

# Gender Speak



Volume 2, Issue 2  
December 2005

## MASA Launched



Participants and Resource Persons of the Sus Ag Dialogue

The Movement for the Advancement of Sustainable Agriculture or MASA is now the formal network organization of Bread for the World (BftW) partners who were participants to the strategic planning workshop held last November 13-17, 2005 at Blue Waters Beach Resort in Samal Island of Mindanao.

A total of nine (9) BftW partners from Mindanao, Palawan and Western Visayas who are engaged in and/or advocates of Sustainable Agriculture approach assessed the five (5) year Sustainable Agriculture Dialogue Process and drafted a four (4) year plan (2006-2009) facilitated by Mr. Ekkehard Kurschner, consultant for FAKT Consulting based in Germany. As a result of the planning process, MASA envisions a *“peaceful and self-determining communities that are gender-fair, culturally sensitive, producing safe and healthy products”*.

*“To promote complementation among different stakeholders in order to realize sustainable agriculture”* – this is what BftW partners intends to pursue as a network by facilitating holistic community empowerment thru Sustainable Agriculture.

WISE Act, Inc. is a member of the MASA Steering Committee as consultant for its Gender Mainstreaming component. During the planning process some of the points raised related to mainstreaming gender perspective in sustainable agriculture approach were the following:

Gender and Development is the main framework used by partners in their gender mainstreaming work.

Gender Mainstreaming work should be pursued in partners' communities.

There is a need for a “Culture Audit” for Indigenous Peoples as complementary to “Gender Audit Process”.

A study should be undertaken on the participation of children in farming vis-à-vis child labor or violation of children's rights.

Sustainability of farming vis-à-vis children being involved in agriculture.

Role of Women / mother in Sustainable Agriculture. (i.e., nurturing role)

There will be a series of Cluster Conferences among BftW partners and representatives of communities and People's Organizations in Mindanao, Palawan and Visayas within the first quarter of 2006. The MASA Strategic Plan as well as organizational concerns will be presented and discussed during the said conferences.

With the birth of MASA, BftW partners believe that the benefits of engaging in and advocating Sustainable Agriculture are undeniably significant contribution to developing sustainable and gender responsive agriculture-based communities.

**Anthony Lee Gutierrez**

### Schedules

Gender Responsive Assessment Planning Workshop Pre Test  
Feb. 1- 3

HIV/ AIDS Module Pre Test  
Feb 17 -18

Gender Project Orientation in Mindanao Feb 20-23

HIV and AIDS Mainstreaming Meeting with Mindanao Partners Feb 25

International Women's Day  
March 8

### What's Inside

From the Executive Director  
page 2

Parenting 101 page 3

Reflections on RBA and the 10th AWID Forum page 4

Adopting a Gender and Human Rights Framework pages 5-6

Gender, Human Rights and Development vis a vis WTO  
page 7

WISE NEWS page 8

In-charge of Gender Speak  
Bulletin—  
AGNES ILAGAN



From the Executive Director  
by Jocelyn F. Cajiuat

## Gender, Women, and Human Rights



Clip art from ISIS Int'l.

December 10 is International Human Rights day. It is when we commemorate the recognition by states and nations to respect, promote, and fulfill the fundamental rights of people, but it also the time when we register our protests against the powers-that-be for the continuing violations of the social, political, cultural rights as citizens and as people.

Talking about human rights in relation to gender is going to the issues of gender inequalities. Gender inequalities manifest in various forms of gender-based discriminations and violence, and the outright violations of the rights of women in all aspects of their being. The ultimate victims of human rights in a patriarchal system deeply imbedded in most of societies are women.

These issues bring to fore the mandates of the CEDAW which stands for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and is known as the international bill of rights for women, or the United Nations Treaty for the Rights of Women. CEDAW was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 1979 during the UN Decade for Women.

According to the 2006 briefer on CEDAW prepared by the National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women or NCRFW, the Philippines signed CEDAW on July 15,

1980, ratified it on August 5, 1981, and came into force on September 3, 1981.

