

Gender Mainstreaming in Government-Managed Social Development Sector Infrastructure Projects in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, Philippines

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Abstract- *This study assessed the level of gender mainstreaming compliance in government-managed Social Development Sector infrastructure projects in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, Philippines. Anchored on the national Gender and Development mandate and aligned with global commitments, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality and inclusive infrastructure (SDG 5 and SDG 9), the study evaluated whether facilities across the health, education, social welfare, housing, safety, and public space sectors integrate gender-responsive standards. Using a descriptive quantitative design and an assessment tool adapted from the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines and the Gender Responsive LGU framework, data were collected from diverse facility users and personnel. Results using weighted mean analysis revealed substantial compliance in most sectors, with safety and protection facilities achieving full compliance. Housing complexes, however, showed minimal compliance, indicating significant gaps in safety features, inclusive amenities, and gender-sensitive spaces. Overall, the findings underscore the critical importance of strengthening gender-responsive planning, facility design, and resource allocation to advance equitable, safe, and inclusive public infrastructure in support of the SDGs.*

Index Terms- *Gender Mainstreaming, GAD Budget, Social Development Sector, Gender-Responsive Infrastructure, Inclusivity*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines, through Ambisyon Natin 2040 and in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5 on Gender Equality and SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, highlights the need for gender responsive, inclusive, and sustainable infrastructure. These global and national commitments reinforce the importance of ensuring that public facilities are designed and managed in ways that promote

equitable access, safety, and empowerment for all users. National and international frameworks such as CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action (PCW, n.d.), and the Magna Carta of Women require government agencies to integrate gender perspectives into programs and public services. However, despite the mandated Gender and Development budget, many agencies continue to show low compliance due to gaps in planning, monitoring, and gender awareness (PCW, 2016).

Research shows that infrastructure affects safety, mobility, and access to essential services. Gender blind facilities, including inadequate lighting, inaccessible walkways, and limited sanitation amenities, disproportionately affect women, children, elderly persons, LGBTQ individuals, and persons with disabilities (UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces, 2017). Studies also emphasize that inclusive infrastructure improves resilience and public welfare (OECD, 2020; Small and Rogers, 2016). Effective gender mainstreaming requires recognizing diverse user needs and incorporating these in planning and design (Council of Europe, 2024; UN Women, 2019; EIGE, 2016). Persistent gaps such as insufficient WASH and menstrual hygiene facilities further highlight the importance of gender sensitive infrastructure (Greed, 2022; Hutton et al., 2014). Tools such as the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines and the Gender Responsive LGU Assessment Tool support agencies in evaluating gender responsiveness (Young, 2024).

Integrating these frameworks with the SDGs emphasizes that gender responsive infrastructure is not only a national mandate but also a global commitment toward achieving equitable, safe, and sustainable development. The alignment with SDG 5 ensures that women and marginalized groups are empowered through accessible and inclusive public services, while SDG 9 underscores the need for resilient infrastructure that addresses social and gender disparities.

Specifically, this study aims to evaluate and seek answers to the following queries:

1. What is the demographic profile be described in terms of Gender (Male, Female, and LGBTQ+)
2. Level of Compliance of Social Development Sector (SDS) with gender mainstreaming principles in each of the following areas:
 - 2.1. Social Welfare and Development Facilities
 - 2.2. Health Care Facilities
 - 2.3. Safety and Protection Facilities
 - 2.4. Educational-Related Institutions
 - 2.5. Housing complexes, and;
 - 2.6. Public Spaces
3. What recommendations can be made to improve gender mainstreaming practices in government infrastructure projects aligned with gender-responsive developments and commitments?
4. Is there a significant relationship between demographic profiles and the level of compliance of SDS with gender mainstreaming?

II. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

This study employed a descriptive quantitative design to assess gender mainstreaming compliance across Social Development Sector facilities in Cabanatuan City.

A. Respondents and Sampling

Respondents included institutional personnel, service users, residents, and community stakeholders engaged with facilities in health, education, social welfare, housing, safety, and public spaces. A purposive sampling method was used to ensure participation from individuals across gender categories including men, women, and LGBTQ persons.

B. Research Instrument

The assessment tool was adapted from the Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines and the Gender Responsive LGU framework. The instrument measured compliance through indicators related to safety, accessibility, inclusivity, privacy, sanitation, consultation, and gender-sensitive facility design. A four-point scale was used to assess the level of compliance: 1 for no compliance, 2 for minimal compliance, 3 for substantial compliance, and 4 for full compliance.

