
Research Article

Five to Five: Sex-Disaggregated Issues in Bicol Region (V), Philippines Through the Lens of SDG 5

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Abstract:

The paper examines the sex-disaggregated issues affecting men and women in Bicol Region (5), Philippines, through the lens of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5) indicators. Utilizing qualitative-evaluative research methodologies such as comparative data analysis and documentary analysis, the study analyzes data from various government agencies to identify persistent gender disparities in labor market participation, health, and political representation. Findings revealed that significant challenges remain unsolved despite gradual improvements in women's engagement in public life, including cultural barriers, income inequalities, and limited access to leadership roles. The paper emphasizes the necessity of generating sex-disaggregated data to inform policy-making and recommends that Local Government Units, NGOs, and private sectors institutionalize SDG localization to address identified issues effectively. The study also advocates for inclusive policies that promote gender equality and enhance women's societal roles, contributing to a more equitable and harmonious society.

Keywords: Localization of SDG 5, Sex-disaggregated data, Bicol Region, Philippines, Gender mainstreaming

Introduction:

In our country, the Philippines, before reaching 18 years of age, 16.5% of women from 20-24 years old were already married. The birth rate in 2017 fell 39% and the adolescent birth rate 2018 was 36.4 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19. Women comprised 39% of total employment in 2019 but will account for 45% of global job losses in 2020. Women held 28% of legislative seats in February 2021. Under the SDG indicator, 66.7 percent of legal frameworks that promote, implement, and monitor gender equality are in place, with an emphasis on violence against women. 5.9 percent of women aged 15 to 49 reported physical and/or sexual violence in the preceding year in 2018. Furthermore, rights to reproductive health and other health-related services are still being confronted with issues and challenges.

As of December 2020, just 48.3 percent of the indicators needed to monitor the SDGs from a gender perspective were available, with deficiencies in essential categories such as unpaid care and domestic Work and key labor market indicators such as the gender pay gap. Furthermore, in many areas, such as gender and poverty, physical and sexual harassment, women's access to assets (including land), and gender and the environment, there are no similar mechanisms for frequent monitoring. Closing gender data gaps is crucial for the Philippines to meet SDG gender targets. From 2014 to 2018, the Philippines was the only Asian country to rank among the top ten in the Global Gender Gap Index. The index study aims to investigate gender equality by rating nations based on how well they allocate their resources and opportunities among their male and female populations. Given this, can we declare that all gender and sexual issues in the Philippines have been identified and addressed? Were the GAD policies aligned with the national and local processes for efficient and effective implementation? Were the mechanisms for addressing gender and sex issues sustainable? Women in the Philippines are still underprivileged, as marginalized sectors in the country are still invisible, and policies and programs with indigenous and rural women are the most vulnerable. Access to basic reproductive health services and maternal and infant mortality is one of our country's greatest challenges in the healthcare sector. Unmet health and reproductive care needs have long been a source of concern, not only in cities but also in rural communities. Social, economic, and political changes for the excluded are almost unattainable, and suspects are bleak. Every day, eleven women are killed as a result of pregnancy and childbirth complications. Despite progress, women's political representation remains low: 20% of women control less than congressional seats and 13% of Senate seats.

Cole et al. (2015) concluded that in traditional rural communities such as the Bicol region, men's physical capacity to conduct Work equates to economic production. "Grit" and "toughness," particularly in fishing and agricultural communities such as the Bicol region, provide simple access to accessible natural resources (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Turgo, 2014). As per Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data, it can be concluded that the Bicol region has one of the greatest gender disparities in the country, along with ARMM, Ilocos, CAR, and Zamboanga Peninsula.

In the Population projection from 2020-2045, the Bicol region was hailed as one of the highest increases with 9,730 (in thousands) compared to its other traditional communities thus, this data could signify the inaccessibility of women to proper health care,

contraceptives, and appropriate maternal care. Regarding the labor force participation rate from 2013-2017, the Bicol region falls short of the national average with 60.71% vs. 61.2% national average. The labor force has always been a turf for men compared to women, with a 77.34% average (Men) versus a 47.24% average (Women). More men have more job opportunities, and economic participation for women has been tirelessly an issue for many long years. With these identified sex-disaggregated issues, one should wonder whether GAD strategies and development plans are religiously followed and implemented. How would we, as beneficiaries, stakeholders, and implementers, benefit from the outcome of this development principle? Are the SDG 5 indicators being implemented and/or integrated at the local/national level?

The data presented in this was anchored to the 2000-2021 Statistical Handbook on Women and Men in Region 5 from the Philippine Statistics Authority, which presents gender statistics and sex-disaggregated issues in the various priority areas in the Bicol region. The PSA RO 5 aspires to support the state's endeavors to advance gender mainstreaming and fulfill our country's various international gender goals.

Statement of the Problem

This paper sought to understand and explain the following objectives:

1. Identify the sex-disaggregated issues of Bicol Region (V) along:
 - a. Work;
 - b. Health and Family Planning;
 - c. Economic Participation;
 - d. Public Life.
2. Analyze identified sex-disaggregated issues vis-à-vis SDG 5 targets;
3. Propose recommendations to address the identified sex-disaggregated issues and to strengthen SDG localization.

Limitations:

This paper is delimited to the 200-2021 Statistical WAM data (Women and Men) Handbook of PSA Region 5. The statistical WAM data 2022 has not yet been published in the PSA publications since the final quarter reports have not been collated. This study shall only focus on some of the priority sectors named by PSA, such as Work, health and family planning, economic participation, and public life. Utilizing data provided by the WAM, an analysis of the vis-à-vis SDG 5 indicators will be presented. In terms of its implementation, localization of indicators, issues/causes of variance, and pragmatic solutions to address identified gaps in sex and gender issues, as well as SDG 5 target implementation. This paper wishes to contribute to the growing Number of literature and solution-based studies on the appropriate localization process of SDG indicators, specifically gender equality and women empowerment.

Research methodology:

This study employed qualitative-evaluative research methodologies. In identifying the sex-disaggregated issues of women and men in the Region, comparative data analysis of various government agencies from its published data analytics were culled out and compared over different years. Secondary sources of data from government agencies such as the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Commission on Audit (COA) etc., were utilized from its website publications, news articles, related studies, and related literature. The identified sex-disaggregated issues of women and men were then thematically analyzed using the SDG 5 indicators per United Nation's mandate on gender equality. Tabular presentations were evident, emphasizing the SDG 5 indicators with the identified sex-disaggregated issues in the Region; thus, discussions were enhanced through related studies and literature.

Results and discussion:

1. The sex-disaggregated issues of women and men in Bicol Region along:
 - a. **Work**

During the past 3 decades, the participation of women in the labor market has risen dramatically. This could signify the strong partnership and equitable working environment of both men and women in the work sector; however, there are still unrecognized and specific sex and gender issues in formal and informal sectors of the labor market that need to be addressed.

In October 2020, the Bicol Region had a labor force of 2.3 million people, but only about a third of them are women, with a participation rate of 44 percent compared to 74 %. Women comprised only 39% of the 2.4 million working people during the same period.

From 2004 to 2020, men in the Region were still more economically involved than women. In 2020, over 74% of men aged 15 and up were employed, compared to 44% of women. Women have a lower employment-to-population ratio, indicating gender inequalities in job status. A fact that can be concluded is that women do almost all of the household work. (Please see Fig. 1)

