



“Women play an important role in the agrifood sector. Empowering women is smart economics, as studies have found that improving women’s ability to make independent choices regarding agricultural production leads to significant positive changes in productivity and efficiency. The Philippine government is fully cognizant of this and has legislation in place to enable women’s empowerment. This guidebook provides policymakers with practical insights on how to operationalize policies and address barriers to women in the agrifood sector. It is a must-read for those working towards improved resilience and sustainable local economies.”

HAZEL ANICETO
Country Manager, ACIAR Philippines



“This guidebook is a nifty resource for policymakers, planners, researchers, and others interested in designing inclusive agricultural policies and programs for women. The researchers’ analyses provide compelling evidence of the need for more inclusive legislation, and their recommendations offer a roadmap for achieving this crucial goal.”

ANNE SHANGRILA Y. FUENTES
Gender Advocate and Researcher, ACIAR
& PhD Candidate, University of Canberra, Australia

“I welcome this book with the hope that it will inspire change. May it also assist us farmers who have the capacity to employ women. At Macatabo Farm, we have a total of 19 regular employees, consisting of 10 males and 9 females. We aspire for farmer leaders to engage in and support this cause of gender equality.”

GENOVIVO “BONG” CAJES, JR.
President, Vegetable Industry
Council of Southern Mindanao

“This guidebook is both timely and highly relevant, as it aligns closely with the Welfare, Access, Conscientization, Awareness Raising, Participation and Mobilization, and Control (WACPC) framework for women’s empowerment, as outlined by Sara Hlupekile Longwe. Furthermore, it effectively demonstrates the importance of a grounded, context-specific approach to developing inclusive policies, particularly in the context of women’s experiences during the pandemic within Mindanao’s agrifood systems.”

RAYMUNDO R. PAVO
Gender Expert and Professor,
University of the Philippines Mindanao



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INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR WOMEN IN THE AGRIFOOD SYSTEM
A Guide for Local Policymakers in the Philippines



BANWA Manual Series 2

Inclusive Policies for Women in the Agrifood System

A Guide for Local Policymakers in the Philippines

Luis Antonio T. Hualda
Marilou O. Montiflor
Jeia P. Manila

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PREFACE

Changes in the agrifood system affect many sectors, including women.

In addition to being part of the labor force, women bear the burden of ensuring household members consume safe, affordable, and nutritious food. Women's specific concerns should be addressed through local and national policies. However, local ordinances related to agriculture and food production are not gender-responsive and often overlook women's productive and reproductive roles. Local legislators can improve women's participation in policy-making by ensuring permanent representation in local development councils and key decision-making bodies.

In the Philippines, women's participation in the labor force is limited. In 2021, they made up only 24.351% of the total employed in agriculture, hunting, forestry, and fishing. Furthermore, women are often given lower wages or treated as part of family labor. The average nominal daily wage in 2019 was P335 for men and P304.60 for women (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA] 2020). As of 2019, only 31% of agrarian reform beneficiaries with a Certificate of Land Ownership Agreement (CLOA) are women (PSA 2020).

The two legal bases for empowering women in food and agriculture in the Philippines are the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710, 2009) and the Women in Development and Nation Building Act (Republic Act No. 7192, 1992). The Magna Carta of Women establishes a state policy recognizing that economic, political, and sociocultural realities affect the current condition of women. The State affirms the role of women in nation-building and ensures substantive equality between women and men. The law also adequately addresses aspects relevant to empowering women in the agriculture and food system. Meanwhile, Republic Act 7192 stipulates that 5% to 30% of overseas development assistance should be allocated to gender and development (GAD).

However, there is a lack of gender-responsive policies in the Philippines (Bayudan-Dacuyucuy 2018). The translation of national-level policies depends on the capacity of local government units (LGUs). LGUs are authorized to use resources to implement policies under the Local Government Code. How can LGUs develop gender-responsive policies in the agrifood system? Promoting equality in the agrifood system can enhance agricultural productivity and address poverty and food insecurity. Women face challenges in agriculture from production to consumption (Malapit et al. 2020). Additionally, they bear the burden of the effects of the pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus,

commonly known as COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities in the food and agriculture system, not only in the Philippines but worldwide, adversely affecting consumers, agricultural producers, and all other relevant actors. Consumers struggled to access safe, nutritious food, while agricultural producers faced limited market access, impacting their livelihoods.

The need to develop resilience in the agrifood system was evident during this time. Another ongoing issue was the state of women and their roles in agrifood systems—whether in terms of recognition or support to harness their full potential.

The call for proposals from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Alumni Research Support Facility (ARSF) enabled us to consider potential project ideas. We needed to examine agrifood system policies to determine their inclusivity and support for women in their productive and reproductive roles. Local policies were selected because local governments have more control, and comparisons can be made. We applied and were approved under the research theme: Food System Resilience.

The research entitled “Enabling Inclusive Policies to Enhance Women’s Roles in Developing Resilient Food and Agriculture Systems in the Philippines” was conducted from September 2020 to August 2021. The project examined the compositions of policymakers and officials, as well as the contents of local policies related to agriculture, women, and food security. Data were extracted, results obtained, and analyzed. The main output was this guidebook. In this guidebook, we outline the principles for developing inclusive policies that empower women as active participants in agricultural development and the promotion of resilience in food systems. These principles are based on our research into local policies and ordinances that supported women in agriculture during the COVID-19 pandemic. The discussions were enhanced by relevant literature and existing policies. When we submitted the guidebook as part of the ARSF deliverables, we determined that LGUs could benefit more from these insights if provided in printed form. We sought opportunities to publish the guidebook in both digital and physical formats. This guidebook supplements existing guidelines, focusing on the major disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We extend our gratitude to the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and their Alumni Research Support Facility 2020 grant, which supported the data gathering and the initial draft of this guidebook.

We are also indebted to the local government units that provided local policies and ordinances. The LGUs generously dedicated their time for interviews despite the challenges of intermittent internet connectivity. In areas with poor or no internet access, some LGUs accommodated the team with face-to-face interviews while strictly adhering to COVID-19 protocols.

Lastly, we thank the University of the Philippines Mindanao, especially the Office of Research, and the University of New England for making the research and publication of this policy guidebook possible.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	ACIAR
Alumni Support Research Facility	ASRF
Comprehensive Development Plan	CDP
City Agriculture and Fisheries Council	C AFC
Convention for the Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	CEDAW
Committee on World Food Security	CSF
Comprehensive Land Use Plan	CLUP
Coronavirus Disease	COVID-19
Department of Agriculture	DA
Department of Budget and Management	DBM
Department of Interior and Local Government	DILG
Department of Labor and Employment	DOLE
Executive-Legislative Agenda	ELA
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	FAO
Future Smart Food	FSF
Gender and Development	GAD
Gender Analysis of Policies	GAPo
Gross domestic product	GDP
Gender Responsive Local Government Unit (LGU) Assessment Tool	GeRL
Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework	GMEF
Gross regional domestic product	GRDP
Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines	HGDD
High-Level Panel of Experts of the Committee on World Food Security	HLPE
COVID-19 Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases	IATF
International Food Policy Research Institute	IFPRI
Key informant interview	KII
Local government unit	LGU
Local planning and development coordinator	LPDC
Municipal Agriculture and Fisheries Council	MAFC



INTRODUCTION

The Challenges

The pandemic brought by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, known as COVID-19, exposed the vulnerabilities of the Philippines' agrifood system, including the loss of access to safe and nutritious food, employment opportunities, and crop markets. Consumers, agricultural producers, food security, and livelihoods were at risk. Among the impacted demographics, women suffered the most, as they are often responsible for bringing food to their households. The loss of income and limited access to markets placed an additional burden on them.

