PAPs offer the most practical means to implement the organization's mandate effectively. Some examples of PAPs include revising

[1] A Handbook on the Application of Enhanced Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework. 2016. Philippine Commission on Women.

and issuing GAD policies, applying gender analysis tools, conducting GAD advocacy, and regularly updating the GAD database. These initiatives are instrumental in promoting gender mainstreaming and achieving meaningful gender equality within the organization.

B. Levels of Gender Mainstreaming

As an organization implements gender mainstreaming, it may advance through various stages of progress, which include:

a. **Level 1: Foundation Formation:** During this initial level, the organization's level of gender awareness is heightened through raising people's awareness and generating support for gender mainstreaming.

b. **Level 2: Installation of Strategic Mechanisms:** In the second level, the organization transitions towards creating enabling conditions supportive of GAD. This involves appointing key personnel and establishing necessary policies, support structures, systems, and mechanisms to facilitate and sustain GM efforts. Additionally, at this stage, the organization begins to apply GAD concepts and tools, effectively integrating gender perspectives into its practices and operations. These strategic mechanisms are vital in advancing gender equality within the organization and ensuring the long-term success of GM initiatives.

c. **Level 3: GAD Application:** During this level, GAD-related activities are firmly institutionalized within the organization. The interventions are guided by a strategic GAD agenda, which drives the implementation of GAD planning and budgeting. This strategic approach involves applying gender analysis to regular programs, leading to an increased allocation of the GAD budget and the development of more gender-responsive initiatives. The organization's commitment to gender mainstreaming is evident as GAD becomes an integral part of its regular operations, contributing to the advancement of gender equality and the promotion of inclusive programs and projects.

d. **Level 4: Commitment Enhancement and Institutionalization:** In this advanced level, the organization has successfully institutionalized gender mainstreaming and remains committed to sustaining its efforts. Concurrently, it continues to challenge itself by conducting continuous monitoring and evaluation of its GM initiatives. The long-term objective is to enhance the government's capacity to address gender issues and concerns consistently. At this level, GAD is seamlessly integrated into all aspects of the organization's operations, programs, and projects. To achieve the desired impact, it becomes imperative to monitor the intended outcomes of gender mainstreaming at this stage with the organization's status before implementing the change. This ongoing evaluation and improvement process contributes to the organization's ability to achieve greater gender equality and responsiveness in its endeavors, promoting lasting positive change.

e. **Level 5: Replication and Innovation:** When an organization reaches this level, it means that GAD has been fully mainstreamed into its mandate and is being recognized by others as a model in gender mainstreaming. The GFPS members of the organization do not only serve as internal experts but are

also invited by other organizations as GAD technical assistance providers. GAD-related mechanisms established by the organization are also certified as learning hubs by national and/or international organizations.

VI. AFE GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIES

To maximize effectiveness, the GM efforts should cover two levels: the agency-wide operations and the implementation of PAPs for its stakeholders. The application and eventual institutionalization of GM best practices ensure a sustained and systematic approach to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment across the AFE system.

By institutionalizing these GM strategies, AFE stakeholders can embed gender equality principles into their culture and operations, leading to more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable outputs and outcomes. These strategies, if adopted, contribute to dismantling gender-based barriers and fostering an environment where women and men have equal opportunities to participate, benefit, and contribute to the organization's success and societal development.

1. Creation of GAD Focal Point System (GFPS)

Mainstreaming GAD practices requires strong commitment and leadership from the management and decision-makers within an organization or institution. Thus, supported by guidelines issued by appropriate oversight agencies like PCW, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Department of the Interior and the Local Government (DILG), the creation of GFPS will help accelerate and institutionalize gender mainstreaming within the AFE agency/institution. Their pivotal role in shaping policies, resource allocation, and organizational culture is crucial for fostering gender equality and women's empowerment in the agency. As the driving force behind GM efforts, management sets the tone by endorsing gender-responsive policies and integrating gender perspectives into all aspects of the organization's work.