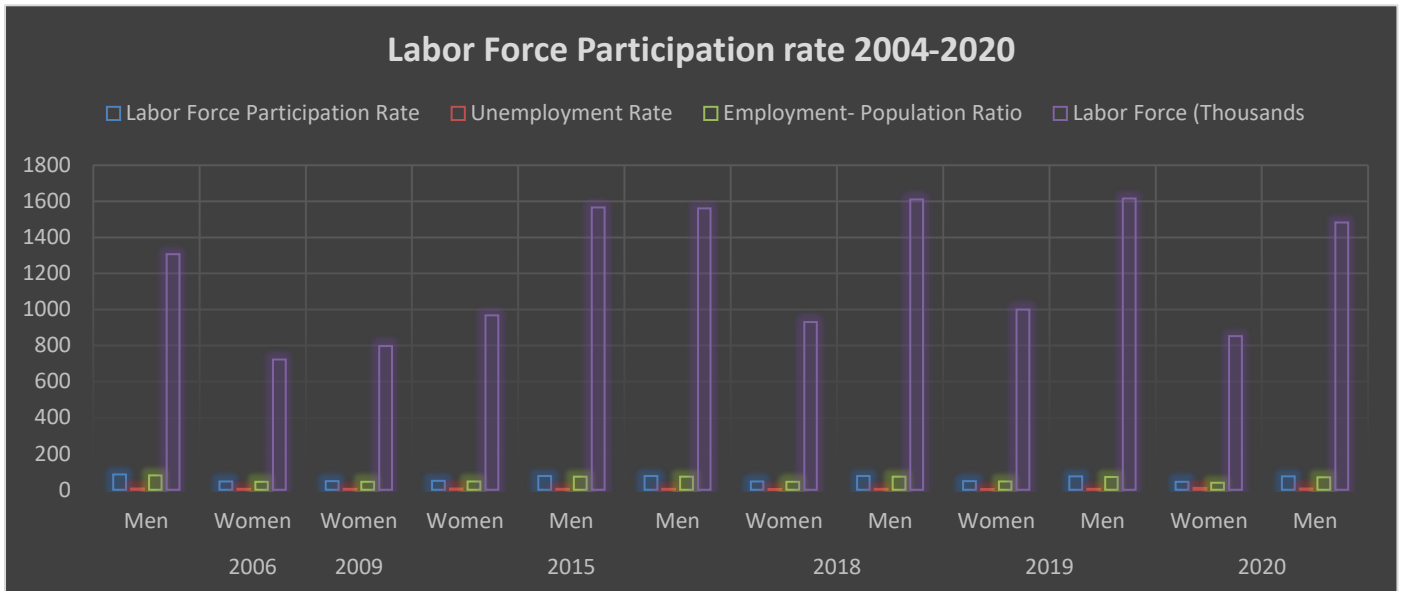


Figure1. Labor force participation rate, 2004-2020

Women participate in the labor force at a substantially lower rate than men. Women's labor-force involvement continues to climb with age, peaking in the 45-54 age group. Childbearing may be a substantial impediment to women's labor force participation. On the other hand, men's involvement begins at a younger age and continues to be high until they reach the age of 55-64. (Please see Fig. 2)

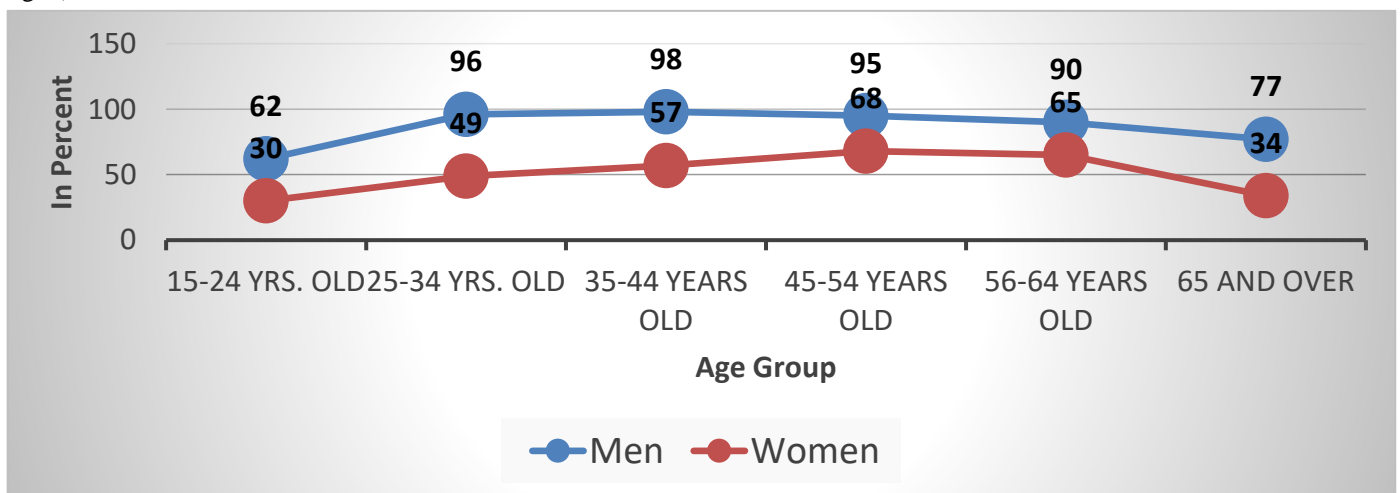


Figure2. Labor participation per age group

From 2006 to 2020, women accounted for less than a third of overall employment in the Bicol Region. In 2017, men accounted for around 64% of all pay, salary, and own-account workers. Women are more likely than men to engage in unpaid domestic labor. (Please see Fig. 3)



Figure3. Employed Men and Women by Class of Worker

In the Region, women continue to dominate private household activities. In private residences in 2009, there were 7 women for

every man. Women primarily worked in the health and social services, commerce, the hotel and restaurant industries, and education. Men still dominate the industry. Men comprised around 72 percent of the workforce in the construction, gas, and water industries, mining, manufacturing, and quarrying. Men outnumbered women in agriculture three to one, but women dominated white-collar jobs. (Please see Fig. 4a and 4b)

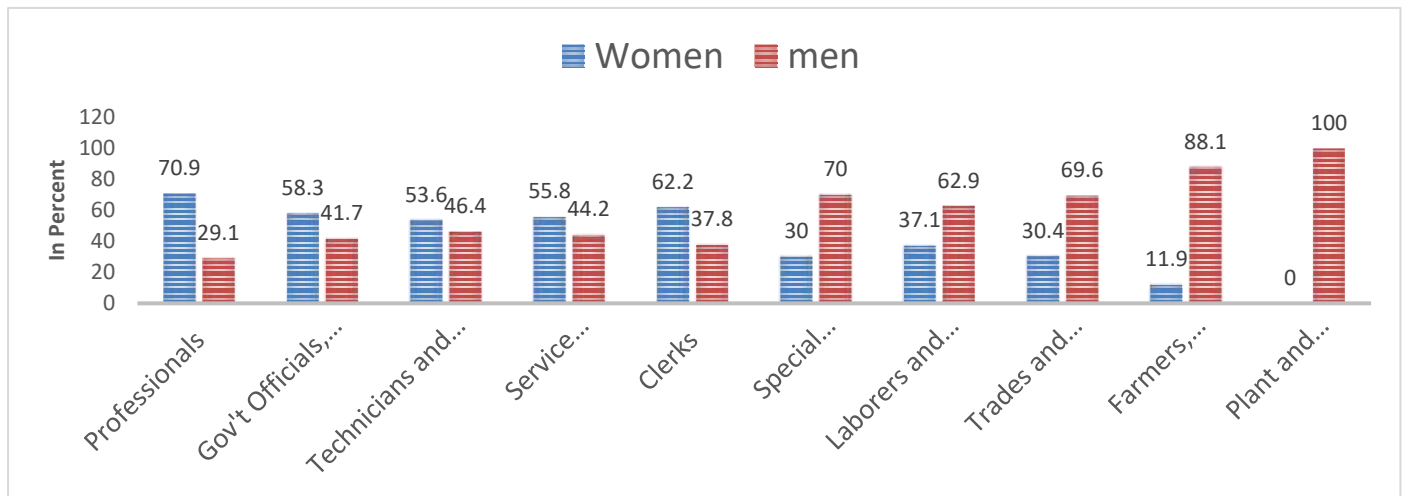


Figure4a. Distribution of Workers by Major Occupation, 2009

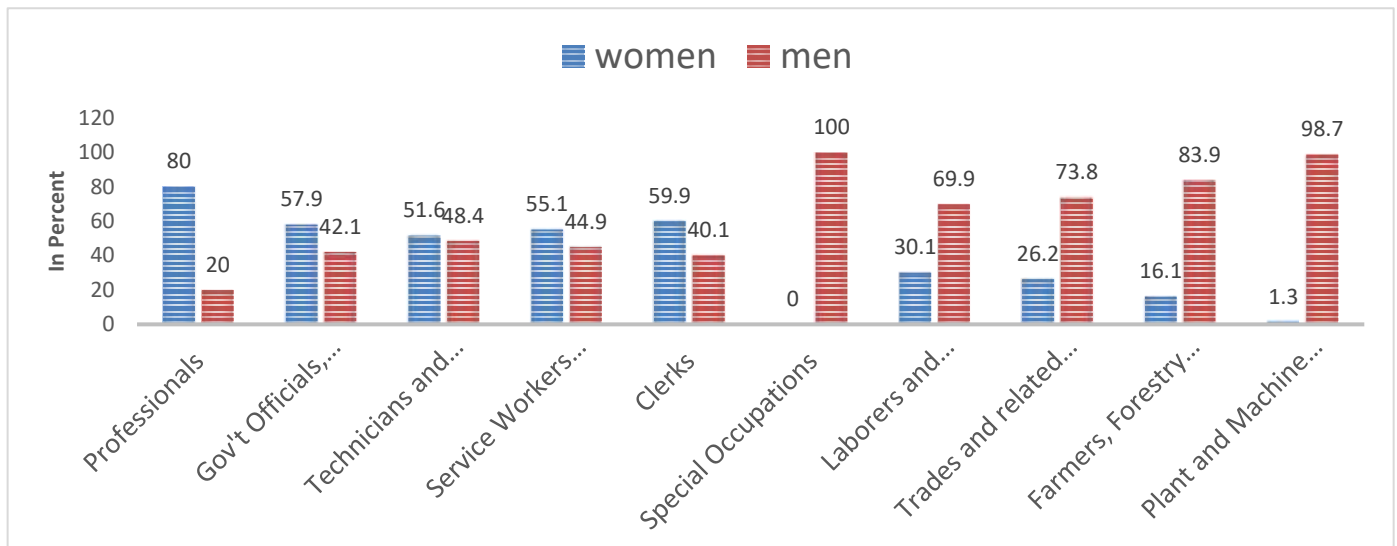


Figure4b. Distribution of Workers by Major Occupation, 2017

Women outnumber males in white-collar jobs in the Bicol Region. In the professional occupation group in 2020, there were about two women for every man. Men, on the other hand, preferred expert labor. Similarly, farming, forestry, and fishing remained men's domains. (Please see Fig. 5)



