

Shadow report submitted to the 64th and 66th sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in relation to the participation of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 by civil society in the

Philippines

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Introduction

- 1.) Women Engaged in Action on 1325 (WE Act 1325) submits this shadow report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in relation to the participation of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 by civil society in the Philippines.
- 2.) WE Act 1325 is a national network of civil society organizations launched in November 17, 2010. On the 14 points of the NAP, most of the network's initiatives have been focused on "policy review, capacity building, and training of various stakeholders; engagement with negotiators of on-going peace processes; advocacy to increase women's participation in peacebuilding in national and local levels; peace education and media campaigns."
- 3.) Laying the groundwork for the formulation of the Philippine National Action Plan (NAP) began as early as 2007 when civil society organizations approached government agencies—Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and then National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) now Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) to broach the idea of developing a NAP for Women, Peace and Security (WPS).
- 4.) The Philippine NAP was actually a product of six regional consultations and a national validation meeting that included community women including Moro and indigenous women, civil society, local government officials, members of government agencies, security sector, the religious and members of the academic community.
- 5.) A preparatory committee on WPS was established and civil society worked with the two government agencies, OPAPP and PCW to design regional consultations which eventually led to the adoption of the NAP via Executive Order (EO) no. 865 on March 1, 2010.
- 6.) Civil society organizations, namely: Sulong CARHRIHL, Center for Peace Education-Miriam College, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZOPI) and Miriam College's Women and Gender Institute (WAGI) made a decision to band together as a network to help government implement the NAP. This is how the network became WE Act 1325. Aside from helping the government implement the NAP, the network also aims to "concretely bring it to the women

most affected by conflict situations in the country.” The network currently has 34 member organizations¹ nationwide.

Civil Society Implementation

WE Act 1325 was the primary civil society network that helped implement the Philippine National Action Plan

Here is a summary of its initiatives:

1.) Protection and Prevention

Promoting Women, Peace and Security Resolutions amongst State and Non-State Actors (NAP Action Point 4)

WE Act 1325 and the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) have conducted orientation and follow-up sessions on WPS and the NAP among senior officers and Gender and GAD Focal points of the Philippine Army and the PNP with the goal of having these operationalized in the plans, programs and activities of the said agencies.

The trainings in the PNP inspired the conduct of other trainings related to WPS such as the Briefing/Orientation on the Framework Agreement on Bangsamoro for the PNP personnel; a Women’s Forum that incorporated UNSCR 1325 and 1820 ; the Women Biennial Summit; and a Forum on Women in Peace and Security conducted nationwide for all regional offices and their Regional Advisory Councils.

WE Act 1325 has conducted orientation sessions on Women, Peace and Security to UN peacekeepers from the Philippines prior to deployment to Golan Heights, Haiti and Liberia. To date, WE Act 1325, with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) has trained over 3,000 UN Peacekeepers. This initiative has started as early as May 2011.²

¹ WE Act 1325 members: Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao (AFRIM), Al Mujadillah Development Foundation Inc. (AMDF), Aksyon para sa Kapayapaan (AKKAPKA), Asia-Pacific Centre on the Responsibility to Protect (APC-R2P), Asian Circle 1325, Balay Mindanaw Foundation, Inc., Balay Rehabilitation Center, Center for Peace Education (CPE), Coalition of Mindanao Indigenous Peoples for Peace Advocacy (COMMIPPA), Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Governance (CCAGG), GZO Peace Institute, Generation Peace (GenPeace), God-centered Women’s Association for Peace Advocacy (GWAPA), Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID), Isis International-Manila, Kutawato Council for Justice and Peace (KCJP), Lupah Sug Bangsamoro Women, Mindanao Peoples’ Caucus (MPC), Mothers for Peace, Nisa ul haqq fi Bangsamoro, Paghiliusa sa Paghidaet Negros (PSPN), Peacebuilders Community-Kalinga, Philippine Action Network to Control Arms (PhilANCA), Philippine Coalition for the International Criminal Court (PCICC), Pilipina, Pinay Kilos (PinK), SLCB Cultural Heritage Center, Saligan, Samar Women’s Action Network for Peace and Development, Sulong CARHRIHL, Teach Peace Build Peace Movement, Teduray Lambangian Women’s Organization, Inc. (TLWO), Young Moro Professionals Network (YMPN), Women and Gender Institute and United Youth of the Philippines Women (UnYPhil-women)

² Ibid. From the WE Act 1325: Initiatives at NAP Implementation written by Jasmin Nario-Galace and Iverly Viar, WE Act 1325

The network also embarked on an action research dubbed “Women Working on the Ground for Peace.” This project enabled WE Act 1325 to reach out to women in indigenous communities affected by armed conflict to gather their perspectives on the armed conflict between the Government (GPH) and the National Democratic Front (NDF). Often, perspectives heard are those coming from members of peace panels and not those of community women. Their perspectives about the causes and effects of the armed conflict on them were solicited as well as their appeal to the warring parties. These perspectives were put together in a publication entitled “Voices from the Hills: Indigenous Women’s Perspectives on the GPH-NDF Armed Conflict” and was submitted to members of the parties in conflict.