The PCW's Memorandum Circular No. 2011-01 entitled Guidelines for the Creation, Strengthening, and Institutionalization of the GAD Focal Point System outlines the procedures for the establishment, strengthening, and institutionalization of GFPS and clarifies the roles and responsibilities, composition, and structure of the GFPS. For the Department of Agriculture (DA), the DA Special Order No. 796, series of 2023, follows this Memorandum Circular to advocate, guide, coordinate, and monitor the GM efforts of the organization.

The structure of the GFPS, which is followed by the SO, is composed of the Executive Committee (ExeCom), Technical Working Group (TWG), and a Secretariat. This can be adopted, whether at the national and regional levels or depending on the scope and coverage of the AFE stakeholders. The heads of agencies/divisions/units and other members of the management committee must lead the GFPS as part of the ExeCom. This is to facilitate the full integration of GAD concerns into their operations and delivery of PAPs.

Also, the GFPS, as part of the TWG, shall include Budget Officers, Planning Officers, and representatives from the Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI). Assigned Focal Persons shall also be assigned to assist in implementing GM strategies in their operating units. It is highly recommended that plantilla/regular positions be designated as members to ensure continuity. Further, the

representation of external AFE partners, as members of the GFPS, is encouraged to generate and provide feedback that can help improve the operationalization of GM strategies in the AFE institution.

If possible, a designated GAD office and corner (which can be physical or virtual) shall be provided. This refers to a safe and comfortable space that features the various GAD initiatives and information being engaged by the AFE agency/institution.

2. Development and strengthening of GAD Policies

The backbone of GM strategies are the policies that would enable effective implementation and integration of gender perspectives at all levels of society. These policies serve as the foundation for fostering gender equality and women's empowerment in the AF sector.

The issuance of GM/GAD-related policies is essential because it offers clear guidelines, frameworks, and standards for incorporating gender perspectives in the designing, planning, budgeting, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating PAPs. These also ensure that GAD concerns are addressed and gender considerations are integrated into the policy and decision-making process.

The priority GAD-related policies to be crafted shall focus on the institutionalization of GFPS, the establishment of a GAD office and corner, the conduct of timely gender analysis through the available audit/assessment instruments and tools, the collection and maintenance of sex-disaggregated database, the use of gender-inclusive language, and the implementation of appropriate trainings and other capacity-building activities for the GFPS, the personnel of the AFE institution, and their external clients. Moreso, there should be a policy to incorporate GAD-related topics in the trainings and other capacity-building activities implemented for external clients. Basic knowledge of GM strategies and GAD shall be considered as a basic competency needed by AEWs across the country.

Also, AFE agencies/institutions shall create their own GAD Agenda, which covers its mandates and is consistent with the DA GAD Agenda, especially those addressing gender issues and concerns in the AF sector. This should be in accordance with the PCW's MC No. 2018-04 entitled Revised Guidelines for the Preparation of the Gender and Development Agenda. With an established GAD Agenda, the agency can develop its GAD Vision, Mission, and Goals anchored on its mandate and the strategic interventions, indicators, and targets to be pursued to achieve GAD goals over a period of time. These policies, information, and advocacies should also be reflected in the AFE agency/institutions' physical and/or online GAD Corner.

3. Establishment of GAD sex-disaggregated database (SDD)

To formulate effective policies and implement relevant PAPs, another important GM strategy is the development and maintenance of GAD SDDs. As a management tool, the GAD SDD shall be collected, stored, and analyzed to provide evidence-based information that differentiates between the experiences, needs, and contributions of women and men. This database helps decision-makers make more informed choices to address gender disparities effectively.

It enables the identification of gender gaps in various spheres, tracking progress on gender equality indicators, and evaluating the impact of policies and PAPs on different gender groups. Also, it informs resource allocation, facilitates gender-responsive planning, and strengthens gender analysis. Moreover, the database aids in advocacy efforts, raising awareness about the importance of gender equality, and supporting the development of gender-responsive policies and legislation.

AFE agencies/institutions shall systematically and responsibly collect data from its personnel and external clients through the administration of surveys, training/learning needs assessments, profile sheets, evaluation and feedback forms, as well as the conduct of interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) and the provision of reports. This should not only focus on separating the number of clients/beneficiaries reached by the PAPs of an AFE agency/institution but also on the socio-demographic statistics of women and men beneficiaries, the roles and benefits received by women and men in the specific intervention, the access of women and men in interventions, the level of competencies of women and men beneficiaries, and the adoption rate of technologies between women and men, among others. Existing forms and databases used by the AFE agencies/institutions may be revised and updated as necessary to suit the requirements of a GAD SDD.