Figure5. Distribution of workers by group, 2020

Women outnumber men in terms of earning a livelihood abroad. There has been a 10% difference in Bicolano Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) than their counterparts in 2018. Women began to outnumber men working abroad in 2013. This is because there

is a greater demand for domestic assistants, nurses, and carers, all of whom are dominated by women. (Please see Fig. 6)

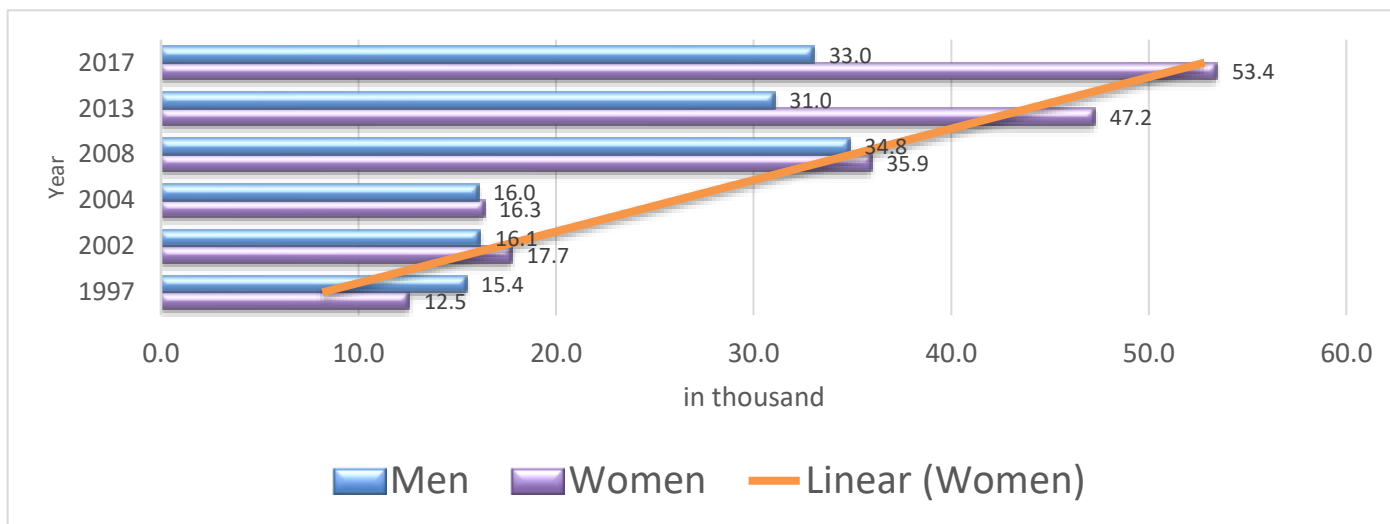


Figure6. Men and Women Overseas Filipino Workers,1997-2017

Women comprised 57.8 percent of employed college graduates and 60% of employed college undergraduates in Region V in 2017, accounting for more than half of all working college graduates. More than one-third of female workers have completed junior high school, compared to 64.1 percent of male workers. (Please see Fig. 7)

Highest Grade Completed	Women	Percent	Men	Percent
Total	925	38.4	1,485	61.6
No Grade Completed	2	27.0	5	73.0
Elementary				
Undergraduate	81	25.8	234	74.2
Graduate	169	35.9	302	64.1
Junior High School				
Undergraduate	140	33.5	278	66.5
Graduate	224	36.8	384	63.2
Senior High School				
Undergraduate	15	63.6	9	36.4
Graduate	-	-	-	-
Post Secondary				
Undergraduate	5	65.3	3	34.7
Graduate	45	54.6	38	45.4
College				
Undergraduate	71	40.0	107	60.0
Graduate*	172	57.8	126	42.2

Figure7. Employed women and men by highest grade completed in 2020

Through the presented sex-disaggregated data of women and men in Work as a priority sector, the following gender issues are evident: (1) unfavorable working conditions and benefits for women, particularly production employees; (2) disparities in income between men and women; (3) uneven possibilities for men and women in the workplace; (4) women's leadership roles in labor unions and other organizations must be strengthened. and (5) Women's engagement in work-based organizations must be increased.

b. Health and family planning

In recent years, the country's population control policy has strongly emphasized women's reproductive health. The fact that maternal mortality reduction is one of the SDGs has added to the urgency of this issue. Aside from being effective partners in economic pursuits, women require extra attention to keep themselves physically and psychologically well to execute the vital job of childbearing and raising. However, considerable Work must be done in the Bicol Region to meet the reproductive health targets for women.

Women will outlive males from 2000 to 2025. According to National and Regional, Women have greater survival rates at younger and older ages due to their longer life expectancy. It's also reflected in the declining male-to-female ratio as individuals age. (Please see Fig. 8)

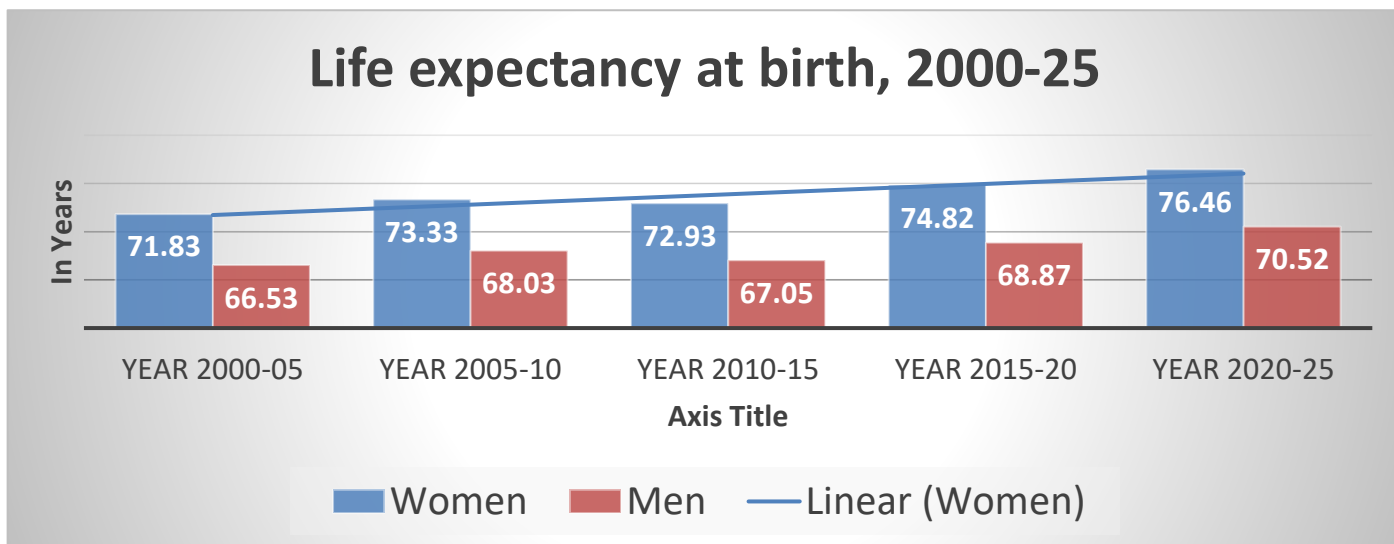


Figure8, Life expectancy at birth, 2000-25

Approximately 25 children are born in every 1,000 inhabitants in the Bicol Region every year. From 2015 to 2020, the Bicol Region's crude birth rate was projected to be 25.7 births per 1,000 residents. In comparison, the predicted crude death rate was 5.8 per 1,000 persons. The crude rate of natural increase for the same period is expected to be 20 persons per 1,000 people. (Please see Fig. 10)