That was 25 years ago and NCRFW laments the fact that very few know about this treaty to this day. This is a rather disturbing note, much as disturbing as the continuing cases of human rights violations. For as we human rights and gender rights advocates alike go about our daily work, we oftentimes missed out on something - that is to make CEDAW known and be useful to our constituents.

The CEDAW preamble points out that the existing discrimination against women shows that international human rights machineries had been insufficient to guarantee the protection of women's rights. "Discrimination against women violates the principles of equality and respect for human dignity." It hampers women's participation, on equal terms with men, in all fields for development and peace.

Having said this, it is therefore a challenge for gender rights advocates to recognize the fact that only with the respect for, the promotion of, and fulfilling the rights of women, can human rights instruments be liberating for all.

#

*On the day when it will be possible for woman to love not in her weakness but in her strength, not to escape herself but to find herself, not to abase herself but to assert herself-on that day love will become for her, as for man, a source of life and not of mortal danger.*

*Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986)*



**PARENTING 101**  
**By Vivian M. Galvez**

## “MOMMY, I HAVE A QUESTION”

One day I was surprised when my 8-year old daughter Sindi asked me, “Mommy, why do women don’t have their own surnames? Why do they have to follow the surnames of their fathers when they are born and their husbands when they married?”

I did not know initially how to react. I could not imagine my young girl asking such a question. But then, she even asked more questions: “Why is it mothers are usually portrayed as housekeepers while men are described as the ones should work and support the family? Does this mean that men have more important roles in society than women?” Don’t you also work like Daddy, Mommy?”



Ms. Galvez with her children: Diwa, Sindi, and Guia

She repeats these observations whenever she encounters these depictions of women in school textbooks, television and movies. She is always assertive about the rights of women and children. I have been very careful in answering these questions. I have once brought her with me when I attended an international conference on gender issues. Apparently, she listened attentively to the issues discussed and this has created an impact on her young mind. She has realized the need to respect the rights of everyone, including children and women. She has recognized that inequities currently exist in our society and helping correct these inequities have been the endeavor of her parents.

My other 15-year old daughter, whenever her father teases to go after her naughtiness would immediately say, “Bantay Bata.” She has also grown assertive of her rights as a child and unafraid of school bullies. She is aware that being a woman does not confine her to the role of a cry baby whenever her male classmates try to get one over her. She has found useful applications for her Tae Kwan Do lessons.

I feel proud that I and my husband were able to bring up our children aware of their rights and of gender issues. They will never tolerate inequity wherever they go in the future.

#

Ms. Vivian Galvez, is WISE Act’s Administrative and Finance Officer. She has three children.



## Reflections on the Rights Based Approach and the 10th AWID Forum

By Florence Yraola Manikan

The dictionary has many different definitions for the word 'reflection'. The closest to my task ahead is "a thought, idea or opinion formed or a remark made as a result of meditation."

Now I have to make a reflection on Rights-Based Approach and my participation to the 10<sup>th</sup> Forum of Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) I attended in October the previous year. It's quite difficult to do if I have to be faithful to the definition which means I have to come out with an enlightened thought or idea after meditation. A meditation I have not done in a long time. **Being in this kind of work, however, learning and insights about human rights and feminism should come naturally. But whatever enlightened thought I might have may not be extraordinary or unexplored by those who have been in this kind of work much, much longer than I have.**

I first heard about rights-based approach (RBA) in 2002. One does not need an in-depth knowledge to understand that it refers to human rights. But what exactly it is about, and how it's being applied as an approach in relation to gender equality is a continuing learning experience for me. In a nutshell, the RBA is "a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international Human Rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights" The RBA has the same concept as gender mainstreaming (GM); where we integrate principle of women's empowerment and gender equality in policies, programs and development processes so do we with norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system. As we so realized in the daily grind of our work, GM and RBA need not be two approaches applied separately or one on top of the other. RBA blends well with GM. The added value of RBA to development and gender mainstreaming is it ensures entitlements, obligations

and responsibilities. RBA empowers people, men and women regardless of their gender preference, to assert their rights and hold states and duty-holders (read: development institutions) accountable to the full realization of their human rights. RBA in development elevates people, to rights-holder and not mere beneficiaries of development. It also tells us that fundamental needs of people should not be at the mercy of changing governmental policies and programs but should be defined as entitlements.