4. Conduct of Gender Analysis

To support the institutionalization of the other GM strategies, the conduct of gender analysis (GA) is necessary to identify gender issues and the actions and PAPs to be undertaken to address them. Connected to the establishment of GAD SDD, GA provides information that will help understand why gaps exist.

It involves gathering and examining quantitative and qualitative data highlighting the differences in roles, values, power dynamics, and behaviors between women and men. This analysis helps identify how access to economic assets, productive resources, and decision-making participation is shaped by gender. Also, based on these insights, the GA must highlight potential differential impacts on women and men and propose solutions to ensure equal access, participation, and benefits for all targeted beneficiaries.

As a guide for the conduct of GA, the PCW's Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF) and Chapter 4 - Guide for Administering the Enhanced Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework of the Handbook on the Application of the Enhanced Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework can be used as reference since it provides different tools for AFE agencies/institutions in assessing their levels of GAD mainstreaming. Specifically, GA can be undertaken at three (3) levels. First, at the community level, project implementers can conduct a Situational Analysis (SA) to examine the distinct circumstances and conditions of women and men regarding a specific issue or concern. This type of GA aims to identify gender-related challenges and delve into their underlying causes. By understanding the disparities between genders, project implementers can develop strategies to address these issues and create opportunities for promoting gender equality in the context of the given concern. The SA serves as a foundation for informed decision-making and targeted interventions to foster greater gender equity and inclusivity in the community.

Second, at the organizational level, there is PCW's GMEF and its Descriptor Matrix which consists of 93 descriptors in total representing the four GMEF entry points discussed earlier. The GMEF descriptors demonstrate both vertical and horizontal correlations. Vertically, a positive response to these descriptors indicates the agency's progress across different levels of gender mainstreaming, from the initial stage of Foundation Formation to the advanced level of Replication and Innovation. Horizontally, positive responses to the descriptors show how each entry point contributes to and enhances the achievement of gender mainstreaming objectives at each level. By understanding the connections both within and between these descriptors, the agency can effectively track its gender mainstreaming journey and gauge the impact of different entry points in realizing gender equality goals.

Third, at the PAPs level, the NEDA and PCW's Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG) serve as a valuable tool for GAD planning and budgeting. It facilitates the assessment of the gender responsiveness of major programs and projects undertaken by government agencies through its GAD checklists that can be utilized by implementers and members of the GFPS throughout the entire project cycle, from its design to monitoring and evaluation. A more detailed checklist can be utilized to address relevant issues or factors in the regions and sectors, but should observe the core requirements contained in the HGDG. Moreover, the HGDG acts as a common instrument, promoting the integration of gender perspectives in development initiatives among government agencies, donor organizations, and various stakeholders involved in the development process.

5. Compliance with GAD Planning and Budgeting

The GAD budget policy was introduced through the General Appropriations Act (GAA) in 1995 as "The Women's Budget" to support with actual resources the implementation of programs and projects on the ground, focused on gender advocacy and commitment to women's empowerment. This policy directs all government departments and agencies to allocate a minimum of five percent (5%) of their total annual budgets for gender programs, projects, and activities. It has been an important feature of the annual GAA and further strengthened by RA No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women.

Further, this defines the national policy for the recognition, protection, fulfillment, and promotion of the rights of Filipino women. It mandates all government instrumentalities to adopt GM as a strategy for implementing the law in which GAD Planning and Budgeting is an essential mechanism.

A GAD Plan and Budget is a systematically designed set of programs, projects, and activities with corresponding budgets carried out by government agencies and departments, including their attached agencies, offices, bureaus, state universities and colleges, government-owned and controlled corporations, local government units and other government instrumentalities over a given period to address the gender issues and concerns in their respective sectors and constituents. It systematizes an agency's approach to gender mainstreaming, women's empowerment, and gender equality.[2]

[2] Policy Development, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division – Philippine Commission on Women. Trends and Updates on the Submission, Review, and Endorsement of FY 2018-2019 Gender and Development Plans and Budgets and Acceptance of FY 2017-2018 GAD Accomplishment Reports. July 2019, p. 2.