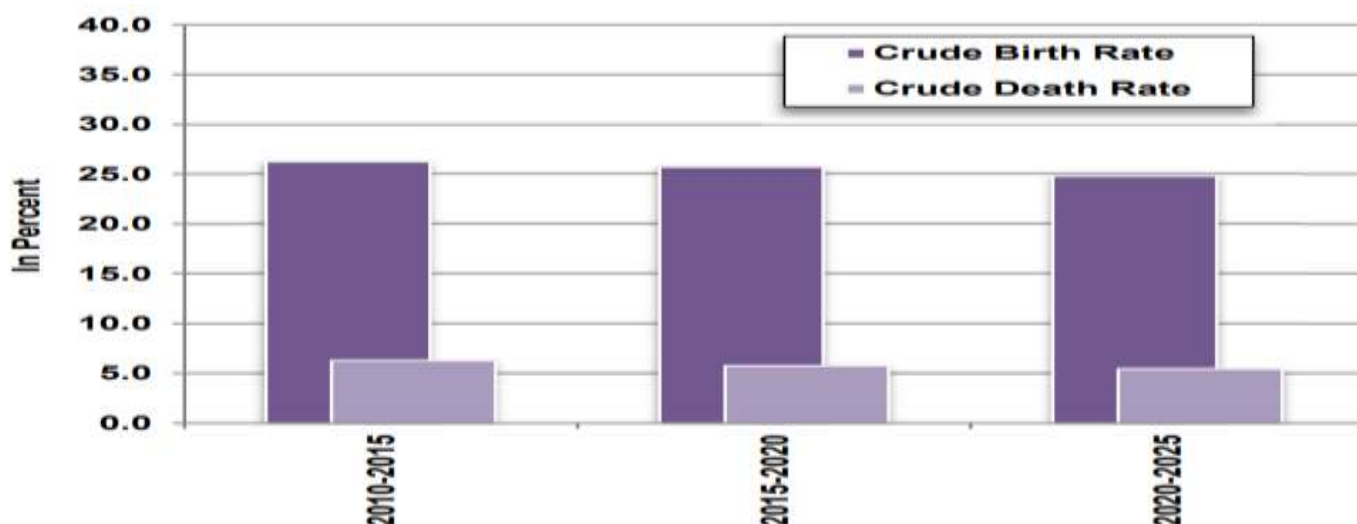


Figure9. Crude death and birth rates, 2010-2025

Region	2013		2017	
	Infant	Under-five	Infant	Under-five
Philippines 3/	23	31	21	27
National Capital Region	16	22	8	11
CAR	16	25	8	11
Region I (Ilocos)	23	26	26	29
Region II (Cagayan Valley)	20	21	19	24
Region III (Central Luzon)	23	31	14	19
Region IVA (CALABARZON)	19	23	18	21
Region IVB (MIMAROPA)	36	43	28	33
Region V (Bicol)	21	33	30	38
Region VI (Western Visayas)	25	30	38	46
Region VII (Central Visayas)	26	34	25	29
Region VIII (Eastern Visayas)	19	32	27	32
Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula)	27	35	20	26
Region X (Northern Mindanao)	25	49	26	32
Region XI (Davao Region)	26	37	17	24
Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN)	37	52	29	48
Region XIII (Caraga)	33	39	24	28
ARMM	32	55	37	55

Notes: 1. Deaths are per 1,000 live births.
 2. Figures are for the 10-year period preceding the survey.
 3. Computed rates are from 5-year period preceding the survey.

Source: National Demographic and Health Survey
 Philippine Statistics Authority

Figure10, Infant and under five-mortality, 2013-2017

In the Bicol Region, 30 children die before reaching their first birthday for every 1,000 born alive. According to the 2017 National

Demographic and Health Survey, the infant mortality rate in Bicol Region was 30.0 per 1,000 live births (NDHS). Approximately 38 children out of every 1,000 are born alive and die before the age of five. The most recent survey found an increase in infant mortality in the Bicol Region compared to the previous year of the study in 2013. It should be emphasized that the infant mortality rate in the Bicol Region was much higher than the national average. (Please see Fig. 11)

Place	2018			2019		
	Both Sexes	Women	Men	Both Sexes	Women	Men
Place of Occurrence	35,782	...	...	37,606	...	...
Usual Residence	36,331	15,478	20,853	38,213	16,337	21,876

Figure11, Death by place of occurrence and by usual residence, 2018-2019

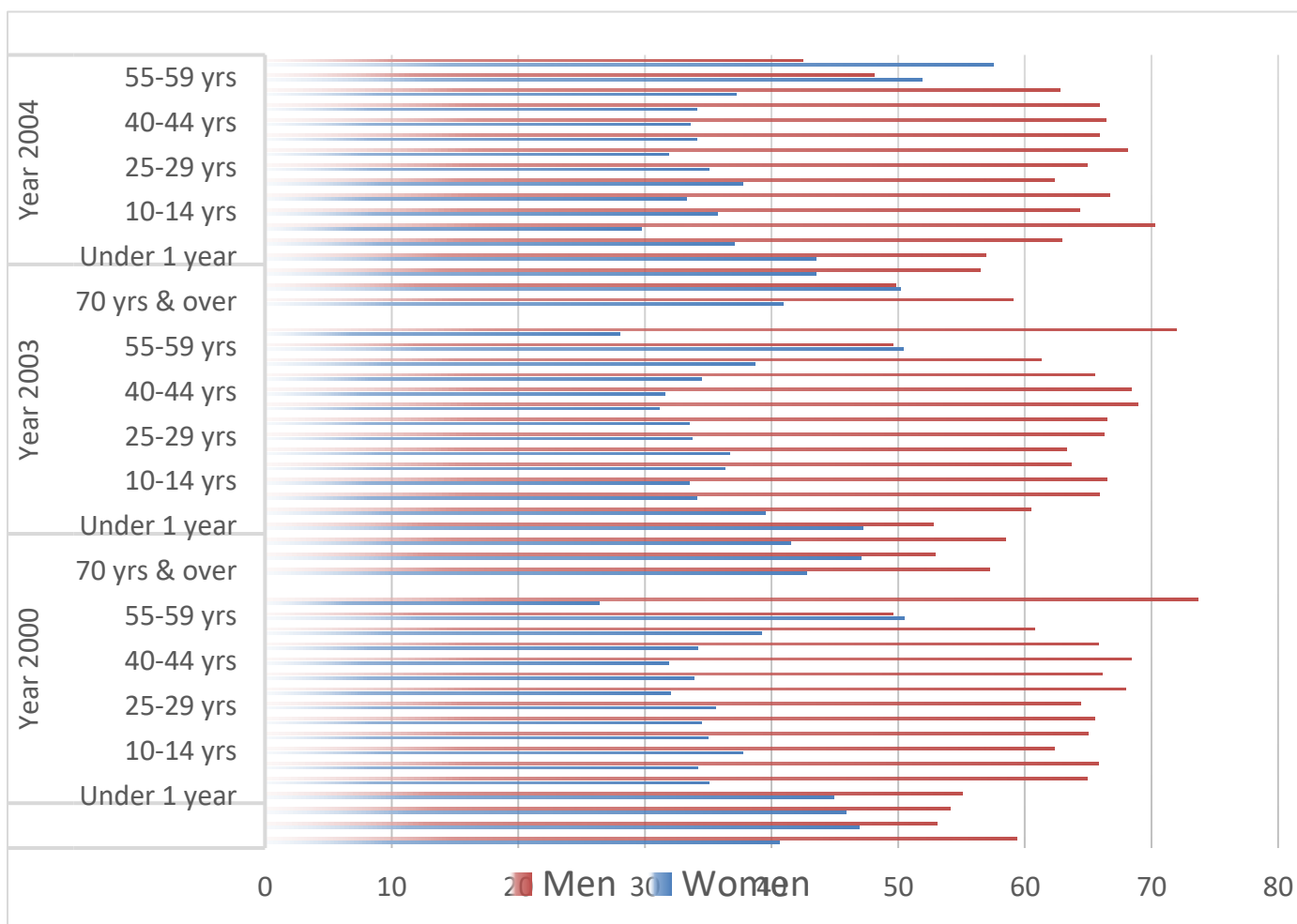


Figure12, Mortality by age group, 2000-2004

Men have a shorter life expectancy than women. In 2019, men accounted for nearly 57.2 percent of all fatalities. In 2019, there were more deaths than in 2018 and men have shorter lives than women. Men lived shorter lifetimes than women between 2000 and 2004. Men were responsible for more than 58 percent of all deaths in 2004. The male-to-female death ratio is notably high between the ages of 40 and 64. Women, on the other hand, account for 52 percent of deaths in the oldest age group, or 3.8 percentage points more than men. As evidenced by the 59 percent death rate in the youngest age group, male infants die at a higher rate than female infants. (Please see Fig. 12)

Bicol has the second-highest unmet need for family planning in the country. The total unfulfilled need for family planning in the Bicol Region is estimated to be 33.2 percent, far higher than the national average of 22.3 percent. Unmet needs for pregnancy regulation are the most common (22 percent), with unmet requirements for spacing births ranking fourth (10.2 percent on average). (Please see Fig. 13)

Region	For Spacing	For Limiting	Total
Philippines	5.8	10.9	16.7
NCR - Metro Manila	4.2	8.1	12.3
CAR - Cordillera Administrative Region	4.3	10.8	15.1
Region I - Ilocos Region	6.5	7.2	13.7
Region II - Cagayan Valley	4.0	10.4	14.4
Region III - Central Luzon	5.7	8.4	14.1
Region IVA - CALABARZON	6.7	13.4	20.1
Region IVB - MIMAROPA	5.5	14.3	19.8
Region V - Bicol Region	7.9	13.4	21.3
Region VI - Western Visayas	4.0	9.4	13.4
Region VII - Central Visayas	5.8	13.9	19.6
Region VIII - Eastern Visayas	6.9	9.1	16.0
Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula	8.4	16.2	24.6
Region X - Northern Mindanao	5.1	12.7	17.8
Region XI - Davao Region	2.7	10.8	13.5
Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN	6.8	10.7	17.5
Region XIII - Caraga	4.4	13.4	17.8
ARMM - Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	10.7	7.1	17.8

Figure13, Percentage of currently married women aged 15-19, 2017

Men have a shorter life expectancy than women. In 2019, men accounted for nearly 57.2 percent of all fatalities. In 2019, there were more deaths than in 2018 and men have shorter lives than women. Men lived shorter lifetimes than women between 2000 and 2004. Men were responsible for more than 58 percent of all deaths in 2004. The male-to-female death ratio is notably high between the ages of 40 and 64. Women, on the other hand, account for 52 percent of deaths in the oldest age group, or 3.8 percentage points more than men. As evidenced by the 59 percent death rate in the youngest age group, male infants die at a higher rate than female infants.