The current configuration of the agriculture and food system in the country is fragile and unsustainable. An assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on food systems in the Philippines found that women faced limited cash flow, reserves, and credit options. Restrictions on the movement of products disrupted food supply chains (Palo et al. 2020).

The pandemic reversed the gains in efforts to reduce hunger and malnutrition. It was estimated that around 265 million people would have experienced acute hunger by the end of 2020. The figure was almost double the estimated 135 million who experienced hunger because of conflict, climate change, and economic crises (Anthem 2020).

The Philippines must contend with the serious problem of malnutrition, which results in Filipino children being either underweight or obese. Around 33% of children under five are stunted in their growth. Among the poorest 20% of the population, 49% of children under the age of five suffer from stunting; and among the richest 20%, 15% of children under the age of five also suffer from stunting. Around 13% of adult women are underweight, while 12.3% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 suffer from anemia (United Nations Children's Fund, Division of Data, Analysis, Planning, and Monitoring 2023). Malnutrition can lead to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), which can affect the population's productivity and the health system. The estimated cost of malnutrition, in the form of lost productivity and health expenses, can average between 3% and 16% of a low-income country's gross domestic product (GDP) (Hoddinott 2016). The magnitude of the cost of malnutrition justifies the need to provide significant investments in health and nutrition.

Other factors can impact the agrifood system and put food security, nutrition, and livelihoods at risk. These factors include climate change, conflict, pest and disease outbreaks, and trade disruptions. The food price spike of 2007/2008 is an example of an event where food prices surged, causing many to experience hunger even in the short term. The shortage in food supply encouraged countries to hold their exports, which left net-importing countries with a depleted food supply. The outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in the country reduced pork supply and caused a sudden spike in the price of pork, especially in highly populated areas (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2021). The scarcity of pork, coupled with the imposition of ceiling prices by the government, discouraged retailers from selling pork. Pork from as far as Mindanao was brought to Metro Manila to augment supply (Lazo 2021).

Developing resilience—the capacity to withstand the impacts of unforeseen events—is needed in the agrifood system to ensure food security and nutrition and protect the livelihoods of farmers and other involved actors. The pandemic has shown the vulnerabilities of the agrifood system and how actors were able to adjust to the situation.

Women in Agrifood Systems

Women play a vital role in agrifood systems, participating in all activities from production to consumption. Approximately half of the food produced globally is grown by women, with this figure ranging from 60% to 80% in developing countries. Around 43% of the world's smallholder farmers are women, primarily located in rural areas (Oxford Committee for Famine Relief [OXFAM] International 2022). Women also engage in post-harvest processing, distribution, and marketing. Retail activities are often carried out by women in markets. At the household level, women typically make food purchasing and consumption decisions, ensuring that each member receives sufficient food. The extent of women's involvement in the agrifood system contributes to their significant impact during the pandemic.

The State of Food and Agriculture 2010–2011 Report of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) emphasized the importance of women in the agrifood system. Empowering women and allowing them access to and control over resources contribute to improving agricultural output by as much as 2.5% to 4.0% (FAO 2011). This can help reduce poverty by improving incomes and alleviating hunger and malnutrition through a sufficient supply of nutritious food. Estimates indicate the number of people suffering from hunger and malnutrition could be reduced by as much as 17% (Oxfam 2023). These figures were

estimated on a global scale and may vary depending on the situation for each locality. However, these global experiences still show evidence of the potential benefits of promoting women's empowerment and gender equality in the agrifood system.

Despite their importance in agrifood systems, women face challenges to engage on equitable terms (Malapit et al. 2020). Women's empowerment in the agriculture sector is framed in the following five domains: (1) decisions about agricultural production, (2) access to decision-making over productive resources, (3) control over the use of income, (4) leadership in the community, and (5) time use (International Food Policy Research Institute [IFPRI] 2012).

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment requires the implementation of policies that are gender-sensitive and responsive. The FAO (2016) states that

the degree of gender sensitivity of a policy is determined by the extent to which it takes into account relevant gender dimensions and incorporates measures to allow women and men to enjoy the same rights and opportunities, while ensuring that their different life conditions, needs and aspirations are equally valued and supported.

Agriculture contributes approximately 19.6% to the country's gross regional domestic product (GRDP) and employs 36.4% of the labor force. Of the 649,683 employed in the agriculture sector, about 19% are women (PSA 2020). The average daily wage in the agriculture sector is P330.29 for female workers and P367.93 for male workers (PSA 2020).

Policy Environment

The policy environment provides the legal basis that supports the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment at the international, national, and local levels. Additionally, there are mechanisms in place to support the implementation of these policies.

The following are international and national commitments, along with their corresponding mechanisms, to support the implementation of programs and activities.

International commitments

The Philippines is a signatory to several international treaties and conventions to empower women and promote gender equality.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was signed by 64 states, including the Philippines, on 15 July 1980, and ratified it on 5 August 1981 (Philippine

Commission on Women 2023b). CEDAW was adopted on 18 December 1979, by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and entered into force as an international treaty on 3 September 1981. By November 2012, 187 countries had ratified it. The Food and Agriculture Organization recognized CEDAW as a tool for designing gender-sensitive agriculture and rural development policies and programs (FAO 2013).

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) is a landmark document for advancing the rights of women and gender equality worldwide. It was adopted during the conference on women in 1995 (Philippine Commission on Women 2023a). The BPfA identified 12 key areas of concern, including the following: (1) women and poverty, (2) education and training of women, (3) women and health, (4) violence against women, (5) women and armed conflict, (6) women and the economy, (7) women in power and decision-making, (8) institutional mechanisms, (9) human rights of women, (10) women and media, (11) women and the environment, and (12) the girl child.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 interlinked objectives adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015. SDG 5 focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment.

National commitments

In addition to the 1987 Constitution, which protects the basic rights of men and women, the Philippine government established national laws and policies to promote women's empowerment and gender equality as part of its commitment to international treaties and conventions.

On 12 February 1992, the Women in Development and Nation Building Act (Republic Act 7192) was enacted. RA 7192 ensures the allocation of 5% to 30% of overseas development assistance to Gender and Development (GAD).

On 28 July 2008, a comprehensive women's rights law was enacted. The Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) declared the country's commitment to CEDAW and other international instruments. Moreover, the law ensures that at least 5% of the total budget of a program or project is allocated for activities that promote gender equality (Section 36). Pursuant to RA 9710, the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (1995–2025) was adopted through Executive Order No. 273 on 8 September 1995.

At the local level, the Joint Circular Memorandum 2013-01 of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the National Economic

and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) issued guidelines on the Localization of the Magna Carta of Women.

Implementation guidelines and tools

Guidelines and tools for the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women are provided by various government agencies. These include the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines (HGDG) of NEDA and the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), and the Gender Responsive LGU Assessment Tool (GeRL) of the DILG. The HGDG outlines the concrete requirements to meet national commitments in the design and implementation of government projects and programs.

In local governance, the tool developed to measure gender responsiveness is called the Gender-Responsive Local Government Unit (GeRL) Assessment Tool. It contains indicators that measure the provision of basic services for the men and women stakeholders by the LGU. The following circulars were created to strengthen the gender and development mainstreaming efforts in the public sector:

- Memorandum Circular No. 2011-01 of the PCW: Guidelines for the creation, strengthening, and institutionalization of the GAD Focal Point System
- PCW-NEDA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2012-01: Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Gender and Development (GAD) Plans and Budgets and Accomplishment Reports to Implement the Magna Carta of Women
- Memorandum Circular No. 2016-03: Use of the Enhanced Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Framework (GMEF)

The Role of Local Governments

The Local Government Code of 1991 hereby declared

the policy of the State that the territorial and political subdivisions of the State shall enjoy genuine and meaningful local autonomy to enable them to attain their fullest development as self-reliant communities and make them more effective partners in the attainment of national goals. (Republic Act No. 7160)

Local government units (LGUs) are responsible for the welfare of their constituents, including food security, nutrition, health, education, and gender equality. They are equipped with resources and the authority

to design and implement local policies that address local needs.