The PCW-NEDA-DBM released Joint Circular 2012-01, entitled Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual GAD Plans and Budgets (GPBs) and Accomplishment Reports to Implement the Magna Carta of Women, which presents the guidelines and procedures for the formulation, development, submission, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation including the accounting of results of agency annual GPBs, and GAD accomplishment reports (AR). It also provides the mechanics for the development of PAPs to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of women in the socio-cultural, economic, and political spheres.

The results of the GA and the HGDG tools, as well as the multi-year GAD Agenda, shall also used as bases to identify direct and attributed GAD-related PAPs in the GPB. It is encouraged that resource speakers from the accredited GAD resource pool be tapped to work closely with the AFE agency/institution, primarily the GFPS and Technical Working Group (TWG) to ensure that PAPs are funded and implemented. Specifically, the GAD Checklist for Agricultural and Agrarian Reform Projects from NEDA can be used to assess whether proposed PPAs have high GAD attribution.

6. Conduct of GAD Capacity-Building Interventions

GAD capacity-building interventions are vital for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. These raise awareness and understanding about gender inequalities, equip individuals with skills to identify and address gender gaps, and promote gender-responsive practices in policies and projects. It also strengthens the institutional memory by developing internal GAD champions and external advocates for GM strategies.

Consistent with the priority policy to implement and incorporate GAD-related topics in the provision of trainings and other capacity-building activities, a set of GAD topics/subject matter shall be determined and provided to internal personnel and external clients of an AFE agency/institution.

Specifically, the GFPS shall be trained on various topics mandated by the PCW including the use of HGDG Tools, Gender Analysis for project implementers, and GAD Planning and Budgeting. General gender sensitivity and use of gender-inclusive language trainings shall be provided to all personnel of an AFE agency/institution, especially the new hires/entrants. As a strategy, the orientation and induction trainings of new hires/entrants shall include GAD-related topics.

Internal personnel trainings cover topics on basic GAD concepts, gender sensitivity, gender analysis, project proposal preparation using HGDG tools, GAD agenda, GAD planning and budgeting, and the importance of sex-disaggregated data, among others. It also includes aspects related to laws on sexual harassment, Violence Against Women and their Children (VAWC) and capacity development for VAW Desk Officers.

Further, the trainers and program implementers should consciously and purposively incorporate GAD as a cross-cutting concern for external trainings. Basic topics on gender sensitivity shall be incorporated as part of their technical and functional trainings. Moreover, the training modules and knowledge products used shall also adhere to GAD standards and protocols, and be designed to be gender-sensitive and use inclusive language.

7. Use of Gender-Inclusive Language

The use of gender-inclusive language as defined by the United Nations is a pivotal aspect in GM practices that aim to uphold gender equality and inclusivity in communication. Gender-inclusive language acknowledges the diversity of gender identities, moving beyond binary distinctions and embracing non-binary and gender-nonconforming individuals.

By avoiding the reinforcement of harmful gender stereotypes, gender-inclusive language challenges traditional norms and ensures that all genders are represented and respected. It promotes equality by treating everyone with equal respect, affirming the principles of human rights and dignity. Also, adhering to gender-inclusive language creates a welcoming environment, where individuals feel valued and included, fostering a sense of belonging for everyone. This approach enhances communication by reaching a broader audience and avoids alienating or excluding individuals based on their gender identity.

In both spoken and written communication, it is essential to consistently use gender-inclusive language. When using images in Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, ensure representation of both women and men and reflect the perspectives of both genders in stories. Avoid using visual materials that perpetuate gender stereotypes. Also, Section 13 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Magna Carta for Women mentions that gender stereotypes and images in educational materials and curricula should be adequately and appropriately revised.

For written documents, CSC released Memorandum Circular No. 12, s. 2005, entitled Use of Non-Sexist Languages in All Official Documents which encourages government officials and employees to use non-sexist language in all its official documents, issuances, and communications. The use of non-sexist language in preparing letters, memoranda, and other communications encourages individuals to make a conscious effort to avoid implicit and explicit discriminatory language against women and men. This, in turn, will help promote gender sensitivity in the workplace.