Between 2008 and 2017, Bicolano women began sexual activity at a young age. The median age of Bicolano women during their first sexual contact, according to the NDHS, is 21.2 years, which is a measure of a woman's vulnerability to childbirth. Consistently, Bicol region people marry and get pregnant at a very young age. This could be due to unawareness of safe sex and contraceptives. (Please see Fig. 14)

Indicators	Age	
	2013	2017
Median age at first marriage among women age 25-49	22.0	21.9
Median age at first sexual intercourse among women age 25-49	21.5	21.2
Median age at first birth among women age 25-49	23.3	22.9

Fig14, Fertility indicators, 2013 and 2017

Maternal issues are the leading cause of maternal Death in the Bicol Region. Anti-partum problems, delivery complications, and postpartum complications accounted for 68% of all mother deaths in 2009. Thirty percent were caused by hypertension, toxemia, and eclampsia, whereas miscarriages caused 4%. (Please see Fig. 15)

Examining sex-disaggregated data of women and men in the Bicol region, as well as health and family planning, the following gender issues in this sector were identified: (1) the healthcare system's inability to meet women's health and reproductive needs; (2) further improvement of nutrition and health status of children and mothers and (3) women should be encouraged to participate in the delivery of health and nutrition services.

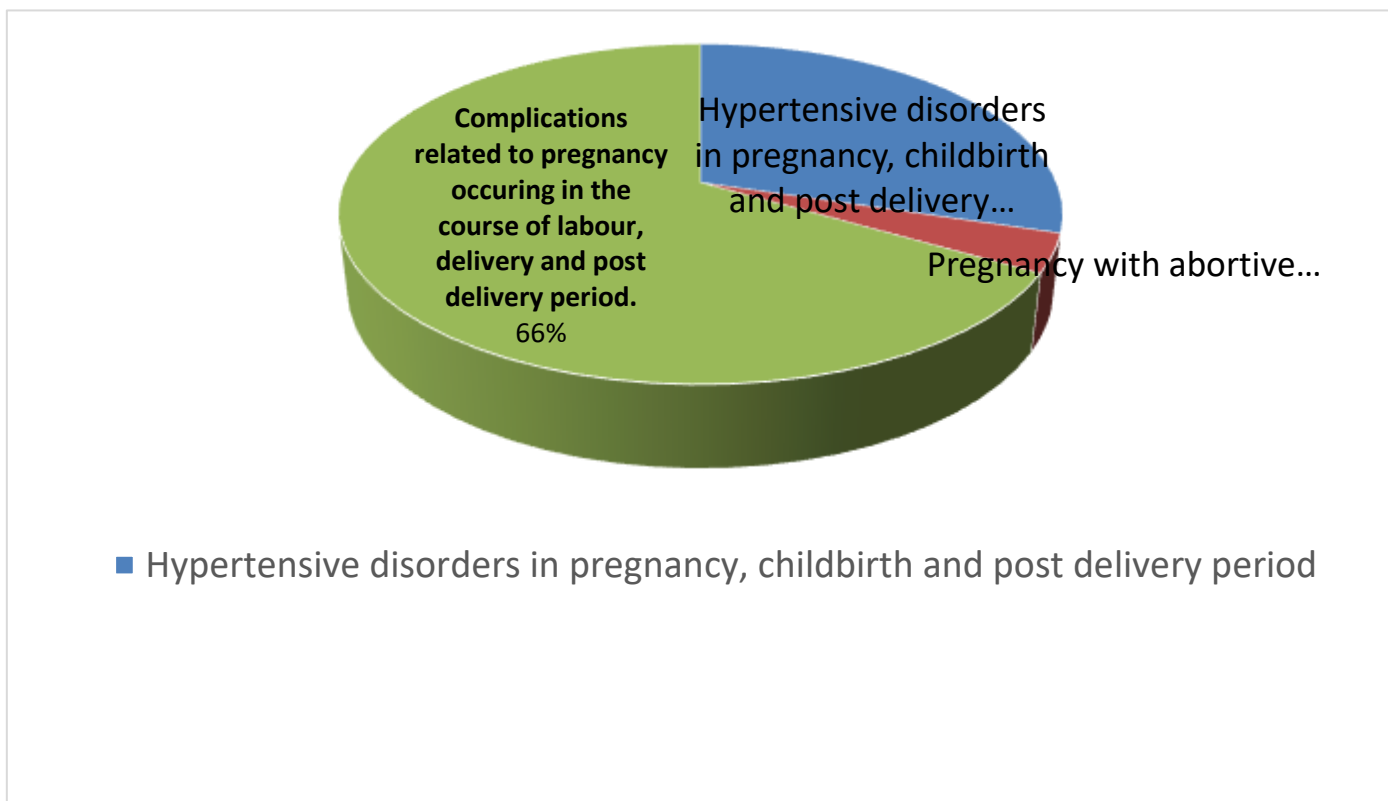


Figure15, Leading causes of maternal Mortality, 2006-2015

c. Economic Participation

Women's unpaid contributions to agriculture, food production, reproduction, and home duties should be quantified concretely. The United Nations acknowledged the need to assess and value women's unpaid labor.

In multi-purpose agricultural cooperatives, women outweigh males. On the other hand, other types of cooperatives have a higher proportion of female members in 2020. In consumer cooperatives, women outnumbered males four to one. Women dominate five of the Region's seven cooperative types. Except for producer and service cooperatives, women comprised most of the coop members in the Region in 2009. (Please see Fig. 16)

Wives' incomes in the Bicol region are lower than their husbands'. More than 62 percent of regional spouses earn less than their husbands, according to the 2017 Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), up from 59.0 percent in 2013. However, one in every five women earns more than her husband. (Please see Fig. 17)

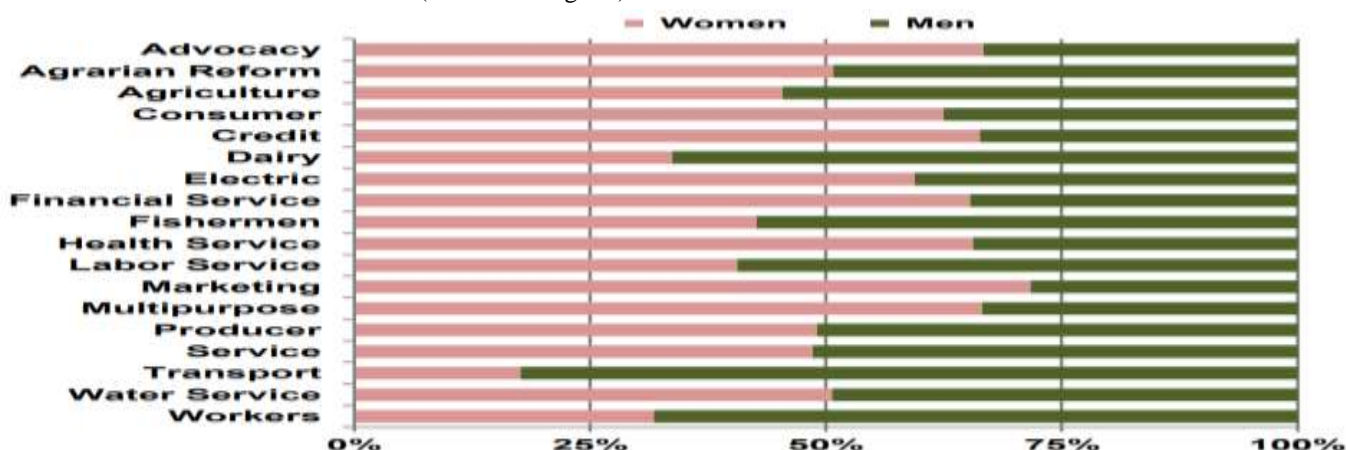


Figure16, Distribution of membership in cooperatives by type of cooperative, 2020

Particulars	Percentage of Respondents	
	2013	2017
Number of Women <u>a/</u>	291	428
More	21.0	21.2
Less	59.0	62.2
About the same	19.0	15.6
Husband has no earnings	0.7	1.1
Don't know/Missing	0.4	0.0

Figure17, Wife's cash earnings compared with husband's cash earnings, 2013-2017

Women in the Bicol region have almost little control over their property. According to the 2017 National Household Survey, 40% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 owned a home, either alone, with another person, or both. Only about 2% of women own homes on their own, while 36.7 percent share ownership with someone else. Women accounted for 9.9% of who owned a lot and/or a piece of land. (Please see Fig. 18)