Lest this starts to look like a thesis, I'll make it quick to add that when I first understood RBA a bulb in my head suddenly lit up. This is an effective approach to Gender and Development. It was quite difficult then to make gender equality understood among NGOs, without giving them the notion that gender is not just about targeting women but also recognizing women's rights, especially so if one is dealing with "mixed organizations" and with culture to consider (i.e. ethnicity, religion). I thought that to present GAD with a human rights dimension is fool-proof. After all, who among development-oriented individuals would deny that each human being, man or woman, has rights?



Filipino participants in the 10th AWID Forum

### 10<sup>th</sup> AWID Forum: How does Change Happen?

AWID holds international forum every two years. Last year's forum was attended by 1,800 participants; around 20 were male, from 120 countries. The forum was a chance for the members to connect in a global way in the same space. It ran for four days and there was just so much one could learn: whether you are a veteran feminist or a young activist just starting to find your place in the women's movement.

The forum's theme was "How does change happen" and it was the most opportune time to see what changes have the women's movement made and how the world has changed. Briefly, *"attitudes, concepts, institutions and most importantly, lives, have been changed by women's movements. Women have made the private sphere a part of public debate; we have created the structures for equality within the state; we have developed and implemented curriculum for gender and women's studies in universities."* Everyone in the forum agreed to this. This served both as a reward for the efforts exerted but also a challenge to the women pursuing gender equality. Amid these developments are threats if the women's movement becomes complacent with what have already been achieved. Emerging issues, such as global power, new technology, fundamentalism, climate changes and economic inequalities, pose danger to women's relative advancement.

Taking back home what I have learned from the Forum, sure, we have achieved so much in the international and national level. Many women claim they are now empowered (I do), but this kind of empowerment has yet to reach the most basic sectors where most women can be found. In the local context, majority of women do not even know what their rights are. They do not know what laws protect them. They do not know the significance and implication of international trade agreements to their daily lives. To make all these achievements genuinely relevant it has to reach the women who are doubly marginalized because of the sector they belong to and because they are women. Another good thing about the forum was that there is a budding consensus among feminists that men are not enemies but allies in the women's struggle. Not exactly what I call a paradigm shift but an openness of minds.

---

Florence Y. Manikan, is WISE Act's Training Officer, she participated in the 10th AWID Forum held in Bangkok, Thailand.

AWID stands for the Association for Women's Rights in Development

## Adopting a Gender and Human Rights Framework

The attainment of equality of rights and opportunities is at the core of the *Gender and Development (GAD) Approach*, and gender equality is basic to the *Rights-Based Approach to Development*. Merging gender and human rights frameworks would add legitimacy to the demand for gender equality and make human rights responsive to gender based discrimination.

### **Rights Based Approach**

Applying the rights based approach to gender and development work entails the integration of the concepts, principles and standards of human rights into the advocacies, policies, programs and processes of women's empowerment and gender equality / equity.

In comparison with former development frameworks, the example often given is that whereas in the past where we dug wells for communities and after that decided that it was better to teach the people to dig their wells, the rights based approach now seeks to educate people that they have a right to water and empower them to demand from the government to fulfil its obligations to provide wells for the community.

The adoption of a human rights framework would mean elevating women as claim holders of human rights; holding the state accountable for human rights in both the public and private spheres; and ensuring compliance with international standards of human rights.

A rights based approach gives a more authoritative basis for advocacy by the linkage of our advocacy points with specific human rights. It demands a higher level of empowerment and participation of women claim holders and an enhanced accountability of the state as duty holder. Human rights standards and norms also provide effective measurement tools for analysis.

The rights based approach seeks to mainstream:

### **Human rights concepts and principles**

Women's empowerment must include raising the rights consciousness of women that they become active *claim holders* of rights rather than passive beneficiaries. It is also imperative that efforts towards rights awareness must clarify and establish the accountability of the state as the *duty holder* for the realization of human rights.