C. Data Gathering and Analysis

Surveys were administered to gather quantitative data on facility conditions and user perceptions. Weighted mean analysis was used to determine the overall compliance for each infrastructure sector. Kendall's Tau correlation was used to examine the relationship between respondents' demographic profiles and their assessments of facility compliance.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the demographic profile be described in terms of Gender (Male, Female, and LGBTQ+)

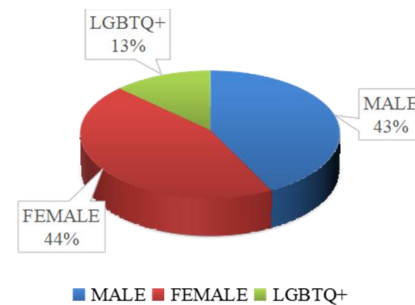


Figure 1. Total number of the respondents

The total number of respondent gathered from the Social Development Infrastructure Project from Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija ,consist of forty four percent (44%) female, forty three percent male (43%) and thirteen percent Lgbtq+ (13%).

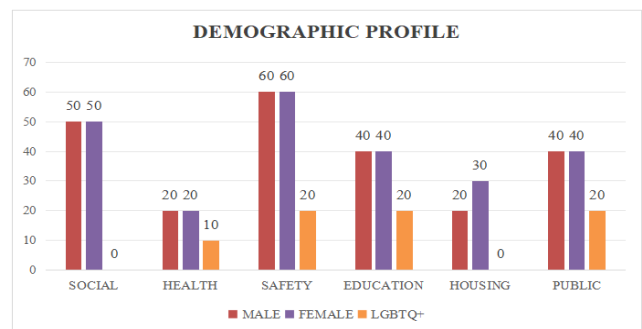


Figure 2. Total number of the respondents per sub-sector

The data indicates that the number of respondents in social welfare and development is 50 male and 50 female, in Health-care facilities 20 male, 20 female

and 10 LGBTQ+, in Safety and Protection facilities 60 male, 60 female and 20 LGBTQ+, in Education-Related institutions 40 are male, 40 female and 20 LGBTQ+, in Housing Complex there are 20 male, 30 female respondents and in Public places 40 male, 40 female and 20 LGBTQ+

2.Level of Compliance of Social Development Sector (SDS) with gender mainstreaming principles.

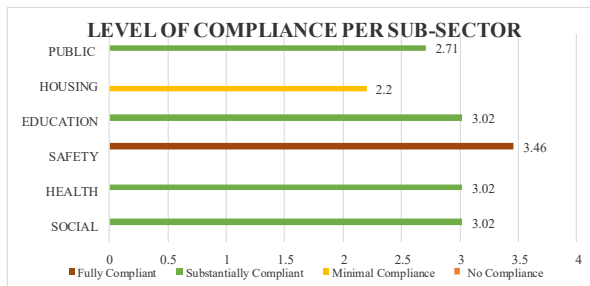


Figure 3. Level of compliance of sub-sector

The assessment of Social Development Sector facilities in Cabanatuan City showed varying levels of compliance with gender mainstreaming principles. Overall, most sectors demonstrated substantial compliance, although several areas still require improvement to ensure inclusivity, safety, and gender responsive service delivery.

Social Welfare and Development Facilities were found to be substantially compliant, providing generally safe and accessible environments for service users. Health Care Facilities showed similar results, offering private and respectful spaces for consultations, though improvements in sanitation and amenities for women and children are still needed.

Safety and Protection Facilities achieved the highest level of compliance. These institutions consistently displayed strong adherence to gender responsive standards through effective security measures and supportive systems for vulnerable groups. This sector demonstrated the most comprehensive integration of gender mainstreaming principles.

Educational related Institutions also showed substantial compliance. Schools provided safe and accessible spaces, along with guidance and support services. However, the results indicate the need for better sanitation and more inclusive facilities to accommodate diverse users.

Housing complexes had the lowest compliance rating. Respondents identified a lack of proper lighting, security, sanitation, and gender sensitive amenities. This sector clearly requires more focused planning and investment to create safe and inclusive living environments.

Public Spaces showed mixed compliance. While accessibility and lighting were generally adequate, facilities related to sanitation, privacy, and gender specific needs were insufficient. This underscores the need for improvements in comfort rooms, breastfeeding areas, and safety features.

Overall, the results show that although several sectors have begun integrating gender mainstreaming principles, significant gaps remain in housing and public spaces. Strengthening facility design, monitoring, and resource allocation is essential to ensure that all sectors provide equitable and gender responsive environments.

3.What recommendations can be made to improve gender mainstreaming practices in government infrastructure projects aligned with gender-responsive developments and commitments?

Most sub sectors of the Social Development Sector, including Social Welfare Facilities, Health Care Facilities, Educational Institutions, and Public Spaces, achieved substantial compliance with gender mainstreaming principles, while Housing showed minimal compliance. These findings indicate the need for further improvement in specific facility features identified by users.