Men still dominate the Region's highways. In 2020, 75% of licenses and permits were awarded to men. 93.8 percent of individuals possessing a professional driver's license were men. On the other hand, there are three men for every female non-professional driver and two men for every female student driver. (Please see Fig. 19)

Particulars	Percentage of Respondents	
	Who Own A House	Who Own A Land
Number of Women Age 15-49	1551	1551
Total	100.0	100.0
Alone	2.1	2.0
Jointly	36.7	7.6
Alone and Jointly	2.2	0.3
Do Not Own	59.0	90.1

Source: National Demographic and Health Survey
Philippine Statistics Authority

Figure18, Percentage of Women by Ownership of House and Land, 2017

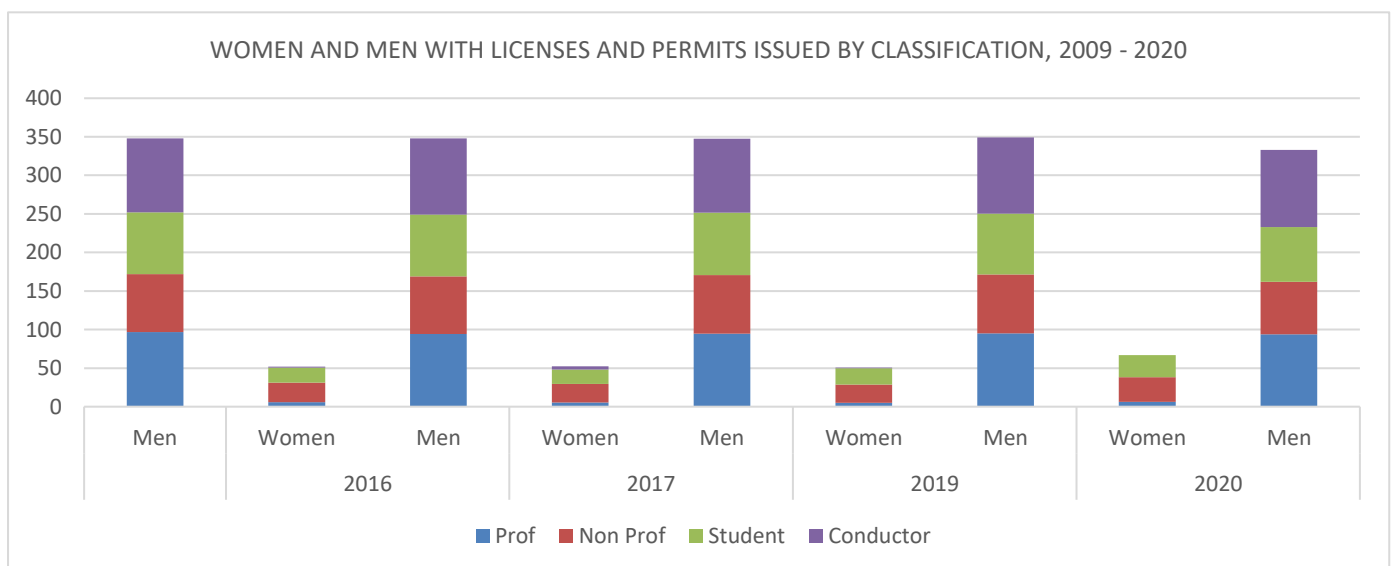


Figure19, Women, and men with licenses and permits issued by classification, 2009-2020

Women-headed families profit more on average in the Region. The median wealth of female-headed households in 2015 was Php194,626, greater than the average income of male-headed households of Php185,230. Men continue to be the head of the family in general. (Please see Fig. 20)

Income Class	Number of Families		Income Reported		Average Income	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
2012						
Total	258	907	45,210	143,975	175,233	158,738
Under 40,000	17	27	445	814	26,176	30,148
40,000 - 59,999	31	80	1,559	4,121	50,290	51,513
60,000 - 99,999	66	291	5,274	23,651	79,909	81,275
100,000 - 249,999	90	388	13,492	57,070	149,911	147,088
250,000 & over	55	121	24,441	58,320	444,382	481,983
2015						
Total	289	973	56,247	180,229	194,626	185,230
Under 40,000	14	11	436	347	31,143	31,545
40,000 - 59,999	25	42	1,250	2,100	50,000	50,000
60,000 - 99,999	55	214	4,469	17,819	81,255	83,266
100,000 - 249,999	126	540	19,666	81,662	156,079	151,226
250,000 & over	69	166	30,427	78,301	440,971	471,693

Figure20, Number of families, total income, and average income by sex of family head and income class, 2012 and 2015

In the sector of Economic Participation, these are the identified gender issues: (1) non-visibility and quantification of women's economic contributions; (2) Women have limited access to credit; and (3) economic policies do not impact women's needs and concerns.

d. Public life

Men continue to dominate the country's public policy and decision-making structures. Women, on the other hand, have made advances in politics. Policies promoting women's political engagement have increasingly gained traction. Thus, women are slowly being mainstreamed into the systems that govern society. The participation and inclusion of women in the voting process has gradually improved. Women are increasingly being elected to public office. As a result of this situation, hopefully, new legislation addressing women's special needs and concerns will be developed.

Women held more roles in national government entities. Women will have over 58 percent of national government seats by August 2020. Women also made up 57% of the entire government workforce in the Region. Men, on the other hand, held more posts in municipal government than women. (Please see Fig. 21)

Province	Women	Percent	Men	Percent
National				
Region V	58,059	58.8	40,730	41.2
Albay	...	...	...	...
Camarines Norte	...	...	...	...
Camarines Sur	...	...	...	...
Catanduanes	...	...	...	...
Masbate	...	...	...	...
Sorsogon	...	...	...	...
Local				
Region V	10,487	49.3	10,801	50.7
Albay	1,696	49.4	1,740	50.6
Camarines Norte	1,092	49.5	1,112	50.5
Camarines Sur	3,209	50.0	3,204	50.0
Catanduanes	790	49.8	796	50.2
Masbate	2,111	47.9	2,299	52.1
Sorsogon	1,589	49.1	1,650	50.9
Total	68,546	57.1	51,531	42.9

Figure21, Women and men government personnel by province, As of August 2020

Women continue to dominate government career services. Women held 60.5 percent of government career positions, whereas men held more non-career positions. For every man, there were two women in positions of influence. Approximately 67 percent of men worked under a work order for the government. (Please see Fig. 22)

Men continue to dominate the political arena. Men comprised 74.6 percent of the successful candidates in the May 13, 2019, elections. As indicated by a rise in the proportion of women elected in the last two national and local elections, women are gradually entering the male-dominated arena. (Please see Fig. 23)

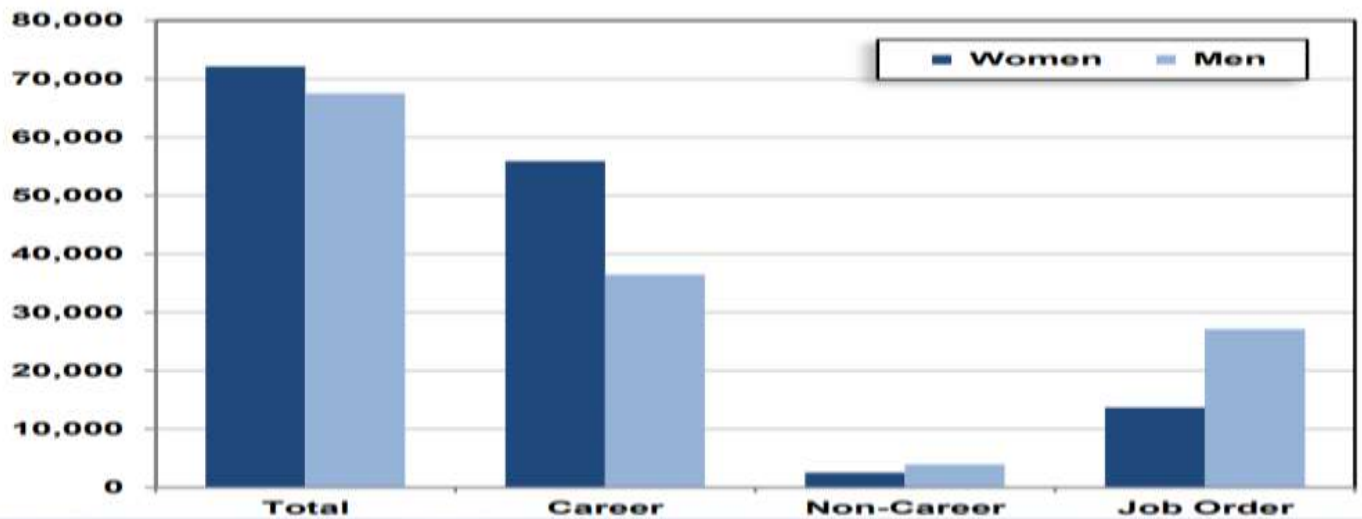


Figure22, proportion of women and men in government service by type, As of August 31, 2020