With these powers, LGUs are ideally positioned to promote gender equality and women's empowerment while developing resilience in the agrifood system to ensure food security, nutrition, and the protection of livelihoods for farmers.

Objectives of the Guidebook

The book aims to provide LGUs and stakeholders with a guide for designing inclusive policies that promote women's empowerment, gender equality, and resilience in the agrifood system. The specific target audience of this guidebook is:

- Local policymakers who are elected officials of the Sangguniang Bayan (SB) or Sangguniang Panlungsod (SP) responsible for designing local ordinances and resolutions.
- Local planning and development coordinators (LPDC) involved in coordinating programs and activities for local development.
- Civil society members of the Local Development Council, Municipal or City Agriculture and Fisheries Council (MAFC or CAFC), and other councils engaged by the LGU in designing and implementing plans and programs. This also includes non-government organizations that advocate for the interests of women and workers in the agriculture sector.
- Researchers interested in the study of governance.

This guidebook does not replace existing guidelines published by the government or international organizations (e.g., HGDG, GeRL). Instead, it serves as a supplement focused on promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and resilience in the agrifood system.

The recommendations in this guidebook are based on experiences and evidence gathered from local ordinances, interviews, and a survey of local policymakers. These recommendations are practical and actionable for LGUs. In addition to SDG 5, this project aims to support other SDGs:

No poverty (SDG 1). By facilitating access to policy resources, the guidebook provides opportunities for policymakers to develop inclusive frameworks based on gender-sensitive strategies.

Zero hunger (SDG 2). Enhancing women's participation in agriculture is expected to increase productivity and improve access to food.

Reduced inequalities (SDG 10). Vulnerable sectors, including women, are hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to information and resources can provide examples that may be adopted or tailored to local situations.

Partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). This guidebook's development, publication, and adoption encourage engagement among government and non-government organizations, the private sector, the academe, and other relevant agencies.

Limitations of the Guidebook

This ACIAR-funded project had budgetary and logistical limitations. It was initiated during the strict implementation of COVID-19 quarantine protocols. As such, the geographic location/empirical boundary was limited to the Davao Region (Region XI). Aside from the location, the project was limited to the following:

- 1. Data collection – limited to local ordinances**

The survey and key informants focused on policymakers and legislators, excluding other stakeholders.

There were limited face-to-face interactions.

- 2. Respondents/participants**

Policymakers were targeted because they understood the policy limitations, awareness, and processes.

- 3. Analysis**

The project is supplemental, not intended to replace actual policy-making, which is established and governed by law.

Policies are focused on women in agriculture.



CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN

To enhance the primary resource materials, we, the researchers, also gathered existing secondary information such as laws, reports, scientific/academic journals, government statistics, and other related literature.

We employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. The quantitative data were obtained from surveys of local legislative council members and city/municipal agriculturists. Qualitative data were collected through key informant interviews (KIIs) to gain an in-depth understanding of local contexts, particularly during the pandemic. KIIs were transcribed in Microsoft Word, and survey results were encoded in Microsoft Excel. Quantitative data were analyzed using Excel, while qualitative data were processed with NVivo software.

Data were collected from cities and municipalities in the Davao Region. Due to travel restrictions during the project, primary and secondary data gathering were conducted online, via telephone, and through postal mail. Face-to-face interviews were held only in municipalities that were otherwise inaccessible. Travel and health protocols were strictly followed.

The research was organized into three main activities: (1) data collection, (2) data analysis, and (3) policy framework development.

Data Collection

This guidebook was developed using information from the results of key informant interviews (KII), surveys, data from elected government officials, local ordinances related to women and agriculture, and relevant literature.

The first hurdle in data gathering was securing the directory of potential respondents. Since there was no single source for the list, the researchers had to contact several sources to compile it. Additionally, the contact information for most offices and local government officials was either unavailable or outdated. Communication with those who had active emails, landlines, or mobile phones was hindered by connectivity issues due to infrastructure challenges. Another significant issue was the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited offices to a skeletal workforce, resulting in only a few people engaging with the researchers, particularly those involved with local ordinances.

Given the limitations imposed by the pandemic, the researchers had to modify their data collection and take the following steps:

Step 1. Obtain directories of target respondents:

- a. The Philippine Councilors League (PCL) did not respond to the request for directories of councilors in Region XI.
- b. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) provided a list of all elected officials in Region XI, but most officials lacked contact details and were not categorized by committees.
- c. The Philippine Information Agency supplied directories of information officers.
- d. Provincial offices, the mayor's office, and the information office were accessed through their websites, Facebook pages, and government sites such as the National Economic Development Authority and the Department of Trade and Industry.

Step 2. Request local ordinances related to women in agriculture:

- a. Letters of request for data were sent via electronic mail and registered mail.
- b. Constant follow-up was done for updates through email, text, and mobile phone or telephone calls.

Letters of requests for local ordinances related to agriculture, women, development, food security, and COVID-19 were sent via email and registered mail. Electronic copies of local ordinances and policies related to women, agricultural development, food and nutrition security, and local trade were collected through the offices of local legislative councils. Communication letters were sent to the email addresses of the Mayor's Office, the Office of the Sanggunian, councilors, or assistants of the councilors. Some letters were sent through the post due to poor internet connection, which prevented contact with respondents and offices online. Hard copies of local ordinances were also provided for some of the local government units that the researchers visited. Constant follow-up was done through emails, texts, and mobile and telephone calls.

Step 3. Key informant interviews

The key informant interviews were conducted with selected respondents who were considered to have extensive knowledge and understanding of issues relating to women and gender in food and agriculture and experience with the policy-making process and implementation at the LGU level. The key informants were councilors and the secretary to the sanggunian. The level of responsiveness to communication and the availability to conduct interviews through online platforms were considered. Some interviews were conducted via Zoom, Google Meet, or Facebook Messenger. The guide questions were sent in advance to allow respondents time to prepare for the interview.

A total of seven respondents were interviewed: three females and four males. Information from the interviews was used to refine the survey questionnaire.

Step 4. Key informant interviews

Among the survey respondents were local policymakers (elected councilors or members of the Sangguniang Bayan or Sangguniang Panlungsod who were chairs of the committee on agriculture and women's concerns), a local agriculture officer, and a local planning development coordinator. Respondents were considered because of their duties and functions in the enactment and implementation of local ordinances related to agriculture and women (Table 1).

The survey questionnaire was divided into five themes: (1) COVID-19 challenges, (2) responses to COVID-19 challenges, (3) gaps and challenges in policies and programs, (4) enhancing participation and policy design, and (5) sociodemographic information.

1. COVID-19 challenges

We identified various challenges faced by women in general, women with their own farms, women who work as farm laborers, women who sell agricultural products, and women involved in household processing during the peak of COVID-19 in agriculture and food security.

2. Responses to COVID-19 challenges

Responses from the government and community that address the challenges faced by women in agriculture.

3. Gaps and barriers to policies and programs

We identified gaps and barriers in existing policies and programs for women's agricultural development and food security. We focused on assessing whether national laws and local ordinances consciously prioritize the needs of women.

4. Enhancing participation and policy design

This included questions and statements that explore potential actions to overcome barriers in designing and implementing policies inclusive of women in the food system.

5. Demographic information

This contained relevant characteristic information about the respondents for the analysis presented.

