

Organizing Women for Gender Equity: The Case of Miagao, Iloilo



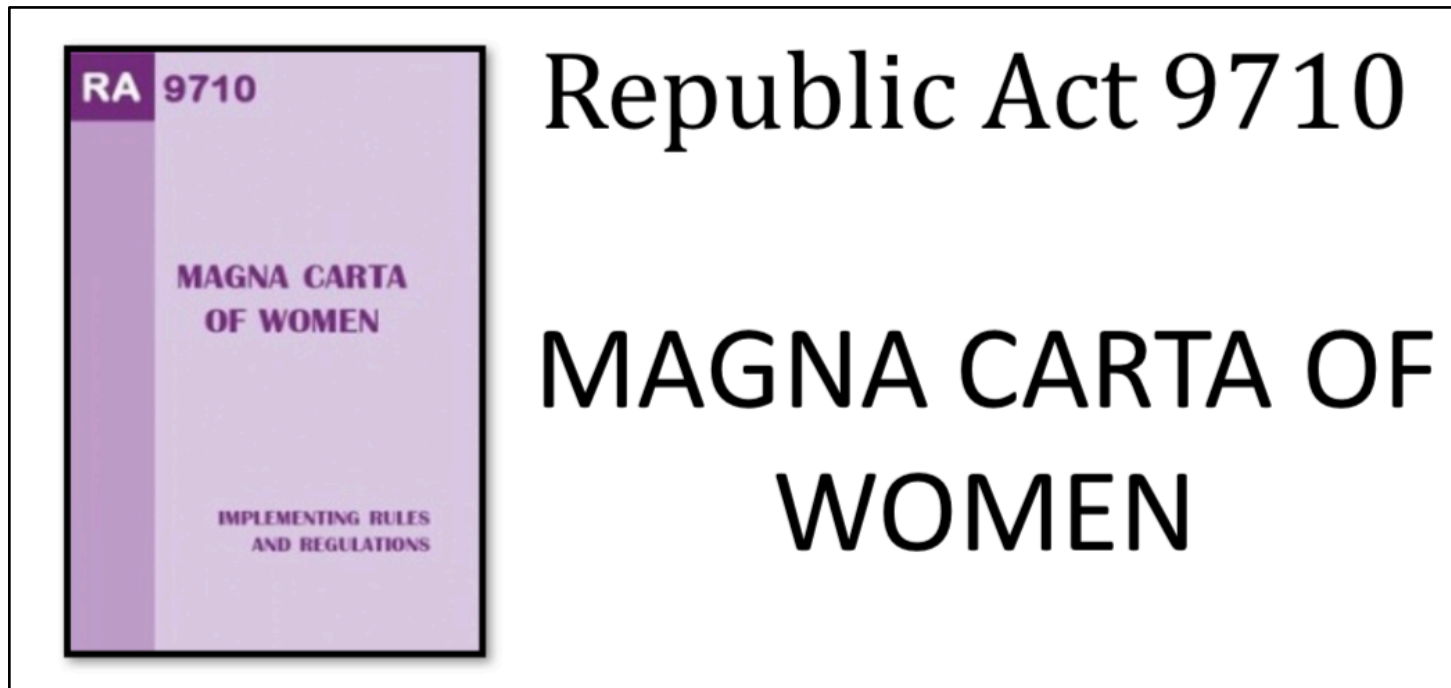
Presented by:

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Background

- *Offshoot of a research assessing the impact of the Philippines' Magna Carta of Women on the situation of rural women.*





What is the Magna Carta of Women (MCW) ?

- a **comprehensive** women's human rights law signed in 2009
- seeks to **eliminate discrimination against women** by **recognizing, protecting, fulfilling** and **promoting** the rights of Filipino women, especially those in the **marginalized** sectors

Who are in the marginalized sectors?

small farmers and rural workers

workers in the informal economy

indigenous peoples

Moro

fisherfolk

children

senior citizens

urban poor

persons with disabilities

migrant workers

solo parents

workers in the formal economy





Rule V. Rights and Empowerment of the Marginalized Sector

Livelihood, credit, capital and technology

- **Trainings of packaging, marketing, product development, etc.** (DTI, DOST, TRC, BSOs)
- **Enhance access to credit and capital** (GSIS, SSS, PCFC, DOF, DTI, BSP)





Rule V. Rights and Empowerment

of the Marginalized Sector

Livelihood, credit, capital and technology

- **Assistance to provide women livelihood, credit, capital and technology** (DOF, DTI, BSP, PCFC, GFIs, MFIs)
- **Skills trainings, business-related trainings, for (potential) women entrepreneurs** (DOLE, TESDA, NAPC, DOST, DTI, DSWD, DA, DOF, BSP, TRC)



Rule V. Rights and Empowerment of the Marginalized Sector

Education and Training

- **Access to skills trainings and retraining of returning women migrant workers (DOLE and attached agencies)**
- Develop and implement gender sensitivity training program
- **Equal opportunities in scholarships for technical skills training and development**





Rule V. Rights and Empowerment of the Marginalized Sector

Representation and Participation

- **Implement capability-building and leadership formation programs for grassroots women** (PARC, PARCCOM and BARC)
- NAPC to ensure that its sectoral councils shall have at least 30% women membership