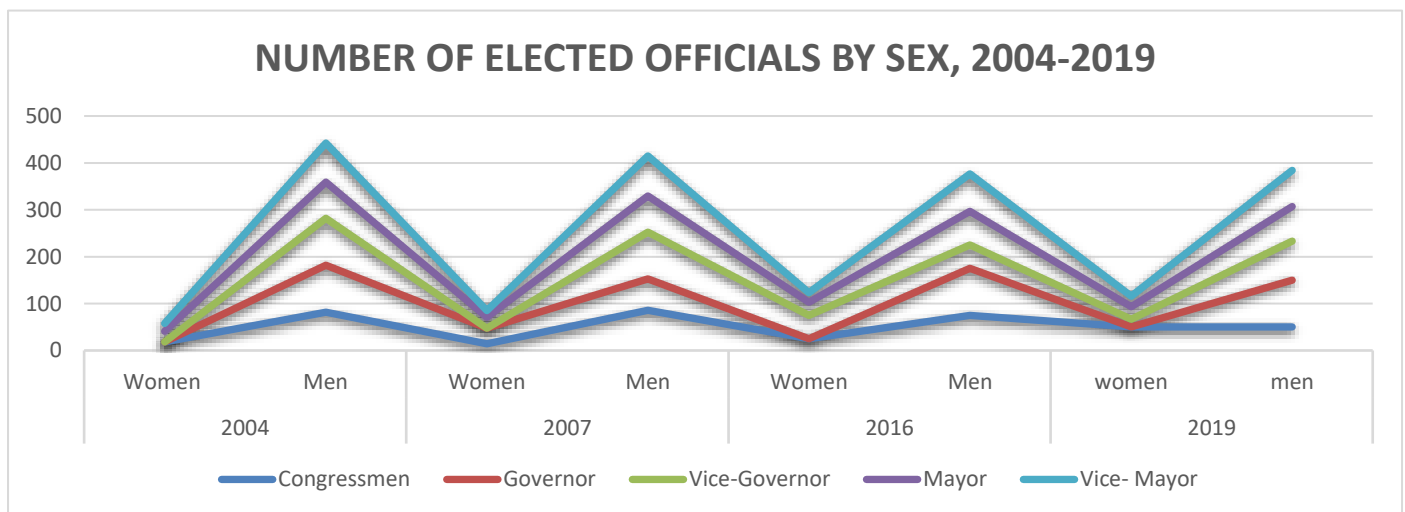


Figure23, Number of elected officials by sex, 2004-2019

More women who have registered voters vote in elections. Women comprised 51.7 percent of the Bicol region's voter turnout in the May 13, 2019, elections. Except for Catanduanes, where more men voted, women outnumbered men in five of the Region's provinces. Compared to men, the province of Albay had the largest proportion of registered voters who voted. (Please see Fig. 24)

Province	Women	Percent	Men	Percent
May 9, 2016				
Region V	1,376,757	52.0	1,272,824	48.0
Albay	333,876	52.4	302,922	47.6
Camarines Norte	134,055	52.6	120,577	47.4
Camarines Sur	438,014	52.2	400,682	47.8
Catanduanes	76,014	49.8	76,547	50.2
Masbate	206,165	51.1	196,973	48.9
Sorsogon	188,633	51.9	175,123	48.1
May 13, 2019				
Region V	1,490,267	51.7	1,395,041	48.3
Albay	343,709	52.2	314,884	47.8
Camarines Norte	145,306	52.1	133,699	47.9
Camarines Sur	489,329	51.4	462,825	48.6
Catanduanes	79,184	49.3	81,478	50.7
Masbate	228,156	52.0	210,872	48.0
Sorsogon	204,583	51.7	191,283	48.3

Figure24, Women and men who voted by province (Region V): May 2016 and 2019 Elections

Summarizing the figures from the disaggregated data along the sector of public life, these are the identified gender issues: (1) At all levels, women's involvement in decision-making operations is negligible; (2) most of the women are in the lower tiers; their engagement declines as position levels rise and (3) Women's participation in political systems is marginalized.

2. Analysis of identified sex-disaggregated issues vis-à-vis SDG 5 indicators

a. Work

Gender subordination continues to have a significant cultural impact on the Region's socioeconomic and sociopolitical environments. According to Elizabeth Eviota Uy, Philippine culture and society are primarily patriarchal, ignoring the potential of girls and women and contributing significantly to gender roles. Female labor is the norm in light industries such as textiles, food processing, handicrafts, and electronic component assembly. Women's income-generating jobs in these fields are equivalent to domestic tasks. This is also why women fall behind men in positions of power and/or management in private and governmental institutions. Men are regarded as the principal source of family income, and women defer to them in the most important household and personal decisions, particularly those impacting the family's financial well-being. In any case, the husband has the last say. In the Bicol region, Women dominate services in education, health, retail and trade, and accommodation, while men outnumber women in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, communication, information, and technology sectors. Although men and women have their turf of sectors that they dominate, it can be analyzed that there is gender inequality in almost every industry. Through sex-disaggregated data, both sexes do not have an equal share of the male-female (and vice versa) population, which greatly contributes to employment decisions, institutional policies, programs and services to be offered, the vision and mission of the sectors, and many more. In other words, male-dominated and female-dominated sectors still do not uncover the possibilities of economic growth and employment reform if there were an almost equal population of men and women who share work experiences, expertise, and the labor force. The more challenging sectors can be seen lurking along the working arena of women where most of the working female population in the Region are in the informal economy and unpaid family workers that could denote non-participation of women to unions, social mobility, and socioeconomic protection.

Table 1. Analyses Summary

SDG 5 indicators	Identified sex-disaggregated issues in the Region
	Work
Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic Work through the provision of public services, infrastructure, and social protection policies, as well as the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family, as nationally appropriate.	Unfavorable working conditions and benefits for women, particularly production employees
	Disparities in income between men and women
	Uneven possibilities for men and women in the workplace
	Women's leadership roles in labor unions and other organizations must be strengthened.
	Women's engagement in work-based organizations must be increased.
	Health and Family Planning
Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed by the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.	The healthcare system's incapacity to meet women's health and reproductive requirements
	Women's and children's health and nutritional status must be improved further.
	Women's participation in the delivery of health and nutrition services should be supported.
	Economic Participation
Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, following national laws.	Lack of visibility and non-quantification of women's contribution to the economy
	Limited access of women to credit
	Impact of economic policies on women
	Public Life
Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.	At all levels, women's involvement in decision-making operations is negligible.
	Most women are in the lower tiers; their engagement declines as position levels rise.
	Women's participation in political systems is marginalized.

Relatively, in this light of analysis, because of biological differences, women are neglected with economic opportunities where most employers do not want to hire women because of childbearing responsibilities. This is one of the factors contributing to the low participation rate of women in the labor force, thus implicating unfavorable working conditions and job status for women. This could be more of an issue for rural and indigenous women and/or to people who belong to diverse SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression).

Within the lens of SDG 5, particularly valuing the unpaid labor and domestic care by men and women, it can be concluded that the localization of this SDG target is still underappreciated, weak, and unsystematic. With the passage of the Guidelines on the Localization of the Magna Carta of Women, one could not say that the targets of SDG 5 are covered in flaws in implementation, localization, monitoring, evaluation, and sustainability. With the slow pace of the inclusion of women and other marginalized sectors in the labor force in the Region, there could be many contributing factors to this cause.

b. Health and family planning.

Women will outlive males from 2000 to 2025. One of the reasons for this impact is men's lifestyle and risky behaviors. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, almost half (48 percent or 14.6 million) of adult males and 9 percent (2.8 million) of adult females are current smokers. Moreover, 23 percent of Filipino adults are daily tobacco smokers: 38 percent for males and 7 percent for females. This constitutes a larger number of men being subject to respiratory-related diseases, particularly lung cancer. Biologically, women produce naturally-made immune responses compared to men. The risky behaviors of men in taking jobs, opportunities, and experiences are also imprinted in the male hormones. This research was proven by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, answering the question of why women in most societies live longer compared to their male counterparts, even though women more frequently report and seek care for stress, depression, or anxiety.