TABLE 1. Description of respondents

Respondent	Description
Sangguniang Bayan or Sangguniang Panlungsod member (local policymakers)	The Sangguniang Bayan or Sangguniang Panlungsod members are part of the legislative body of the municipality or the city. They are tasked with enacting ordinances, approving resolutions, and appropriating funds.
Provincial/city/municipal agriculturist	The agriculturist is the head of the agriculture office. They develop plans and strategies for agricultural programs and projects and offer recommendations and advice to the legislative and executive branches to matters relating to agriculture and aquaculture.
Secretary to the Sanggunian	The secretary to the sanggunian publishes and keeps the records of all ordinances and resolutions and performs other administrative tasks to support the legislative council. They were added as respondents in the key informant interview due to their institutional memory regarding the enacted ordinances in the community. They were also our direct contact in the municipality for updates on the interview and requests for local ordinances.
Sectoral representative	They represent segments of society such as women, youth, and the private sector. They advance the issues and interests of the sector they are representing.





CHAPTER 3

DEFINING THE CONCEPT

Agrifood System

The High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) stated in 2017 that a

food system gathers all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes, infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution, preparation, and consumption of food, and the outputs of these activities, including socioeconomic and environmental outcomes.

A simpler interpretation of this definition can be achieved by examining individual food value chains, identifying actors and their activities, policies, and institutions that influence them, and exploring the relationships between actors and their activities.

Resilience

Tendall et al. (2015) define food system resilience as the

capacity over time of a food system and its units and multiple levels, to provide sufficient, appropriate and accessible food to all, in the face of various and unforeseen disturbances. (p. 19)

Developing resilience in the agrifood system is essential in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and other unexpected events. Availability and access to safe and nutritious food are key determinants of food security. Unexpected disturbances in the agrifood system can jeopardize food supply, threatening food security and the overall welfare of the population. A depleted food supply can cause a spike in food prices, putting lower-income households at risk of not meeting their basic needs.

Transformation

Developing resilience in the agrifood system will require its transformation and addressing the root causes of its vulnerability. The key sources of vulnerabilities of the agrifood system are as follows:

- Configuration of food supply and distribution systems
- Dependence on trade for food supply
- Dependence on a few crops as food sources
- Lack of diet diversification

Women and Developing Resilience in the Agrifood System

Women are involved in all aspects of the agrifood system and play significant roles at every stage, from production to consumption. They are essential in promoting resilience, particularly by introducing innovations in key areas. Women can catalyze the transformation of the agrifood system while also benefiting from it. Innovations can alleviate their burdens in the current agrifood system and unlock their potential to enhance agricultural productivity.

Policies that Empower Women

The legal basis for empowering women in agriculture and food includes the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Magna Carta of Women.

In the Philippines, CEDAW was incorporated into the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act 9710), which was enacted in 2009 (Republic Act No. 9710, 2009). The Magna Carta of Women is then translated into the respective Gender and Development Codes or Ordinances at the local level. Davao City established its own Women and Development Code or City Ordinance in 2010, predating the Magna Carta for Women. This case demonstrates that local governments can formulate and implement their own ordinances before national laws are adopted.

The Magna Carta of Women declares it a policy of the State to recognize the economic, political, and sociocultural realities that affect the current condition of women. The State affirms the role of women in nation-building and works to ensure substantive equality between women and men. Specifically, Section 2 states that

The State reaffirms the right of women in all sectors to participate in policy formulation, planning, organization, implementation, management, monitoring, and evaluation of all programs, projects, and services.

The Magna Carta of Women effectively addresses aspects relevant to empowering women in the agriculture and food system. The law includes the following elements:

- Land ownership and proprietary rights
- Access to finance
- Participation and representation

The Magna Carta of Women also mandates budget allocation for activities related to women. Section 36 specifies that

The cost of implementing GAD programs shall be the agency's 5% or the local government unit's GAD budget which shall be at least 5% of the agency's or the local government unit's total budget appropriations. (p. 25)

The Women in Development and Nation Building Act (Republic Act No. 7192) mandates the allocation of 5% to 30% of overseas development assistance to GAD. Funds for GAD programs and activities are subject to government auditing procedures.

The Women in Development and Nation Building Act states that

The State recognizes the role of women in nation building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men. The State shall provide women rights and opportunities equal to that of men. (p. 1)



LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Study Site

Data gathering was conducted in the Davao Region in the southern Philippines from 2020 to 2021. The region covers a total land area of 20,433.38 square kilometers and has a population of around 5.2 million (PSA 2020). It consists of five provinces, one chartered city, five component cities, and 43 municipalities (Table 2). Figure 1 illustrates the location of the Davao Region within the Philippines.

Although the country has made progress in advancing women's status, their representation in decision-making remains low (FAO 2018). Data from the DILG indicate that males dominate local executive and legislative bodies. In the Davao Region, most elected officials are male, including 75% of the councilors (Table 3).

Female council members in Southern Mindanao are a minority, making up less than 13% of the total in some areas (Figure 2). The same is true for mayors (Figure 3) and vice mayors (Figure 4), where males hold the majority.

Analysis of Local Ordinances

Twenty-three LGUs submitted a total of 241 local ordinances. Using NVivo software, we identified four themes for analysis: (1) agriculture/agribusiness, (2) food security, (3) women/Magna Carta/gender, and (4) COVID-19 (Table 4).

Four word clouds were generated from the local ordinances presented in Table 4. The figures illustrate that ordinances related to women, agriculture, food security, and COVID-19 are interconnected. However, the word clouds do not provide an in-depth analysis of the ordinances; instead, they offer a snapshot of their focus, which could be further analyzed. The local ordinances concerning women, the Magna Carta, and gender and development also highlight agriculture and related terms, such as “organic” (Figure 5). Additionally, words like “provision” and “ensure” are associated with food security and nutrition.

In ordinances related to agriculture, some of the common words are “government,” “women,” “development,” and “public.” These ordinances also contain entries related to women, gender, development, and provision (Figure 6). The commonly used words in ordinances related to food security and nutrition are “women,” “gender,” “government,” “organic,” and “development” (Figure 7). The ordinances related to COVID-19 revolve around the words “loan,” “program,” “food,” “garden,” “backyard,” and “women” (Figure 8).

TABLE 2. Population of the Davao Region (Region XI)

Province	Population	Cities	Municipalities	Barangays
Davao de Oro	767,547	0	11	237
Davao del Norte	1,125,057	3	8	223
Davao del Sur	680,481	1	9	414
Davao City	1,776,949			182
Davao Occidental	317,159	0	5	105
Davao Oriental	576,343	1	10	183
TOTAL	5,243,536	6	43	1,162

TABLE 3. Distribution of local officials by sex in 43 municipalities in Region XI

Position	Male	Female	Total
Mayor	32	17	49
Vice Mayor	37	12	49
Councilors	322	98	420
Total	391	127	518

Source: Department of the Interior and Local Government (2021)

TABLE 4. Summary of collected ordinances from cities and municipalities

Province	City/ Municipality	Agriculture/ Agribusiness	Food Security	Women/ Magna Carta/ Gender	COVID-19
Davao de Oro		5	14	9	11
Davao del Norte (including Island Garden City of Samal, Panabo City and Tagum City)		6	40	14	20
Davao del Sur (including Davao City, Digos City)		5	44	11	19
Davao Occidental		1	1	0	1
Davao Oriental (including Mati City)		6	21	4	17