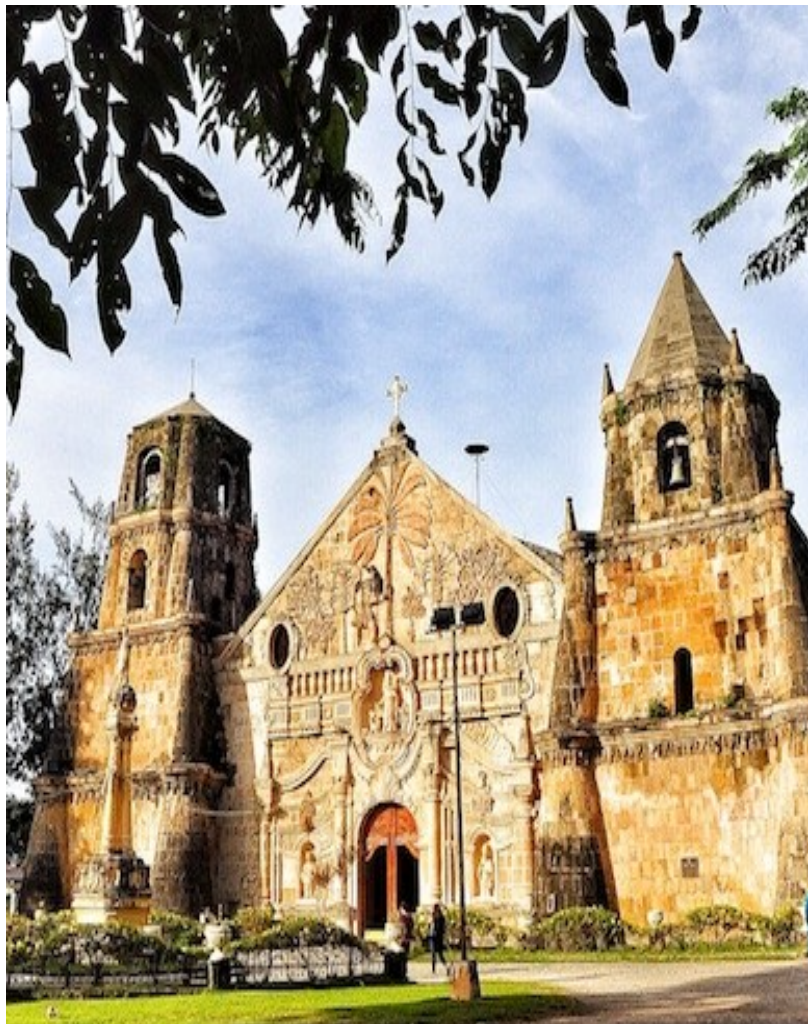
Methods used:

- Focus group discussions with women in fishing villages
- Key informant interviews with community leaders and government employees

Locale in focus: Miagao, Iloilo, Philippines



Why Miagao?



- *Ranks 3rd among towns with highest number of small-scale fishers in Iloilo Province (2,316 registered)*
- *Presence of the University of the Philippines Visayas' College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences*
- *Fisheries-related women's organization was recipient of the national government's GREAT Women Project*

- There are 22 coastal *barangays* (villages) in Miagao, each with registered fishers organization
- To date, there are only two registered women's organizations related to fisheries in Miagao:
 1. *Subana Women's Organization*
 2. *Miagao Talipapa Fish Vendors' Association*



Subana Women's Organization

- Composed of female informal settlers in what used to be a riverbed in a coastal village with highest number of small-scale fishers
- Established in 2011 resulting from a public service activity of UP Visayas Fisheries students
- Resource speaker of said activity was a university researcher who pushed for & helped organize the village women
- Local Government Unit recommended Subana as recipient of GREAT Women Project



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What is the GREAT Women Project?

The Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project is a governance and capacity development project that aims to promote and support a gender-responsive enabling environment for women's economic empowerment, particularly those in microenterprises.

The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the national machinery for the advancement of women in the Philippines, is the lead executing agency for the Project. The Commission partnered with key national government agencies involved in micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprise (MSME) development and select local government units to support the project. NCRFW partnered with 12 national government agencies, 8 pilot provincial governments and 35 municipal local government units.

This five-year project (2006-2011) is provided with technical and financial support by the Canadian International Development Agency. Seven million Canadian dollars (Cdn\$ 7 Million) in development assistance has been earmarked for the project.

Subana Women's Organization

- Had about 60 members in the beginning and now only have less than 25 members
- Current set of officers cannot make the link between the trainings they underwent with the university and the GREAT Women Project Grant
- Current set of officers are hounded by funds mismanagement rumors
- Current set of officers are not politically aligned with the mayor

Miagao Talipapa Fish Vendors Association

- Established in 2012
- Organized themselves into a group to have legal identity
- Membership overlaps with Subana
- Wanted to appeal to the mayor to reconsider policy of disallowing them to sell outside of the market
- Has undergone minimal livelihood trainings or interventions and wishes to access more funds or government support

Some salient points

- Women remain as minority in registered fishers organizations and are assigned stereotypical tasks (e.g. clerical work)
- Institutional interventions to organize women were top-down & were met by minimal internal commitments to foster the organization
- Organizational sustainability was not harnessed
- Training interventions were seen as disparate & not part of consolidating efforts towards women's empowerment

Some salient points

- Household maintenance tasks continue to be identified as a hindrance to women's full participation in organizing efforts
- Mainstreaming gender perspectives and sensitivity is a key challenge for many fisheries-related organization

Conclusions



Consult Women



Develop capacity for organizational management & sustainability



Provide technical and material assistance



Raise the community's gender awareness & sensitivity