Bicol has the second-highest unmet need for family planning in the country. In the study "*The Demand for Primary Health Care Services in the Bicol Region of the Philippines*" by Akin et. Al, Bicol region's primary health care service faces a great dilemma. (1) **Unavailability of Modern Medical Resources**- Despite the availability of modern medical care, traditional healers are still sought by roughly 14% of outpatients in rural areas. Traditional midwives are used for about 70% of deliveries in rural parts of the United States. Comparisons of aggregative personnel and per capita hospital beds for low- and high-income countries often reinforce the notion that rural areas lack modern health care. (2) **Cost as a Determinant of Medical Care Use**- The poorest Bicolanos are the least likely to receive prenatal, well-baby, or immunization services. The poorest quartile pays a premium for traditional midwives to deliver their babies. A trip to a public facility can take 4 hours, a private facility 3.9 hours, and a traditional healer 1.25 hours. The lack of reproductive health care harms all aspects of women's health, including maternal and newborn Mortality and adolescent pregnancy. Full support for improving mother and child health indicators and unmet demand for family planning would give women the freedom to make decisions about their bodies. On this SDG target, the Bicol region still has a long way to go in reaching the unmet needs of its people. This posed a great leap even with the government's passage of the Universal Health program. As part of the integration and localization of this SDG target, the PSA data and relative research on this cause could help intensify and religiously follow the appropriate mechanisms to implement such. Collaboration of local health units, district hospitals, and barangay health centers is necessary to collate raw and correct data on the implementation and localization of this SDG target.

c. Economic Participation

Inequitable wealth distribution, as well as inequitable Distribution of unpaid care and domestic labor, limit women's earning potential and expose them to lifetime poverty. Women's reduced labor force involvement, lower incomes, and lack of social protection may compound poverty, placing impoverished women in danger. Age matters in the Region and as a global norm in labor force participation. The older the women/men, the less likely for him/her to be part of the labor force. As a rural community where men dominate agriculture and have the most socioeconomic opportunities, women in the Region have a lower labor force participation rate than men. Unpaid domestic labor, which most women consume most of their time, is undervalued by most people. According to one study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in the United States, women spend 243.2 minutes daily doing unpaid labor — approximately 28.4 hours per week. Women continue to work greater hours when paid and unpaid jobs are combined. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Americans earn an average of \$26.82 per hour. This means that if men and women were compensated for their unpaid labor, men would receive \$469.35 (P 27,222.00) more each week, and women would earn \$761.69 (P 44,178) more per week – a total of roughly P 2,120, 544 more per year. According to data logistics, the more children she has, the more probable she is to be a part of the labor force. As raised in a rural community, the perception of economic mediocrity is also embedded in the basic social institutions. Herding the animals, taking good care of the farm, being agriculturally active even not attending school days and the thought of “Mas mabuting magtrabaho sa bukid para may makain sa isang araw kesa mag aral at magutom lang”. Out of options due to financial deprivation and lack of economic opportunities tend to be the centennial behavior of men and women in the Region.

In most Asia-Pacific countries with available data, women and girls bear the greater burden of unpaid care and domestic work, including cooking and cleaning in the household's dwelling, person-to-person care activities, and transporting water (if 16 unavailable on the household premises) from safe sources to the home (Hirway, 2016). If a woman has at least one child under 1-year-old, less likely she is to be economically active, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). If she has more children

between 1 and 8, they are likelier to not be in the labor force. Unpaid household, child, and elderly care (as well as unpaid farm labor) performed mostly by women is undoubtedly a compelling reason why many women are invisible and even excluded from their local and national economies. This can significantly impede opportunities for better living conditions for women and their entire households.

D. Public life

Civil service posts require a college degree at the first and second levels of education. Those in technical and professional positions up to the Division Chief level require a four-year college degree. There are considerable gender inequalities in civil service posts between levels, with those in the first level more likely to be male and those in the second level more female.

The representation of women in elected offices has been an area of modest development, even as women's economic participation rates have improved. Even evident in the data results and statistics of the improvement of women in the political arena, this does not safeguard them from gender subordination in politics nor the quality of treatment by other men-elected officials. Because of the generally low proportion of women, female leadership is lacking in the most powerful committees that control the budget, national planning, and government management. Therefore, few female legislators are assigned to numerous committees and chairpersonships of "traditionally female" concerns, and there are insufficient women to appoint to other committees.

Through the lens of SDG 5, it can be concluded that women have gradually improved in the political arena. As I have argued in class with Dr. Magno, policies are where it all starts. Through appropriate treatment of data and conclusions, one could easily establish an inclusive and sensitive policy that could address the grassroots and perennial problems of the marginalized in the Region, specifically sex and gender issues. With this breakthrough, the Region could produce well-represented sectors in the political arena. Representatives who could fight for equality and equity, regardless of sex, gender, race, color, and ethnicity. Senator Leila De Lima, Governor Imelda Papin, and Former Vice President Leni Robredo are some of the prominent Bicolana names in politics. They served as an inspiration to all women aspiring to achieve a seat in public service.

Recommendations to strengthen the localization of SDG 5.

- 1. Strengthen the institutionalization of Gender analysis.** The praxis of the institutionalization of gender analysis shall start with familiarizing gender analysis tools and gender auditing i.e. Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG), Enhanced-Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (E-GMEF), etc. According to COA, the Philippines has adopted a sustainable, objective, and beautiful GAD framework; however, issues have arisen in its implementation. Gender analysis tools shall objectively initiate the identification of various gender issues in an organization; thus, this shall be the first step in the GAD Agenda, Gender Plan and Budget (GPB), formulation of inclusive policies, etc. In using the GAD fund, failure to integrate the institutionalization of gender analysis means a certain PPA is neither Gender-responsive nor inclusive. Varied CSOs, NGOs, and public and private institutions shall fully enforce the mechanization of addressing sex and gender issues. Collaboration of each agency and bench learning where gender-related data and results are being treated.
- 2. Capacitate Gender Focal Point System on the Gender and Development mandates.** GAD-related training and capacity building are necessary to integrate gender-responsive needs into an institution's systems and processes. Stressing the awareness to identify gender issues in the Gender Plan and Budget will drive inclusive policymaking, gender equality, and gender mainstreaming. Partnerships and linkages with agencies with strong GAD implementation shall also be key factors for replicating GAD best practices. With a strong foundation, objectively identify and prioritize pressing gender issues in their institutions. Institutional leaders and program implementers should be exposed to varied strategies, tools, mechanisms, and approaches to solving gender issues. Research data say that related gender and development programs and activities are always disregarded and misinterpreted as this would be the high time for awareness and action. The following are the common observations of COA in line with the implementation of Gender and Development policies and mandates.

(1) Gender and Development policies were not devised, and monies totaling 5% of the agency's allocation were not provided to undertake GAD-related initiatives, projects, and activities;

(2) GAD received less than 5% of the institution's total budget;

(3) The PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular 2012-01 criteria for producing the Annual GAD Plan and Budget, as well as the Accomplishment Report, were not properly adhered to;

(4) GAD programs and initiatives should have been implemented in conformity with the HGDG; they were not fully implemented or not implemented at all and

(5) because GAD Plan and Budget and/or accomplishment reports were not submitted, GAD accomplishments about targeted activities could not be evaluated.

This must be one of the reasons why, despite the improvements in women's participation in various priority sectors in the Region, gender issues are not being appropriately identified and addressed. Its main cause is the non-compliance of multiple organizations to Gender and Development mandates and policies, disregarding the real and root causes of gender issues

- 3. Implement policies on Gender Mainstreaming.** Each institution should be able to promote gender mainstreaming with the institutionalization of gender analysis tools and a capacitated GFPS on gender sensitization. Its purpose is to investigate how

men and women interact regarding resource access and control. The steps of GAD mainstreaming are planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming has four entry points: (1) policies, (2) programs, projects, and activities, (3) people, and (4) enabling mechanisms. The Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG) and the Enhanced-Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Frameworks (EGMEF) are two multi-agency-approved gender mainstreaming tools that aim to identify gender issues in institutions. These tools include gender-responsive indicators required for designing, implementing, and monitoring more inclusive programs, projects, and activities. With the implementation of policies on gender mainstreaming, gender issues along the economic, social, political, environmental, and other aspects shall be prevented and thus appropriately addressed.

- 4. Conduct research on gender-related concerns and sex-disaggregated data.** Recognizing the epistemological conditions of women, their class, status, ethnicity, societal roles and functions, and cultural background through scientific research must be increased. This contextual and localized approach shall uncover the various gender and sex issues in their respective area. Gender and development-related research are necessary for fully integrating and institutionalizing marginalized groups, securing their work capabilities, and economic participation for multi-sectoral development. Examining the experiences of poor urban women demonstrates the numerous ways development policy fails to recognize the critical Work women do to support their households and communities, as well as the negative ramifications of this failure for poor communities more widely. Addressing sex and gender-related issues through scientific research could also amplify the socio-political horizons and possibilities of the Region, as proven effective in first-world and developing countries. Through research, the development of appropriate and suited long-term and sustainable programs will be secured; thus, gender-sensitive and inclusive policies will be increased.

Conclusions:

While there have been gradual improvements in women's representation and participation in the political and economic spheres in the Bicol Region, significant challenges persist, such as gender inequality, cultural barriers, the need for sex-disgregation, and trivial observance and/or implementation of SDG 5. Women continue to face systematic barriers, including unfavorable working conditions, income disparities, and limited access to leadership roles, which hinder their full participation in public life and the decision-making process. Also, the patriarchal structure of Philippine Society contributes to the marginalization of women, affecting their economic opportunities and societal roles. This one cultural barrier perpetuates traditional gender roles that impede women's potential. The lack of comprehensive sex-disaggregated data limits the effective monitoring and implementation of gender-responsive policies. The paper emphasizes the importance of generating sex-disaggregated data analytics and gender analysis to cover specific gender-related issues and inform policymaking. Lastly, as a policy recommendation, LGUs, civilians, NGOs, and private companies and industries must learn to institutionalize and/or strengthen the localization of SDGs, in this case, SDG No. 5. This would solve men and women's sex and gender issues and promote inclusive policies for a more harmonious society.

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