FIGURE 1. Map of the Philippines showing location of the Davao Region

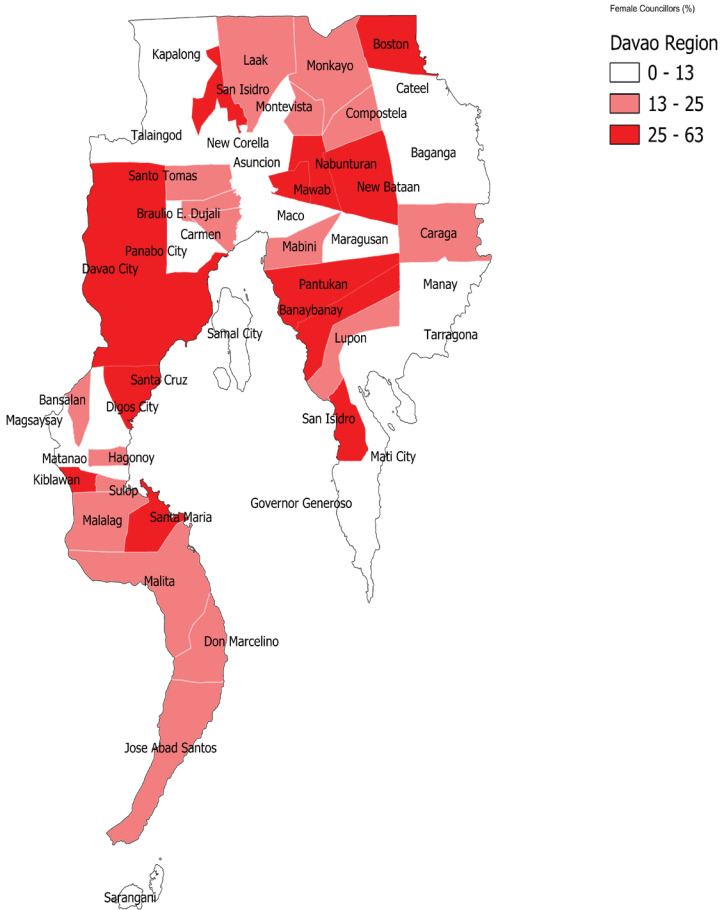


FIGURE 2. Distribution of female council members in the Davao Region

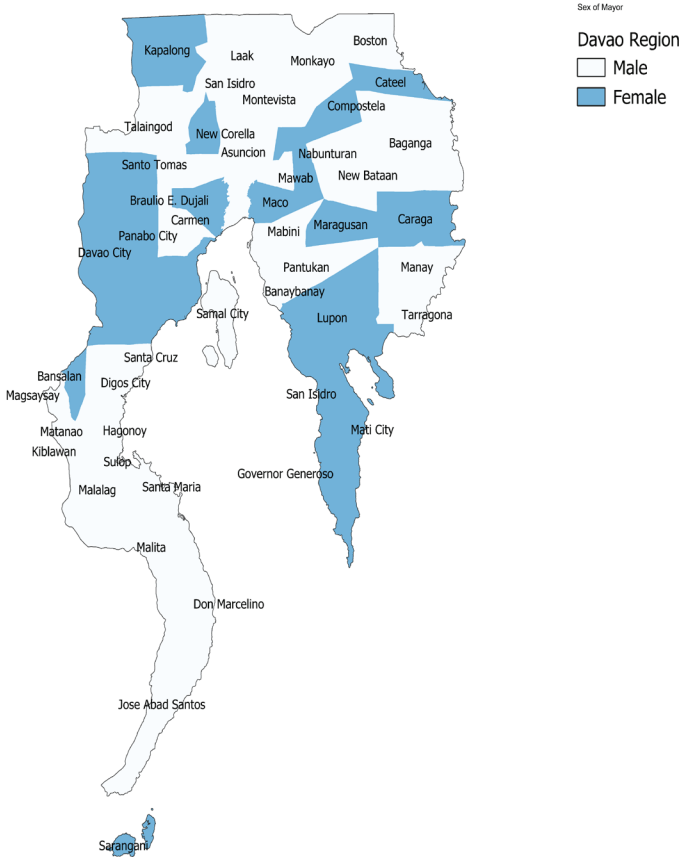


FIGURE 3. Sex distribution of mayors in the Davao Region

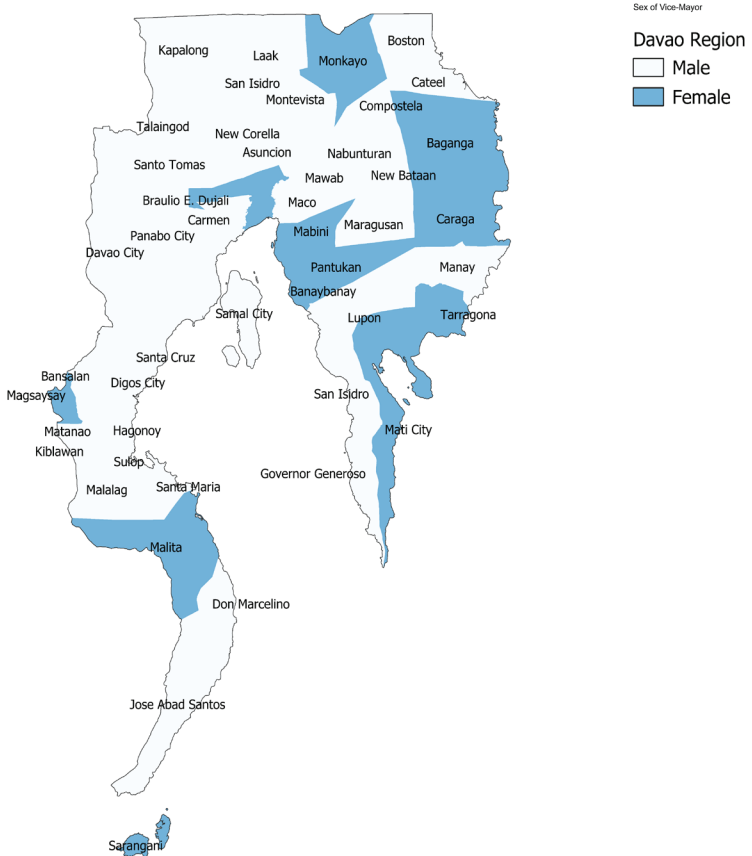


FIGURE 4. Sex distribution of vice mayors in the Davao Region



FIGURE 6. Agriculture-related ordinances



FIGURE 7. Food nutrition-related ordinances



FIGURE 8. COVID-19-related ordinances

Key Informant Interview Results

During the community quarantine from March to April 2020, in addition to the directive to stay home, there were border controls and checkpoints in each province and city. The public transportation sector was also advised to limit the number of passengers to adhere to social distancing protocols. Jeepneys, the most common means of transportation for both people and agricultural products in the Philippines, were restricted to only 50% passenger capacity, resulting in higher fares. Some jeepneys did not operate on their usual routes, not only because drivers were concerned about the dangers of COVID-19 but also because they needed to comply with the directive to install plastic dividers inside the vehicles. Additionally, motorcycles, another common vehicle for hire, were not allowed to carry passengers to minimize exposure and transmission. These restrictions hampered mobility for both goods and people:

1. **Challenges faced by women during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and its corresponding restrictions**
 - a. Limited mobility due to lack of transportation, community quarantine, and childcare demands.
 - b. Lack of job opportunities, especially for women working as agricultural laborers, due to limited production and operations and restricted transportation, resulting in higher costs.
 - c. Loss of out-of-town buyers for women in agricultural marketing. Current and prospective buyers could not cross the border, and women entrepreneurs could not deliver their products.
 - d. Pedicab drivers increased fare rates in response to restrictions on passenger numbers. The usual capacity ranged from four to five passengers, but stringent health and safety measures reduced this to two at a time.
2. **Local government responses to COVID-19 challenges**
 - a. Limited mobility due to lack of transportation, community quarantine, and childcare demands.
 - b. The national government (through local authorities) distributed food packs to households.
 - c. Vegetable seeds for home gardening were distributed for free.
 - d. Some local governments organized weekly market days (or pop-up mobile stores) in selected villages to ensure access to fresh food.

- e. Some local governments provided free transportation for goods and people from the border to the población.
- 3. Policies for women in agriculture**
- a. Initial data revealed no specific policy addressing this issue. Women and agriculture were treated as separate sectors.
 - b. Interviews indicated that policymakers assumed agriculture policies encompassed both men and women, neglecting the unique needs and circumstances of each gender.
- 4. Gaps and barriers in policies and programs**
- a. Sustainable livelihood programs: Implementation of backyard livelihood programs should be sustainable, as most women involved play both productive and reproductive roles.

