

# Women's Empowerment in the Philippines in the Agriculture Sector

Gender equality in the Philippines remains a paradox. The country has progressive enabling laws and policies that facilitate the participation of women in government and the private sector. The Philippines also ranks as the top country within ASEAN and East Asian for limiting gender-based disparities.

Despite this, there are entrenched disparities in economic opportunities and access to productive resources between men and women, particularly in rural areas. These disparities are the result of a social structure where patriarchal ideology is still firmly entrenched in Philippine culture. Gender stereotyping and traditional Filipino expectations combine to differentiate the expected roles of women from men.

Top  
**10**

country in the world for limiting gender-based disparities

Ranked  
**7**

in the world in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index

Ranked  
**4**

out of 128 countries for share of women in management positions in the business sector

## INTERESTING FACTS



As the largest sector of employment in the country, agriculture is also the largest source of employment for Filipino women with about 8.3 million women working in the sector.



In terms of wage rates in the agriculture sector, between 2010 and 2014, men received an average daily rate of \$3.43, while women received \$2.98.



Women only represent 11% of landholders and have less access to agriculture support services compared to men.

Women in the Philippines make essential contributions to agricultural growth, often managing complex households and pursuing multiple livelihood strategies. Their activities typically include producing agricultural crops, tending animals, processing and preparing food, working for wages in rural enterprises, engaging in trade and marketing, and maintaining their homes.

In engaging in these tasks, women often face enabling environment constraints distinct from those of men, such as limited access to land tenure or credit, which limit their productivity, income and the overall potential of the agriculture sector.



# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM AGCLIR PHILIPPINES DIAGNOSTIC

The Agricultural Commercial Legal and Institutional Reform (AgCLIR) diagnostic is an analytical tool that focuses on the systemic limitations that inhibit productivity improvement and limit profitability in the agriculture sector. This area of the study specifically focuses on the governing legal institutional, and social characteristics that promote and protect the rights of women in the Philippines. Below is a summary of the key findings.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Women in Development and Nation Building Act (1991) served as the first major piece of domestic legislation to promote gender equality. The central tenet of this act was the concept of Gender in Development (GAD). GAD promotes gender equality as a fundamental value to be reflected in all development choices. The GAD states that 5% of allocated funds received from all governments, agencies, and development partners shall be set aside and utilized by the agencies concerned to support programs and activities for women.



### Additional Constraints to GAD Implementation:

- The Department of Agriculture's (DA) decentralized structure.
- The DA's inability to utilize its 5% GAD allocation.
- The capacity of some Local Government Units to implement its GAD commitments remains limited.

## IMPLEMENTING INSTITUTIONS

The Philippines Commission on Women (PCW), one of the five primary GAD oversight agencies, is the primary policy-making and coordinating body on women and gender equality concerns. The greatest constraint at PCW is the geographical reach of its operations. PCW is a small agency and has limited regional presence. It is responsible for overseeing gender mainstreaming for national agencies, but at the regional and local level, this responsibility falls to the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG). DILG suffers from strong capacity constraints that limits its ability to support GAD at the Local Government Unit level.

## SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

The progress made in promoting gender equality has been massively supported by a vibrant civil society and strong collaboration with development partners and international NGOs. Among them is the PhilDHRRA consisting of a network of 65 NGOs integrating gender in their various community-based development activities.

Another is the Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK), a national rural women's coalition that advances rural women's issues and advocates for rural women's property rights.

### Key Supporting Institutions

National Rural Women Coalition

Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK)

Philippine Commission on Women

Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)

Women's Business Council Philippines

## SOCIAL DYNAMICS

### In Rural Households Women Are Responsible For...

- Household chores
- Childcare
- Elderly family care
- Managing household budget
- Performing economic tasks

Despite a strong legal framework and proactive government leadership, a patriarchal ideology is still firmly ingrained in Philippine culture. This ideology is particularly entrenched in the agriculture sector, given its importance as a livelihood activity. Women are involved in all stages of production and across all crops, from subsistence farms to cooperatives to large plantation agribusinesses. Despite their key role in many value chains, women trail behind men in terms of employment and wage rates. Part of the employment disparity can be explained by the time spent caring for children and senior family members; and limited access to and other productive resources.

For more information, contact:

David Quinn, Director, Economic Growth and Innovation, [dquinn@integrallc.com](mailto:dquinn@integrallc.com)