Specifically, “these workshops aimed to promote awareness and understanding of the GPH-CPP/NDF/NPA peace processes to community women by providing updates, and to serve as space for consultations with the women centering on their experiences of conflict and the concerns and issues of the people on the ground.”³ The initiative received support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Manila

Sustaining Peace Negotiations and Working for Gender-Responsive Peace Agreements (Action Point 5)

WE Act 1325, believing that war solves nothing, has consistently called for ceasefire between armed groups particularly the military and the members of the National Democratic Front (NDF). It has issued several statements of support for the resumption of peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GPH) and the NDF. It has dialogued with peace panels including the GPH peace panel and the MILF peace panel, as well as the Bangsamoro Transition Commission to lobby for a gender responsive peace agreement. It has also met with women in the Cabinet to dialogue on what the networks and its members can do to support peace negotiations. Three of its members were given the opportunity to participate as observers in the peace negotiations between the GPH and MILF in Kuala Lumpur.

WE Act 1325 actively lobbied and campaigned for an engendered Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). It co-organized, organized and participated in several public actions to underscore the call for a BBL that integrates language on gender equality and women’s human rights, particularly women’s right to participation. The lobby points it pushed were informed by thousands of women on the ground consulted on what they wanted included in the law. To lobby its agenda, it co-organized with Anak Mindanao (AMIN) party list a breakfast meeting with women parliamentarians, among others.⁴ The network also engaged in the following strategies to

³ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2015/07/03/women-working-on-the-ground-for-peace-leg-2-and-leg-3/>

⁴ Ibid. From the WE Act 1325: Initiatives at NAP Implementation written by Jasmin Nario-Galace and Iverly Viar, WE Act 1325

support the peace process: lobbying, issuance of statements, attendance at public hearings, rallies, marches, organizing forums and public actions.

Participation in arms control and disarmament campaigns

WE Act 1325 participated in lobby and campaigns for the adoption of an engendered Arms Trade Treaty. It's Secretariat, the Center for Peace Education (CPE), helped work for the adoption of the language in the UN level by working with other organizations such as IANSA Women's Network, WILPF, GAAV, GAPW, Amnesty International and Control Arms Coalition. CPE is also active in lobbying parliamentarians and government agencies to amend the gun law perceived to be too liberal to gun owners as well as in lobbying for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons.

The NAP on WPS has a particular goal of controlling the tools of violence specifically small arms and light weapons. Women from communities have consistently mentioned the proliferation of guns as a security threat. WE Act1325 has gone around the country giving workshops on the cause and effects of gun proliferation and has shared capacities on how women can help in controlling such weapons. WE Act 1325 is aware of gender-related provisions in the UN PoA on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Arms Trade Treaty, UN SCR 2117 and 2242, GA Resolution 65/69, and has used these provisions to inspire women that they can be effective agencies in non-proliferation and arms control.

2.) Empowerment and Participation

Involvement and Participation of Women in Addressing Armed Conflict (Action Point 7)

WE Act 1325 has often emphasized the value added of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and this is women's participation in decision-making in matters of peace and security. Women, whose voices in these matters are often in the margins, are not given equal chance to give their opinion, craft decisions and implement actions that can help lead us closer to peace and the promotion of human security.

Hence, women's participation is at the heart of the work of WE Act 1325. The *Women Working for Normalization* Project supported by the Australian Government, for instance, which theme was "Ensuring Women's Meaningful Participation in the Formulation of the Basic Law and in the Process of Normalization" sought to consult women in conflict-affected areas in the ARMM to get their perspectives on normalization and submitted such perspectives to the members of the negotiating panels that drafted the final peace agreement as well as to the BTC which was tasked to draft the BBL.⁵

⁵ Ibid. From the WE Act 1325: Initiatives at NAP Implementation written by Jasmin Nario-Galace and Iverly Viar, WE Act 1325

To “ensure that provisions on women’s meaningful participation will be strongly reflected in the BBL⁶” an Advocacy Training for women leaders on the BBL was held. The training “also served as a venue to understand the salient points of the proposed law and the particular articles relating to women.⁷” This particular undertaking received support from the British Embassy in Manila and Conciliation Resources.