Application of international and domestic human rights standards CEDAW and other human rights instruments are open and subject to the interpretation of different, and often differing, groups. They may even be interpreted to negate their very spirit. In order to maximize the intent and the potential of CEDAW and other conventions, women's rights advocates must not only be familiar with their provisions but also build the capability to interpret the articles in the context of concrete situations of discrimination and be able to integrate them in the various efforts to bring about equality between men and women.

### **Ensuring entitlements, obligations and responsibilities**

Situation or issue analyses must take into account the specific rights relevant to an issue or problem and clarify the entitlements to be claimed by the specific groups or individuals affected, as well as the accountabilities of concerned governmental or inter-governmental agencies. The responsibilities of non-governmental entities (e.g. political groups, multinational corporations, church, NGOs) involved must also be clarified.

### **Progressive realization and core compliance to the normative content of human rights**

The claim holder – duty holder concept is similar to the *bibingka* strategy popularized by peasant groups, where the combined efforts of an empowered populace and an accountable government bring about the actual realization of human rights. The norms and standards set forth in international human rights law, and expounded in general comments and recommendations, provide detail and guidance for the compliance and realization of human rights.

A rights based approach may be used in gender related work in enhancing situational analysis and project development, in enriching impact assessment of projects and activities, and in providing humane and realistic indicators for assessment and evaluation.

### **Gender responsive human rights work**

Human rights analysis must look into the specific conditions wherein women's rights are violated as well as the different ways that men and women are affected by a particular situation or violation. Human rights programs and services must also be responsive to the specific needs of women.

In situations of conflict for example, data gathering must take into account gender based violence like rape in order to show the particularity of violations perpetrated on women. Studies on the phenomenon of torture have shown the differences in method and technique used on men and women. Research must also show how a particular situation like armed conflict, detention or forced evictions further exacerbates existing gender based discrimination on women. Multiple burden of traditional female reproductive roles like child rearing, fetching water and meal preparation takes on new dimensions when this is maintained in evacuation centers.

from page 6 Adopting a Gender and Human Rights Framework

The distinct short term and long term effects of torture on women have been well documented.

### **Responses to human rights violations must be gender fair and gender specific.**

Data gatherers must design their research format or questionnaires to be relevant to the particular situation of women and particular care must be given to interviewing women victims of human rights violations. Gender disaggregation of data must be institutionalized in order to make women visible and be able to provide a more concrete picture of their situation. Sweeping generalizations must be avoided and particular attention must be given to ascertaining the specific causes of gender discrimination in a particular situation – religious, ethnic, cultural, political, etc.

Welfare and relief services as well as community and capability building programs must take into account the subordination and marginalization of women and make sure that goods and services would benefit both men and women.

For example, livelihood program must not add to the multiple burden of women (e.g. goat raising), education activities must have an acceptable male to female ratio in participation and empowerment, organizing efforts must provide space for women in decision making and not stereotype them in traditional roles (e.g. secretarial, health, sanitation, marketing), control over resources (e.g. Certificate of Land Ownership Awards, CADT) must be in the hands of both men and women.

**BY : ROMEL CARDENAS DE VERA**

Pages 5 and 6 are culled from the Rights Based Approach on Gender Mainstreaming that Mr. De Vera wrote for WISE Act when he was a consultant.

## **About Women's Human Rights**



### **Specific rights issues affecting women demanded that human rights and its violations be articulated in her point of view. The last thirty years has shown positive developments in this regard:**

**1975-85** The Declaration of the Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace

**1979** Adoption of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

**1984** Inclusion of Rape as a form of Torture in the adoption of the Convention Against Torture and other Inhuman, Cruel and Degrading Punishment

**1989** Adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child providing special attention to rights of the girl-child

**1993** Reaffirmation of women's rights as human rights in the Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights

**1994** Appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and inclusion of reproductive rights in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

**1995** Adoption of the Beijing Platform of Action for the Fourth World Conference on Women

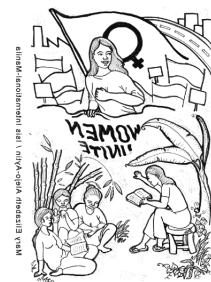
**1998** Inclusion of sexual and gender crimes as war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Rome Statute Establishing an International Criminal Court

### **Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women or CEDAW**

The **CEDAW** is sometimes called the *Bill of Rights of Women* because it aims for the full equality between women and men, and finally extends to women the coverage of a whole range of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights that shall carry the weight of state obligation.