8. Collaboration and Partnership with Other AFE Agencies/Institutions

To institutionalize gender mainstreaming across the AFE system, establishing strategic partnerships among extension providers and partners is necessary. Networking for gender mainstreaming includes the establishment of linkages and the formation of joint activities with other gender advocates in governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Also, the conduct of different knowledge-sharing activities, orientations, and participation in activities of AFE networks and communities of practices are encouraged to facilitate the sharing of insights and ideas on the implementation of GM strategies and GAD PAPs as well as discussion on possible joint implementation of GAD-related initiatives in which cost and resource sharing can be made. This can also be a venue for the harmonization of GAD PAPs to improve efforts in addressing gender issues and the conduct of gender analysis.

Further, AFE agencies/institutions can avail of the PCW's technical assistance in enhancing and finalizing the GAD Agenda, annual GAD planning and budgeting exercises, annual GAD accomplishment reporting, and assessment for the GMEF.

At the regional level, AFE agencies/institutions can participate in the Regional Gender and Development Committee (RGADC) initiatives to initiate, coordinate, and monitor gender-related activities and to recommend gender-related policies in the region. The Committee can also discuss gender issues and concerns, and share good practices and experiences on gender mainstreaming.

9. Establishment of an Awards and Recognition System

To incentivize and recognize the actions and efforts made toward the institutionalization of GM strategies and implementation of GAD PAPs to promote gender equality in the AF sector, AFE agencies/institutions shall establish an awards and recognition system, which can be part of their broader Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) system.

The awards and recognition system shall be designed to encourage creativity, innovativeness, efficiency, integrity, and productivity in incorporating a gender perspective in the aspects of the program/project cycle, addressing gender issues related to the AF sector, and advancing the rights and empowerment of women in the sector. Individual and group awards may be identified and provided with corresponding incentives.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF AFE GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGIES

The GFPS members shall use the GMEF, with assistance from PCW if necessary, to measure the agency's performance in gender mainstreaming, as well as pinpoint best practices along with areas for improvement for mainstreaming the GAD perspective in the agency. The GMEF assessment results will then serve as inputs in the development and formulation of the agency's GAD Agenda and annual GPBs.

The GAD Agenda, progress, and year-end reports shall be submitted by AFE agencies/institutions to the PCW for monitoring, evaluation, reporting of GEWE results, and as necessary, provision of technical assistance on its implementation. AFE agencies/institutions shall adhere to the timelines, requirements, processes, and protocols of the PCW's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. Any changes or updates in the M&E system as issued in relevant PCW guidelines shall also be strictly adhered to by AFE agencies/institutions.

Further, as part of the implementation of this guidelines, ATI shall also monitor the accomplishments, best practices, and innovations, as well as issues and problems encountered by AFE agencies/institutions in the adoption and institutionalization of the GM strategies. Moreso, a timely evaluation will be conducted in line with the implementation of the guidelines in which adherence, attribution, and outcomes related to the provisions of this guidelines will also be looked into and included in the study.

VIII. COMMUNICATION PLAN

As part of its dissemination mechanisms, the ATI through its Network of Training Centers, shall disseminate this guidelines to all relevant AFE stakeholders within their respective areas of jurisdiction. This will also include the conduct of information campaigns,

orientations, knowledge sharing, and other dissemination activities and the development and distribution of printed and digital format knowledge products.

IX. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

The provisions in this guidelines shall be declared separable, and if any portion or part has been declared as unconstitutional, unenforceable, and/or invalid, the other provisions that are not affected shall thereby continue to be in full effect and remain valid unless declared otherwise.

X. AMENDATORY AND SUPPLEMENTARY ISSUANCES

As deemed necessary and appropriate, the guidelines may be amended, modified, or revised to ensure its use and relevance. Further, any supplemental guidelines may be developed and issued to elaborate on the specific provisions specified in this document.

XI. EFFECTIVITY

This order shall take effect immediately following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper, or general circulation and filing with the Office of the National Administrative Register, UP Law Center, and shall remain in force unless terminated.

APPROVED AND PROMULGATED this 3rd day of October, 2023.

DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN
Senior Undersecretary

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