To further encourage women’s empowerment and participation and taking cue from its previous “Women Working for Normalization” project, the network held two legs of workshops on “Advanced Conflict Resolution and Mediation” for Moro and Indigenous Community women in Maguindanao in Zamboanga. Among the topics which the workshops focused on were: “a review of local indigenous and traditional methods of conflict resolution and mediation used in IP and Moro communities; input on mainstream methods of mediation; and a session on ‘Creating the Process’ wherein aspects of both traditional and mainstream approaches were integrated into a process, made by the participants themselves, grounding the process on the context of existing community conflicts.⁸” This initiative was made possible with support from the Embassy of Canada through the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI).

Finally, also worth highlighting for activities under this pillar of the NAP, WE Act 1325’s “Training on Women’s Leadership and Political Participation in the Bangsamoro.” The four legs of the training were made possible with support from Oxfam-UK and Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The project “aimed at promoting the meaningful participation of women in the Bangsamoro in line with the provisions of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) and the BBL of the rights and the role of women in the envisioned Bangsamoro political entity.⁹”

3.) Promotion and Mainstreaming

From NAP to LAP: Localizing the National Action Plan

The localization program implemented by WE Act 1325 and GNWP is meant to bring to the level of communities affected by armed conflict the women, peace and security agenda. It is meant to enhance women’s capacities to participate in discussions and decision-making on peace

⁶ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2014/10/29/advocacy-training-on-the-bangsamoro-basic-law/>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2015/02/09/advanced-conflict-resolution-and-mediation-with-moro-and-indigenous-community-women/>

⁹ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2015/10/16/first-leg-of-the-training-workshop-on-womens-participation-in-politics-peace-and-security/>

and security issues and amplify their voices; identify the provisions of the NAP on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 that are relevant to the local government and initiate local multi-sectoral action planning for the implementation of the provisions, particularly as they relate to women's participation in decision-making and the protection of women and girls' rights; and promote shared responsibility and accountability between national and local government entities; and national and local CSOs in implementing UNSCR 1325 and 1820.¹⁰

WE Act 1325 and GNWP have conducted several workshops, including several monitoring workshops, to localize the Philippine National Action Plan (P-NAP) on WPS and UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. The result is the adoption of Local Action Plans (LAPs) in the province of Agusan del Norte, municipalities of Cuyapo in Nueva Ecija; Tabuk in Kalinga and Real in Quezon. The localization initiative has also resulted in the adoption of municipal legislations in other conflict-affected areas such as Calbiga, Basey and Marabut in Samar, various municipalities of Agusan del Norte and Sultan Mastura in Maguindanao.

Some of the resolutions and ordinances are on the allocation of reserved seats for women in local conflict resolutions bodies such as the *Lupong Tagapamayapa* (Peace and Order Councils¹¹) and other mechanisms of the local government; funding legal, economic, educational psycho-social support and spiritual services for women and girl survivors of conflict; and providing emergency and livelihood assistance to children and women victims of armed conflicts among others.

The localization workshops in Samar also gave birth to the Samar Women's Action Network on Peace and Development (SWAN), which was started by four women from government and civil society who attended these localizations workshops and who wanted to pursue and monitor the implementation of the local legislations crafted.¹²

The network has led 54 capacity building initiatives on various issues and topics from 2010-2013.¹³

Promoting Awareness of Women's Issues in Peace and Conflict and the Vital Role They Play in Peace and Security Work

The network has engaged with women in community media to dialogue on women's role in peacebuilding. It also provided a space for women affected by armed conflict to share with women in national media their lived realities. This dialogue paved the way for the publication of these women's stories in several major dailies as well as in social media.

¹⁰ From the concept note on localization written by Mavic Cabrera-Balleza, International Coordinator, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

¹¹ Reference: <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Lupon-Tagapamayapa>

¹² Ibid. From the WE Act 1325: Initiatives at NAP Implementation written by Jasmin Nario-Galace and Iverly Viar, WE Act 1325

¹³ Ibid. From the publication: National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security: The Philippine Experience

WE Act 1325 also organized meetings with women in community media to discuss the BBL and the Mindanao peace process. All of these were meant to highlight the impact of armed conflict on women and their desire to get peace.

Awareness raising initiatives on the WPS agenda has also been done in schools. WE Act 1325 has partnered with the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) to raise awareness on the BBL among the youth from CEAP schools in the country. Forums on the BBL and the Mindanao peace process as well as the “Bangs for Bangsamoro” campaign were organized in Western Visayas, Cagayan Valley, CALABARZON and National Capital Region (NCR).