The convention elaborates on the meaning of discrimination against women. It brings focus to social, customary and cultural practices that bring about inequality between sexes and calls for corrective measures to overcome their negative impact on women and the eradication of these discriminatory practices.

The convention discards earlier distinctions in international law between civil-political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, as well as between private and public spheres, by pointing out the need for women's economic and social development as well as recognition of violations in the private domain.





## Gender, Human Rights and Development vis a vis WTO

By Agnes M. Ilagan

*When we talk of gender in the WTO, we should be talking about gender in the context of development.*

Gigi Francisco, International Gender and Trade Network.

### How do we see development? Why do we have to concern ourselves with WTO when we have varied concerns?

- For those who are in sustainable agriculture and working with indigenous peoples, it is for member states to have the freedom and flexibility to determine and adopt appropriate regimes of sui generis systems that provide maximum protection for farmers, breeders, indigenous knowledge and the right of their local communities to use, save and exchange seeds and biological resources.
- For sectors in agriculture, it is important to note that local agriculture, food security and local livelihoods are protected. It would also mean pushing for anti-dumping measures to protect our market for local agriculture.
- For those in the fisheries sector, it is the non binding of fisheries in the non agriculture market access.
- For those in the urban poor, and for all sectors alike it is the support for the services sector including critical public services like water, education and health. It is putting primacy of public health and safety over corporate patent rights.
- For people living with HIV or AIDS, it is another affordable ARV.
- For women working abroad, it is finally staying at their home country with their loved ones.

### How is it relevant to the rights based approach?

“ Access to food is a universally recognized human right.

Protecting that right must be accorded a higher priority than the pursuit of commercial advantage and free trade.” – The 1996 Balay Declaration, Philippine NGO Liaison for Food Security and Fair Trade

Much more are other rights such as the right to development, right to livelihood, right to basic social services and the like.

As a developing country, we have 3 % to 4% domestic support in the procurement of rice thru the National Food Authority. Beyond this, the Philippines as a State Party has the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of its citizen are violated in its surrendering our claims to the WTO. For agriculture it is reduction of tariffs for agricultural products – allowing cheaper crops to flood in our market (highly subsidized by their countries), binding of fisheries in the NAMA, considering human labor as concessions and allowing foreign corporations to provide for basic services such as health, education and water for those who can afford, in the General Agreement on Trade in Services. The negotiating team admittedly said that we should lobby for strong domestic support in this country. How is that?



Women marched against new deals in the WTO. (Nonoy Regalado)

### Why is gender an important question in the WTO?

Taking it in the context of development, involves most ordinary lives and most ordinary peoples, half of whom are women. While WTO is much a political thing, to women it is a personal thing, a concern of the household. It's a question of *services made unavailable*. It is like water, hospitals, schools, privatised

and made unavailable to those who cannot afford it. Services like water, hospitals and schools will be open to foreign investors and their access is the same with the nationals of one country. Social services provided by State Parties will be lesser and lesser. Women's burden will be more and more. If life is more difficult, violence increases.

As workers in rural communities, rural women find it hard to market vegetables due to lack of access to productive resources and post harvest facilities such as market facilities. Though very difficult, when products reach the market place, its prices can be higher than imported potatoes, onions, garlic, carrots, cabbages, leeks, cucumbers, peas, beans, celery, pepper, spinach, ginger, cauliflower, broccoli and lettuce. Since most imported products receive export subsidy and domestic support, it can compete well in the markets. *Vegetable farmers in Benguet province for instance, complain that their products cannot compete with cheaper vegetable imports.* We have no domestic support for vegetables. These further displace vegetable farmers.

