

SRA Celebrates National Women's Month

The SRA Gender and Development Focal Point System led by no less than Adm. Anna Rosario Paner successfully sponsored a three-day activity in line with the celebration of the National Women's Month on March 6-8, 2017 at the agency's Social Hall.

On Day One, SRA-GAD Vice-Chair Dr. M. Dina Padilla-Fernandez formally opened the program wherein she greeted everyone, particularly the female personnel a "Happy Women's Month!"

"This year's theme is 'We Make Change Work for Women' and to make such changes really work for the Juanas, they have to practice their human rights. In contemporary times, there is no better way to women's empowerment and gender equality than the full implementation of the Magna Carta of Women. This law aims to eliminate discrimination against women.

"We have to make women's rights real in their lives, hence, today's celebration will start with an orientation on the MCW for everyone present here, including the males to know the basic rights of Filipino women and the provisions in the law. Meanwhile, in the next two days, health profiling for all SRA employees will be staged. All of us will undergo basic assessment whose results will enable the agency to have a personal database with sex-disaggregated indicators which eventually, will become the basis for its GAD mainstreaming of programs and activities. So, prepare yourselves to be challenged, excited and inspired," she averred.

Dr. Fernandez lauded Adm. Paner for spearheading the event and ensuring the complete attendance of all SRA denizens. She proudly introduced the members of the GAD-TWG (Technical Working Group) in SRA-QC as well as their Bacolod counterparts who flew to Manila to attend the event. Before bidding adieu, the active SRA-GAD Vice-Chair made a roll-call of all the departments.



Next to take the floor was Mr. Luis Marajas (OIC, Office of the Deputy Administrator) who delivered a brief but meaningful message in behalf of Adm. Paner. According to him, GAD activities can be further implemented now in the agency under the initiative of the new Administrator. He expressed hope that participants will have a broader idea of what GAD is all about by listening intently to all the scheduled topics.

The theme of the first day activity was dubbed, "Karapatan Kong Malaman" in which topics on the "Magna Carta of Women", "Rights of Filipino Women" and "Types of Abuses" were thoroughly discussed by Ms. Naomi Estabillo with Mr. Joseph Cubar as facilitator. The former is the Human Resource Development Officer and GAD Focal Person (for five years now) of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Region III while the latter is an

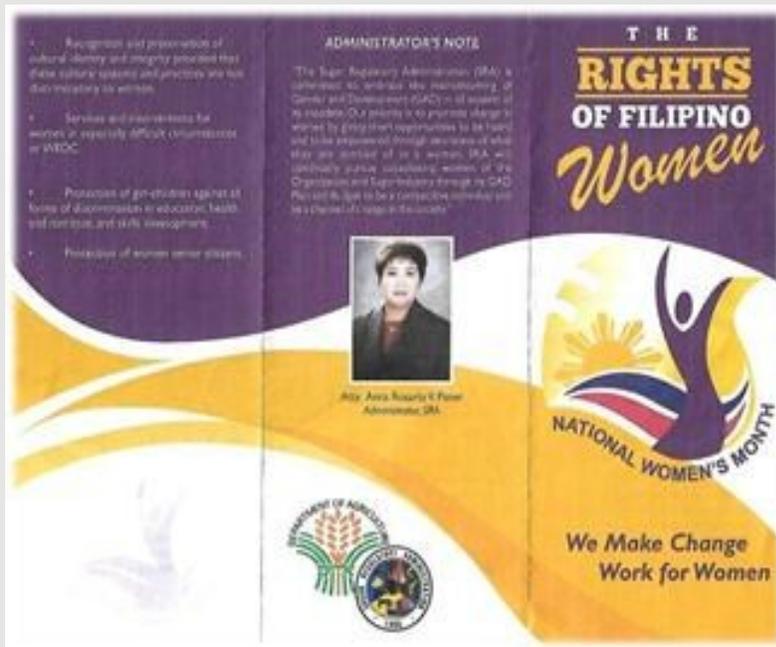


Organizational Development Consultant, Professional and Life Coach and Soft-Skills Trainer.

Before the lecture proper, Mr. Cubar enjoined the body in a community singing of the James Ingram hit classic “Whatever We Imagine” and pointed out the message that it wants to convey--that nothing is impossible when there is cooperation and helping among individuals. The participants were also asked to write down what they expect to learn from the lectures and their accompanying activities and have it posted in the “Tree of Expectations.”



In the discussion of the topics on the “Magna Carta of Women” and the “Rights of Filipino Women”, participants were provided with customized leaflets containing the basic rights of every woman especially when it comes to protection, participation, representation, health benefits, food security, information, opportunities and recognition.



Since Adm. Paner couldn't make it to the affair due to an equally important commitment, she had her meaningful and assuring message printed in the specially-made leaflets which read:

“SRA is committed to embrace the mainstreaming of GAD in all aspects of its mandate. Our priority is to promote change in women by giving them opportunities to be heard and empowered through awareness of what they are entitled of as a woman. SRA will continually pursue capacitating women of the organization and the sugar industry through its GAD Plan and Budget to be a competitive

individual and be a channel of change in the society!”

According to Ms. Estabillo, it's sad that statistics-wise, women and children comprise the marginalized sector of the society, especially those living in poor conditions, have less resources and physically challenged. Faced with this fact, she averred that GAD mainstreaming is an important step to combat the scenario. In SRA's case, this mainstreaming scheme ought to be included in the agency's mandate as it will benefit both male and female when it comes to equal access to work and training opportunities.

The discussion on the various “Types of Abuses” capped the afternoon session. The



audience were enlightened that unlike the popular connotation, abuse does not only pertain to the physical but to other forms as well like psychological, sexual, verbal, environmental and financial. After the lecture, a film showing took place which focused on the stereotyping of women and men. Participants clearly understood the message it wants to convey: that both men and women should complement each other when it comes to self-enhancement and work opportunities at all times to promote gender equality.



Before the lecture finally wrapped up, the audience was once again divided



into groups and were asked to list down some gender issues in the office and their recommendations on how these can be avoided. As a parting message, Ms. Estabillo said that the key to have a peaceful life is C-R-A-F-T which stands for: Communication, Respect, Acceptance, Forgiveness and Trust.

For the next two consecutive days, the health profiling of SRA employees was staged. Divided into two batches, they were made to undergo various tests like: height measurement, blood pressure reading, blood sugar checking and the Karada Scan which determines body weight, body fat, visceral fat, body mass index and body age.

Dr. Linda Lim-Varona, MD, FPCP, FPSAAI and Lifestyle Program Facilitator of the Complete Health Improvement Project (CHIP), together with her team introduced and explained their GO FORWARD program to SRA denizens. The latter were given passports that need to be signed by each facilitator in each table which completes the acronym. The letters stand for: G-God First, O-Outlook, F-Family Support, O-Oxygen and Sunlight, R-Root out the Bad Habits, W-Water, A-Active Life, R-Rest and Recreation, and D-Diet. These are the components of a happy and healthy living.

In the afternoon, Dr. Varona discussed the topics on “Diet is the Best Medicine” and “Look out on Outlook.” She pointed out the importance of healthy living in an era where various life-threatening diseases are in our midst like heart attack, diabetes and cancer. To avoid this, she recommended the following steps: adequate in-take of fruits and vegetables, physical exercise, stress management and early detection of sickness.

As a fitting culmination to the triumphant three-day activity, the medical team raffled off a number of items to the delight of the participants. *By: Joseph Peter R. Gonzales*