Survey Results

Some important points from the survey that were similar with the key informant interviews.

- 1. Challenges faced by women (prior to and during COVID-19)**
- a. Both men and women workers faced limited mobility and job-seeking difficulties during the peak of COVID-19 due to lockdowns and travel restrictions.
 - b. Even before COVID-19, women farmers experienced job loss due to farm mechanization, and some business owners preferred male workers for hard labor. The Asian swine fever (ASF) affected hog production, resulting in massive hog depopulation. Overproduction caused income loss, with limited marketing options and difficulties in transporting produce. Business closures contributed to job loss.
 - c. Income loss and rising costs of basic goods impacted food budgets.
 - d. Most households were also concerned about COVID-19 transmission and insufficient vaccine supply.
 - e. Difficulty accessing medical and other essential services left many relying on services provided by rural health units (RHUs).

2. Local government's response to COVID-19

- a. Families received cash assistance in the form of grants and loans from the national government, including the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Agriculture (DA), and local government (subject to qualifications).
- b. The Department of Agriculture, through the Municipal Agriculture Office, provided vegetable seeds, and some municipalities offered cash prizes for the best vegetable gardens. The objectives of strengthening backyard gardening and gulayan sa barangay were to sustain family food supplies and enhance the availability of nutritious vegetables in the community.
- c. Rice, vegetables, canned goods, noodles, dressed chicken, health kits, vitamins, and medicine were also provided to constituents through budget realignment and the use of the disaster fund.
- d. A special fund account was established for COVID-19 programs, including the procurement and distribution of food assistance, relief goods, medicine, and vitamins.
- e. A temporary condonation for real property tax during the peak of COVID-19 provided relief from statutory obligations.
- f. Barangay health workers regularly visited households for health monitoring (specific to Malita, Davao Occidental).
- g. The Indigenous Peoples (IP) were also visited to conduct health education and learn about their current situation (specific to Montevista, Davao de Oro).
- h. The Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Agriculture imposed price controls on basic needs and commodities. The government purchased vegetables from some farmers, and the LGU sold the produce to constituents at a lower margin.
- i. Local government units procured palay (rice) for food pack distribution, ensuring control over price fluctuations set by traders.

- j. Rural improvement clubs (RICs) were active before COVID-19, with many involved in value-adding or processing (both food and non-food). The RICs were mobilized and strengthened during COVID-19, with some prioritizing the creation of products using materials readily available in their locality.
 - k. LGUs enhanced subsidies for farm inputs and dispersal programs.
- 3. Gaps and barriers in policies and programs**
- a. Common policies implemented in agriculture, such as financial and input subsidies, do not take into account gender distinctions.
 - b. LGUs require additional financial support from the national government due to their limited resources. More funding for agriculture, along with the need for more competent agri-technicians, fertilizers, seedlings, manpower, seminars, machinery, and on-site technicians, is essential.
 - c. A review of the household survey list for financial assistance from the national government is necessary, as many poor households were excluded.
 - d. The gap between the government and people living in remote areas must be bridged and strengthened to ensure stability and resilience in rural projects.
 - e. Local Government Units must establish a comprehensive framework for the development of rapid response plans.
- 4. Enhancing women's participation in policy design**
- a. Conduct leadership training and seminars to educate women legislators, women's councils, and constituents on gender issues.
 - b. Inform and invite officials and representatives from all women's associations or sectors in the locality.
 - c. Organize women in barangays into groups or associations; have them accredited and recognized, provide support for operational expenses, conduct evaluations, and offer rewards and recognition.
 - d. Frequent consultations with women should be held to understand their issues and challenges.

Challenges Encountered by Women

Women faced several challenges before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both men and women workers experienced limited mobility at the peak of COVID-19 and struggled to find jobs due to lockdowns and travel restrictions.



In some remote areas, women used to go to the farm. However, during the peak of the pandemic, they were curtailed from leaving their households due to community quarantine. They were forced to stay in their houses instead.

Chair of the Asuncion Committee on Women, Children and Family Welfare (7 May 2021)*



Women in Matanao have not been staying at home even before the pandemic. They have been involved in providing food on the table of the household. This might be explained with the primary source of income of the people in the municipality, which is agriculture, that includes farming their own land, providing labor and hog raising wherein women [are involved] as well. Mainly, the challenges involved the income process as women in the municipality lost their jobs and the source of income.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Agriculture (2 June 2021)



Most households feared COVID-19 transmission and worried about the insufficient supply of vaccines. There was also concern about going outside due to potential transmission affecting family members.

The closure of establishments, limited markets, and mobility restrictions resulted in a loss of income and livelihood.



High levels of unemployment, loss of income, and rising food costs are making access to food difficult for many.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Social Services, Gender, Family and Social Welfare Development and Elderly(13 April 2021)



*Official correspondences underwent minor editing (punctuation and spelling) for clarity



This might be explained with the primary source of income of the people in the municipality which is agriculture that includes farming their own land, providing labor and hog raising wherein women as well. The peak of the pandemic was [also] the peak of SAF which made things extra hard. Most of the hog growers are women who were forced to surrender their precious hogs to contain the disease. The paid labor was not present at those times as well as the farm owners are hesitant and restricted as they are awaiting orders and regulations unto how farming will operate during the pandemic. Mainly, the challenges involved the income process as woman in the municipality lost their jobs and the[ir] source of income.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Agriculture, Matanao
(2 June 2021)



Some challenges encountered by women in household food security and nutrition include limited availability and choices of nutritious food, limited access to nutritious food, malnutrition, hunger, rising food prices, and loss of income. Women farmers who owned their farms faced the following production challenges:

- Reduced access to markets
- End-users face challenges accessing products due to strict health and safety measures, such as lockdowns and border controls, enforced by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases
- Challenges in finding buyers due to the closure of buy-and-sell establishments
- Reduced access to inputs
- Limited availability of farm labor
- Limited availability of farm workers due to stay-at-home protocols and fears of COVID-19 transmission
- Low buying prices
- Production problems due to limited mobility
- Difficulty disposing of products due to a lack of buyers and fears of COVID-19 transmission

Women farmers who own their own farms encounter the following marketing challenges:

- Difficulty in marketing due to lockdown
- Farmers' inability to market commodities due to challenges in obtaining travel permits/passes
- Lack of transportation from farm to market
- Challenges in transporting and selling commodities outside the municipality due to travel restrictions, curfews, border controls, and delays in product delivery
- Social distancing concerns related to COVID-19
- Fear of COVID-19 transmission and concern for family safety
- Absence of buyers leading to spoilage of perishable goods
- Absence of buyers due to the cancellation of tabo or market days
- Absence of buyers because of restrictions on outsider entry into the municipality
- Low farm gate prices due to overproduction
- Farmers were unable to set prices for their produce because neighboring farmers planted the same crops, resulting in overproduction

The pandemic was particularly challenging for women who do not own land but work on farms. These women faced job losses as landowners reduced their workforce, often preferring male workers for hard labor. This led to a loss of income. Farm owners were significantly affected by declining prices for their products. The loss of labor and primary income sources hindered their ability to hire, as they needed to protect their capital and comply with government regulations. Additionally, they had to safeguard their health. Limited mobility was another issue.



With the suspension of any operation in the country, landowners were forced to reduce the number of workers to scavenge what they can with their produce and to make up for the loss of the earlier harvest. With this grueling demand in labor, landowners preferred male workers.

Chair of the New Bataan Committee on Women, Children, and Family
(13 March 2021)



Women who sell agricultural products had a limited customer base.



Due to the implemented restrictions of the government to put a stop on the increasing number of COVID-19 cases, customers were limited, which resulted to low income to no income at all.

