



How We Made Change Work for *Women*

Culminating the six-year theme of the National Women's Month Celebration (NWMC), "***WE Make CHANGE Work for Women***" this 2022, it is timely to ask: did we really make change work for women in the last six years?

Before the country undergoes a change in elective and appointive officials after the national and local elections in May, the *DILG GAD Bulletin* looks into the notable achievements for women under the Duterte administration.

Legislative Victories for Women

According to the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the current administration established great progress in the promotion of the rights and status of Filipino women.

Because of this, various gender-responsive laws were passed, ensuring that women's interests and rights are honored and respected. Some of the pro-women laws and regulations implemented are:

- **Republic Act (RA) No. 9710: Magna Carta of Women** – Though signed during the Arroyo administration, the incumbent administration ensured proper implementation of this comprehensive women's human rights law that seeks to promote the rights of Filipino women and eliminate discrimination.
- **RA No. 11313: Safe Spaces Act** – The judicious "Bawal Bastos" law penalizes catcalling, non-consensual sexual advances, and other forms of sexual harassment in public places like streets and schools as well as cyberspace.
- **RA No. 11165: Telecommuting Law** - This law allows a work-from-home arrangement to employees, which can be very beneficial to Filipino moms.
- **Executive Order (EO) No. 12, series of 2017: Attaining and Sustaining "Zero Unmet Need for Modern Family Planning (FP)" through the Strict Implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health (RPRH) Act** - No family is left behind in the issuance of this EO, which aims to properly implement critical actions needed to attain and sustain zero unmet need for modern family planning (MFP) for all poor households and Filipinos.
- **RA No. 11148: Kalusugan at Nutrisyon ng Mag-Nanay Act** - This law provides that every child has a right to health and survival, and the government shall support parents and guardians during a newborn baby's critical first 1,000 days.
- **RA No. 11210: 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law** – This gives mothers more time for recovery and breastfeeding without them worrying about their job security or salary.
- **RA No. 10931: Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education** – Gender and Development (GAD)-related policies and guidelines were issued by the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education to promote sex and gender education among the youth.

Another significant law that addresses women's needs is RA No. 11223 or the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act that automatically enrolls all Filipino citizens in the National Health Insurance Program and prescribes complementary reforms in the health system. This gives citizens access to the full continuum of health services they need while protecting them from enduring financial hardship as a result.

According to the World Health Organization-Philippines, the UHC Act is a new dawn for health care in the country as it is "the first UHC Act of its type in the Western Pacific region." It said that this is particularly remarkable considering the strong presence of the private sector in the Filipino health system existing in parallel with a fragmented and devolved government health service.

Women Take Action

PCW Executive Director, Attorney Kristine Rosary E. Yuzon-Chaves, wants to tell Filipino women to "embrace their rights to choices and changes... and embrace the power they hold and the difference that they can make especially in exercising their right to suffrage this coming May 2022."



She highlighted that it is through good leadership and proactive governance that women's issues, concerns, and perspectives are made an integral part of decision and policy-making processes.

While it is true that various significant gender-responsive laws were passed in the current administration, more change needs to be done as we continue pushing for improved access to health services and increased economic and political participation for women, as well as to ensure their safety and security.

"*Women's right to participation and representation in all spheres of life is vital in fully realizing their role as agents and beneficiaries of development. Composing half of the country's population, Filipinas can truly make change work not only for themselves but also for the country,*" she said.

Have we made change work for women in the last six years? Though we answer in the affirmative, what's important now is we sustain constructive change by expressing our voice, embracing our power as women, and inspiring each other to make concrete changes that work for every Juana in the world. ■ **Arianne Q. Zurbano**

DILG-CO Quality Policy

We, the DILG-Central Office, imbued with the core values of Integrity, Commitment, Teamwork and Responsiveness, commit to formulate sound policies on strengthening local government capacities, performing oversight function over LGUs, and providing rewards and incentives. We pledge to provide effective technical and administrative services to promote excellence in local governance and enhance the service delivery of our Regional and Field Offices for the LGUs to become transparent, resilient, socially-protective and competitive, where people in the community live happily.

We commit to continually improve the effectiveness of our Quality Management System compliant with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and international standards gearing towards organizational efficiency in pursuing our mandate and achieving our client's satisfaction.

We commit to consistently demonstrate a "**Matino, Mahusay at Maasahang Kagawaran Para sa Mapagkalinga at Maunlad na Pamahalaang Lokal**".