Women as primary nurturers will be much more affected by this phenomenon. It is critical to the social reproduction and development. Most women leave the country only to afford the private services in their country and work as service workers in other countries. As women from a poor country and as migrants they are more vulnerable.

**The WTO cannot guarantee an improvement in gender relations. For how can an unequal super body look at the world or even peoples with a gender lens?**

#### Sources:

1. WISE Act participated as NGO delegate to the recent 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference of WTO in Hong Kong.
2. <http://www.wto.org>
3. <http://www.focusweb.org>
4. <http://www.igtn.org>

**WISE NEWS****WISE ACT and WRB hold Medical Mission**

Seventy three clients and staff of WRB availed of medical services from Women's Rural Bank (WRB) and WISE Act's Gender, Advocacy and Partnership Building Program last

December 10 and January 21 respectively. . Sixty one of whom are women, while twelve are men. The two organizations sought the help of Dr. Jaime Reyes.

"The medical mission is a preliminary activity to the development of a health program", according to GAPB Team

Leader, Zone Narito. There is also a need to look into the health profile of the clients, says Thess Molino, Training Officer. Moreover, they talked about provision of curative and preventive measures and health services for WRB Clients.

This will be a continuing activity as they plan to hold more medical missions this coming February 18 and 25. This is in tune with WISE Act's advocacy on social protection for women and mainstreaming gender in micro-finance programs.



Dr. Reyes with his girl child patient

**WISE ACT Welcomes Additional Board Members**

WISE Act welcomes its additional board members. They are Ms. SYLVIA BELTRAN, Sr. ZENAIDA PINEDA and Mr. MARTIN "MILO" TANCHULING. They had been board members since June.

Ms. Beltran is currently the consultant of WISE Act for its Gender, Advocacy and Partnership Building Program. She has a consultancy firm called GEECO. Sr. Nida is MicroDev's partner with the Alay Kapwa Rural Women in Sariaya, Quezon. Mr. Tanchuling is the lone male board member. He is currently the Secretary General of the Freedom from Debt Coalition.

Current Board of Directors include Dr. Carolyn I. Sobritchea, President, Ms. Jocelyn F. Cajiuat, Executive Director, Atty. Grace Eloisa, Que, Secretary and Treasurer. Board Members are Ms. Mary Lou Alcid, Ms. Alice Alviar, Dr. Angelina Briones, Ms. Aurora Regalado and Atty. Fides Cordero Tan.

**HIV AND AIDS Mainstreaming Workshop Held**

OLAF HIRSCHMANN, BFTW HIV and AIDS Focal Person demonstrates how to use a condom to participants of the HIV and AIDS Mainstreaming Workshop held at Samal Island in Mindanao last November 17. With him is Ms. Beate Hahn, Project Officer of BFTW.

BFTW Partners worked on their plans in mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in their work. Among the partners recommendations are integrating HIV and AIDS in their policies and programs esp. in training, advocacy, networking and referral and production of information, education materials. WISE ACT will conduct a trainers training for Gender Focal Persons and Advocates.

**Your Contributions Are Most Welcome**

Dear Readers and Friends,

We would like you to know that we are accepting contributions such as articles, literary work and drawings for the Gender Speak newsletter. Gender Speak newsletter is a quarterly Newsletter circulated among WISE ACT partners. It is also posted in our website: <http://www.wiseact.org.ph>.

We also welcome your comments and suggestions, you may write us thru our email: [info@wiseact.org.ph](mailto:info@wiseact.org.ph).

We would like to hear your stories and your gender mainstreaming experiences. We are waiting...

**WISE ACT Inc.**

"...you can create your own freedom and you don't have to ask for it. You don't have to wait for it to given to you. And the women I chose as my heroines were women who created their own freedom. They didn't demand it, they didn't ask for it. They created it."

From: Anais Nin,  
"A Woman Speaks"