Chair of the New Bataan Committee on Women, Children, and Family (13 March 2021)



Business disruptions, such as temporary closures of wet markets due to quarantine and limited product supply, also resulted in lost income.



The pandemic has forced many street markets and even wet markets to temporarily close to limit public gatherings and overcrowded area. This prevented vendors, including women who sell agricultural products in markets, to sell all their products directly to consumers.

Chair of the Bansalan Committee on Food, Agriculture, Cooperatives, Irrigators Association and other Civil Service Organizations (5 May 2021)



The fear of contracting COVID-19 became prevalent.



Women who sell agricultural products in the market during the peak of COVID-19 experienced more danger than the others. They might encounter different kinds of people due to panic buying. And since they encountered people outside their premises, not only that their health was in danger but also including of their families at home. Thus, it might also affect their psychological health.

Chair of the Asuncion Committee on Women, Children and Family Welfare, Asuncion (7 May 2021)



Women involved in household food processing faced difficulties in procuring raw materials due to travel restrictions and the African Swine Fever (for meat processors). A lack of capital hindered operations, preventing most meat processors from functioning. Even those who managed to source raw materials and continue their food processing activities struggled, as they were unable to sell their products.



Same with the supply demand relationship that affected the market even its harder to access the materials needed to process, prices should be lowered as buying from external was still viewed as extremely dangerous.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Agriculture (2 June 2021)



Local Government's Response to Challenges

The local governments responded, as mandated by the national government, to address food security and nutrition challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. The respondents did not specify that it was solely for women in agriculture.

The national government's response to the food security and nutrition challenges faced by women farmers during the COVID-19 pandemic included distributing free seeds, chemical inputs, fertilizers, loans, and grants.

1. Food packs containing rice, noodles, canned goods, vegetables, and dressed chicken were distributed by the LGU and the national government. Additionally, immediate relief operations were conducted, and up to six cycles of rice were distributed.
2. Cash transfers, such as the Social Amelioration Program (SAP) from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and cash assistance from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), were implemented.
3. Supplementary supplies for household food production, such as vegetable seeds, were provided. The LGU facilitated the distribution of various vegetable seedlings from the Department of Agriculture to boost backyard gardening.
4. LGUs realigned their budgets for the procurement of the food packs given to constituents.
5. Medicines and vitamins were distributed with the food packs.



The Local Government Unit of Asuncion in line with our duties and goals to answer the problems that might encounter or already encountered by our local constituents, headed by our Local Chief Executive, provide assistance of food to the entire families that inhabited our jurisdiction—including but not limited to local rice, vegetables, and other healthy canned goods—in order for our constituents to fully survive. Further, we also exercise due diligence in the selection to evade and prevent the virus.

Chair of the Asuncion Committee on Women, Children and Family Welfare (7 May 2021)



Crisis intruded during the peak of COVID-19 pandemic, there was a created Special Fund Account called Bayanihan to Heal as One Fund by enacting Municipal Ordinance No. 242 of 2020, with the purpose of using it solely for the CoViD-19 related programs, projects, and activities (PPAs), of Matanao, Davao del Sur, consistent with the intent of the Local Budget Circular No. 125, dated April 7, 2020 of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The fund boosted the capacity of the LGU in immediately responding to the COVID-19 emergencies. One of it was the procurement and distribution of food assistance and other relief goods [such as] medicines and vitamins for affected households.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Social Services, Gender, Family and Social Welfare Development and Elderly (13 April 2021)



As relayed by the Chair of the Agriculture and Fisheries Cooperative of Banaybanay in 24 May 2021, the LGU, with the Municipal Agriculture Office and the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office, provided various vegetable seeds and assistance to women farmers.

The Chair of the Committee on Women, Children, and Family Welfare communicated on 7 May 2021 that their LGU, led by the local chief executive, assisted not only women farmers but the entire farming community. During the period when they were prohibited from cultivating their lands due to pandemic-related movement restrictions, the LGU provided food and medicine to meet the needs of constituents.

The municipality of Matanao enacted Municipal Ordinance (MO) 242 of 2020 to create a special fund for COVID-19-related projects, programs, and activities (Box 1). Another ordinance, MO 245, was enacted to provide temporary relief on statutory obligations, including taxes, fees, and other charges. At the time of the interview, a resolution on real property tax condonation was pending.



One of the interventions provided in order to lessen the burden of the women in the locality involved in the food system, was the enactment of Municipal Ordinance No. 245, series of 2020, an ordinance providing temporary relief on statutory obligation by considering and allowing [the] provision of grace period and other related mechanisms in the collection of applicable taxes, fees, and charges from when the COVID-19 Community Quarantine started and contemplated in RA No. 11469. This is due to the fact that the businesses within the municipality are not in full operation due to the declared community quarantine throughout the municipality.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Social Services, Gender, Family Chair and Social Welfare Development and Elderly (13 April 2021)



The enactment of Resolution No.19-199 request[ed] the Sangguniang Panlalawigan to condone penalties of Real property tax payers in consideration to recent calamities that took place in the municipality.

Chair of the Matanao Committee on Agriculture (2 June 2021)



Policies and Programs

Several national policies supported men and women farmers during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. These included Bayanihan 1 (RA 11469) and 2 (RA 11494), the Rice Tariffication Law (RA 11203), the Farm Input Subsidy (RA 11598), the Organic Agriculture Act (RA 10068), the Solid Waste Management Act (RA 9003), the Plant, Plant, Plant Program of the Department of Agriculture (DA-AFID 2020), the Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Program (RA 11321), the Agriculture Information System in All Cities and Municipalities, the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710), and the Act Promoting the Integration of Women as Full and Equal Partners of Men in Development and Nation Building and for Other Purposes (RA 7192).

Enhancing Women's Participation in Policy Design

Some LGUs have established practices in policy making. The most common local ratification and implementation of a national agricultural policy is based on the Organic Agriculture Act. In one municipality in Davao de Oro and another in Davao del Sur, the role of women in organic agriculture is recognized (Box 2). These municipalities created a section in their Organic Agriculture Ordinance to support mechanisms addressing the needs of women.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the municipality of Matanao in Davao del Sur, referencing the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act (Republic Act 11469, 2020), passed Resolution No. 19-199 (2020) to waive penalties for all real property taxpayers due to calamities that damaged agricultural products and reduced rice production, adversely affecting farmers' livelihoods. The municipality subsequently passed Municipal Ordinance No. 245, Series of 2020, which provided temporary relief by allowing a grace period and other mechanisms for the collection of taxes, fees, and charges from business establishments.

In New Bataan, Davao de Oro, the chairs of the Committee on Women and the Committee on Agriculture co-authored an ordinance to strengthen backyard gardening in the municipality (Box 2).

These field lessons provided empirical evidence to support the guiding principles for designing inclusive policies for women in agriculture.

Box 1. Recognition of the role of women in organic agriculture

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE NO. 2015-03, SECTION 20, MONKAYO, DAVAO DE ORO. The role of women in the practice of organic agriculture is recognized. Towards this end, measures shall be taken by the municipality to comply with its obligations to ensure a gender-fair and gender-balanced development along with support mechanisms to take into account the particular needs of women, from those who are child-bearing and girls of tender age to the elderly women farm workers. The Municipal Women Development Council (MWDC) shall incorporate in its programs and activities for organic agriculture and shall assist in the establishment, promotion, and marketing of organic agriculture produce.

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE NO. 169, SERIES OF 2015, MALALAG, DAVAO DEL SUR. The role of women in the practice of organic agriculture is recognized. Towards this end, measures shall be taken by the municipality to comply with its obligation to ensure a gender-fair and gender-balanced development along with the support mechanisms to take into account the particular needs of women, from those who are child-bearing and girls of tender age to the elderly women farm workers.