The “Bangs for Bangsamoro” campaign were participated in by students, school administrators and staff and other civil society organization partners. The cutting of the bangs of the women was actually a nonviolent way of expressing their sentiments particularly on the importance of women’s participation in the Bangsamoro. Meanwhile, the students’ forum on the BBL, also with CEAP, conducted in four legs, “serve(d) as a space to address misinformation regarding the BBL and (as an) opportunity for the students to appreciate the role that women play in the peace process.”¹⁴,

Recognizing the importance of the role of the youth in the country, a poster-making contest with the theme “Young People Painting Women Making Peace” was held. The contest aimed to raise awareness about the PNAP among the youth especially on the significance of women, peace and security issues. This was in partnership with GNWP.

Continually engaging the government in terms of promotion and mainstreaming of the NAP has also been an important aspect of the work of the network. Thus the network held a capacity building on WPS for DILG officials. The activity aimed to “raise awareness of the DILG officials and personnel of the relevant Security Council Resolutions and other international policies and directly engage them in identifying concrete actions toward the implementation of the PNAP.”¹⁵,

Always recognizing the important role of women, a widely attended Women’s Forum on Upholding Women’s Meaningful Participation in the Bangsamoro was also conducted by the network. It “focused on strengthening and consolidating the gains of advancing women’s participation in the Bangsamoro.”¹⁶ The forum was “participated in by 120 key women leaders from the grassroots communities and relevant women’s organizations in Mindanao and was

¹⁴ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2015/09/03/we-act-1325-holds-a-student-forum-on-the-bangsamoro-basic-law/>

¹⁵ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2015/01/27/capacity-building-on-wps-for-dilg-officials/>

¹⁶ Information from WE Act 1325’s website, article link: <http://weact1325.org/2015/04/07/womens-forum-on-upholding-womens-meaningful-participation-in-the-bangsamoro/>

attended by representatives from the various government agencies, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and members of civil society and international organizations.¹⁷” The event was in partnership with WE Act 1325 member organizations, United Youth of the Philippines-Women (UnYPhil-Women), Teduray Lambangian Women’s Organization Incorporated (TLWOI), and Nisa Ul Haqq Fi Bangsamoro. The activity was made possible with support from Conciliation Resources and the British Embassy-Manila.

Mainstreaming activities that the network conducted included: participating in the GNWP’s Women Speak Out for Peace campaign (specific activities conducted were: a mini exhibit on UNSCR’s 1325 and 1820 and the NAP, video-showing and a photo booth) and the Biyaheng Bangsamoro Peace caravan (to raise public awareness and encourage support for the BBL).

Currently ongoing, with support from the RNE is the radio show, Women on the Airwaves for Peace and Security, broadcast in Samar in the Waray language, tackling issues on WPS slated especially for listeners in the conflict-affected areas in the province. Now on its first leg in Northern Samar, the radio show features topics like: how women can be peacemakers in their own home and community, women’s electoral issues and what kind of leaders women want to vote for (before the elections). The second leg of the radio show will begin in October and will be broadcast in the western part of Samar, also among the conflict-affected areas in the country.

4.) Monitoring and Evaluation

Recently, the end of the Aquino administration also marked the end of the NAP implementation, March 31st of this year.

Last April 1, the network, along with OPAPP launched significant publications re what transpired during the NAP implementation. Among the publications launched were the: “Women, Peace and Security in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao: A Civil Society Report” and the “Policy Paper on Women’s Security Issues in the Bangsamoro.”

The first publication is actually a result of the study that was commissioned by WE Act 1325 under its Building Autonomous and Stable Institutions and Communities through Socially Cohesive, Transparent, Accountable and Responsive Transition (BASIC START) in the Bangsamoro project supported by Oxfam in the Philippines and funded by the Australian Government. The publication and study encapsulated “how WPS was advanced in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).¹⁸”

The second publication, the Policy Paper on Women’s Security Issues in the Bangsamoro “brings to the forefront the realities confronting women in the ARMM that have resulted to a lack of safety and security.¹⁹”

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Report downloadable link: http://weact1325.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/WEACT_CSReport_March23_2016_4website.pdf

¹⁹ Report downloadable link: http://weact1325.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/BarometerPolicyPaper_02April_web.pdf

Both publications give a glimpse of how the NAP implementation came about particularly in ARMM which is one of the most conflict-ridden regions in the country.

Another endeavor for monitoring and evaluation that the network has been doing, a continuation of the endeavor on localization with GNWP are stock-taking exercises held in the provinces where the LAP has been implemented. This is to gather actual observations on the ground as to how the LAP implementation can be improved, what worked and what didn't and most importantly how it impacted the lives of women on the ground.