Box 2. Collaboration of committees

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE NO. 2021-22, “An Ordinance Institutionalizing Family Backyard Gardening in the Municipality of New Bataan and for Other Purposes,” was passed to enhance backyard gardening, which was first established in 1979. The Committee on Agriculture and Livelihood Projects and the Committee on Women, Children, and Family co-authored the 2021 ordinance, which aims to strengthen backyard gardening through cash prize incentives.

The main objective of the ordinance is to address hunger and malnutrition by encouraging households to grow food, particularly for children, the elderly, the sick, and differently-abled persons. Backyard gardening provides an easy and inexpensive source of nutritious fruits and vegetables.







DESIGNING INCLUSIVE POLICIES FOR WOMEN

Guiding Principles

The design and implementation of policies inclusive of women in the agrifood system would benefit from guiding principles based on several key considerations, such as:

1. These policies should promote women's empowerment and gender equality. Developed policies can improve women's access to and control over resources, participation in decision-making, and monitoring of activities without disadvantaging others.
2. These policies should enhance the role of women without adding to their burden. Women can participate in the decision-making, design, and implementation of plans and programs, as well as in monitoring and evaluating initiatives. However, involvement in these activities can require additional time and effort, potentially becoming a burden.
3. These policies should promote inclusivity for women without being limited to specific groups. While policies can target certain groups of women, this may create further inequality. If policies are implemented to benefit one group, there should also be measures in place to support other women.
4. These policies should ensure greater access to and control over natural resources while maintaining sustainability.

Identifying Themes

Several guides have been suggested in designing inclusive policies for women in agriculture, ones that local governments may adapt or modify as they deem appropriate for their constituencies. Inclusive policies for women in the agrifood system are designed to improve the status of women in agrifood systems and harness their potential to contribute

to increasing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty, ensuring food security and nutrition, and fostering resilience.

Basic/Foundation Steps

The basic step in designing inclusive policies for women in agriculture is to develop a common reference point and understanding among policymakers, implementers, and stakeholders. This can be supported by existing national policies and commitments, while considering local experiences. Local governments are primarily responsible for fostering this common understanding with their constituents. The specific steps are, but not limited to, the following:

1. Establish a common understanding of gender issues for public officials through activities such as gender sensitivity training and orientation on relevant laws, including the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710), Anti-VAWC (RA 9262), and the Women in National Building Development Act (RA 7192)
2. Public officials receive orientation on PCW/DILG directives related to women and gender
3. LGUs gather information on gender-related policies.
4. LGUs conduct public orientation and information campaigns, through radio and print, to inform men and women of their rights.

Specific program/activities that may be taken:

1. Identify challenges that limit women's full participation in agrifood system activities.
2. Identify resources that enable women to fully engage in agrifood system activities.
3. Identify policies and gaps that ensure women have access to necessary resources.
4. Design policies that address gaps in women's access to resources.
5. Inform women of their rights to access resources.
6. Facilitate the design and implementation of participatory processes for monitoring and evaluating policies.

There is a need to create policies based on these themes to build resilience in agrifood systems:

- 1. Access to and control over resources**
 - a. Allocate land for communal production among women.
 - b. Utilize vacant land for production.
 - c. Establish agreements with private owners for the use of land for production.
- 2. Technology and extension services**
 - a. Overcome barriers to using technology, including heavy farm machinery, and provide operators for such machinery, particularly for women.
 - b. Provide extension services that are responsive to the needs of women, especially regarding training schedules.
 - c. Provide training for women on home-based production (e.g., household gardening, food preservation/processing, food preparation, organic fertilizer production, and seed germination).
- 3. Financial services**
 - a. Improve women's access to innovative financial services that do not require collateral (e.g., agricultural loans), as most physical assets, such as land, are in their husbands' names.
 - b. Improve access to financial services that support women's productive and reproductive roles (e.g., low-interest loans).
- 4. Market development and business linkages**
 - a. Create opportunities for women to connect with markets and enhance their economic prospects through direct marketing activities supported by local government ordinances.
 - b. Implement institutional procurement programs and community-supported agriculture.
- 5. Social support and safety nets**
 - a. Establish support services (e.g., insurance, conditional cash transfers, leave privileges) that assist women in fulfilling their social and reproductive roles, which may hinder their productive roles.

- b. Improve access to daycare centers, child-minding facilities, and breastfeeding areas that enable women to do their work, join meetings, and undergo training.
- 6. Policy, planning, and decision-making**
- a. Ensure participation in policy design, planning, and decision-making.
 - b. Ensure compliance with the law, particularly the Magna Carta of Women and the Women in Nation Building Act, ensuring representation of women in councils, including a member quota.
 - c. Ensure meaningful participation of women, allowing them to take an active role in decision-making.
- 7. Developing partnerships and multi-stakeholder partnerships**
- a. Improve the involvement of the private sector and leverage their resources to promote women's empowerment and gender equality.
 - b. Improve the participation of the private sector in developing direct marketing initiatives for women.
- 8. Standards and regulations**
- a. Establish a local quality standard system, such as the Philippine National Standards, to encourage private sector participation.
 - b. Develop a local quality seal to promote the products of local women agriculture producers.
- 9. Information technology and logistics**
- a. Establish policies that protect both buyers and sellers on online business platforms.
 - b. Improve women's access to transportation and logistics services to support their enterprises.





CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the data presented above, the guidebook recommends the following:

1. Encourage collaboration between the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Women to create more enabling and gender-inclusive policies for women in agriculture. The phrase “men and women farmers” should be included in local ordinances.
2. Encourage multi-sector partnerships to consolidate and leverage resources that cannot be provided by the government. Additionally, develop a market for women farmers.
3. Strengthen meaningful representation and participation by enhancing the involvement of women in the policy-making process through public consultations, allowing them to voice their issues and be heard by all stakeholders. Representation will be measured by the proportion of female participants in public hearings, which includes women participants and permanent representatives in key decision-making bodies such as the Municipal/City Agricultural and Fishery Council (MAFC/CAFC) and the Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council (RAFC). The Magna Carta of Women mandates that at least 40% of members in development councils be women.
4. Provide capacity building for women to enhance their participation in the policy-making process, including leadership training, public management and governance training, and public speaking.
5. Secure the support of the local legislative council and the executive branch. If the LGU supports the ordinances, the deliberation, endorsement, and approval will be easier.
6. Understand the local context and institutionalize services and programs that support women through targeted policies aligned with the local situation, environment, culture, and stakeholders.



CONCLUSION

The recommendations in this guidebook aim to promote gender equality and women's empowerment while building resilience in the agrifood system, with a specific focus on policy-making.

Inclusive policies for women in the agrifood system must consider the following objectives:

1. They can contribute to achieving international and national commitments for gender equality and women's empowerment. The Philippines is a signatory to international agreements such as CEDAW and has adopted national commitments in the Magna Carta of Women. Some local governments have integrated these commitments into their Gender and Development Codes or Women and Development Codes. However, specific provisions addressing women in agriculture are needed, particularly in areas where agriculture is the primary economic source.
2. They can help reduce poverty and enhance food security and nutrition, especially for women and girls. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the agrifood system can boost agricultural productivity.
3. They recognize the vital role of women in local and national social and economic development. This must be reflected in policy documents. Additionally, women's participation in all stages of policy-making, from inception to ratification, must be ensured.
4. They include provisions for improving the status and welfare of women and girls in the community. This involves meaningful changes that women can experience, such as having a voice and impact in decision-making processes.
5. They promote sustainable development and the responsible use of natural resources. Policies aimed at improving the status of women should not lead to the overexploitation of natural resources.



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USEFUL RESOURCES

The following reference materials can support initiatives to develop inclusive policies for women in agriculture and food:

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

MANDANAS-GARCIA RULING. https://www.lawphil.net/judjuris/juri2018/jul2018/gr_199802_2018.html