The importance of providing diaper changing rooms, emphasized in Senate Bill 2704, highlights the need for Social Welfare and Public Facilities to enhance amenities that support parents and caregivers. Health Care Facilities are also expected to strengthen their services because RA 10354 mandates the availability of Reproductive Health facilities for victims of violence, making these provisions essential for both gender mainstreaming and legal compliance. Menstrual Health and Hygiene, although not explicitly stated in the Sustainable Development Goals, remains vital for ensuring women's access to sanitation and safe hygiene practices.

In housing complexes, issues related to women's privacy, personal space, and safe pathways were noted as areas needing improvement. The Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines stress that gender mainstreaming cannot be achieved if these concerns remain unaddressed. Furthermore, NHA Memorandum Circular 2018 010 requires resettlement sites to install CCTV systems to ensure resident safety and prevent intrusion, reinforcing the need for improved security features in housing areas.

4. Is there a significant relationship between demographic profiles and the level of compliance of SDS with gender mainstreaming?

The results show that the respondents' gender had a significant influence on their perception of compliance in several sub sectors. In Social Welfare and Development Facilities, a significant negative relationship was found, indicating that gender groups experienced varying levels of inclusivity due to remaining gaps in service implementation. A significant relationship was also identified in Health Care Facilities, suggesting that although this sector was substantially compliant, demographic differences still affected how respondents evaluated gender responsive features. Educational related Institutions likewise showed a significant relationship, which reflects the varying experiences of learners and personnel as they interact with school amenities and services. Public Spaces also demonstrated a significant association, implying that differences in gender shaped how individuals perceived safety, accessibility, and available facilities.

In contrast, no significant relationship was found between demographic profile and compliance in Safety and Protection Facilities. This aligns with the sector's overall full compliance rating, which indicates that gender responsive measures were implemented consistently for all users regardless of demographic differences. Similarly, Housing complexes showed no significant relationship, suggesting that the limitations in this sector were experienced broadly and uniformly across demographic groups, as the low compliance level affected all users in similar ways.

Overall, the findings indicate that demographic factors influence perceptions of gender

mainstreaming only in sectors where compliance is substantial and implementation varies across facility features. Sectors with either consistently high compliance or uniformly low compliance do not show significant demographic differences in user perception.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn regarding the level of gender mainstreaming compliance in government managed Social Development Sector infrastructure projects in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija.

1. The respondents reflected a diverse gender composition, with females representing the largest group, followed closely by males, and a meaningful proportion identifying as non-binary. This diversity provides a broad and inclusive perspective on the assessment of gender mainstreaming across facilities.

2. Most Social Development Sector facilities demonstrated substantial compliance with gender mainstreaming principles. Social Welfare and Development Facilities, Health Care Facilities, Educational Related Institutions, and Public Spaces generally met LGU standards, while Safety and Protection Facilities achieved full compliance, indicating strong and consistent application of gender responsive practices.

3. Housing complexes showed minimal compliance, revealing major gaps in safety, privacy, sanitation, and inclusive amenities. This sector requires priority attention to meet gender responsive standards and ensure equitable access and protection for all users.

4. Significant relationships were found between demographic profile and perceived compliance in Social Welfare Facilities, Health Care Facilities, Educational Institutions, and Public Spaces. No significant relationship emerged in Safety and Protection Facilities and Housing complexes, indicating uniform experiences in these sectors regardless of demographic differences.

5. Overall, gender mainstreaming is effectively integrated in most SDS facilities, supported by the

utilization of GAD funds. However, challenges identified by the Philippine Commission on Women, including limited gender analysis skills, difficulty incorporating GAD into routine operations, and insufficient gender disaggregated data, continue to slow progress.

6. Sustained improvement is essential across all facilities. Fully compliant sectors must maintain and monitor their practices, substantially compliant sectors should focus on targeted enhancements, and minimally compliant sectors must initiate urgent upgrades to provide safe, inclusive, and gender responsive environments.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen gender mainstreaming practices in government managed Social Development Sector infrastructure projects and to support future research and policy development.

1. Future research should include length of employment in the demographic profile to better understand gender mainstreaming awareness over time.

2. To increase accuracy in Social Development Sector assessments, researchers should include additional institutions such as PJGMMRC and BJMP.

3. Future studies should expand to other sectors such as Environmental Development and Economic Development.

4. Government managed infrastructure in malls should be included due to cross utilization of facilities.

5. Engineers should attend seminars to strengthen their understanding of GAD guidelines and gender responsive infrastructure design.

6. Staff and administrators must receive training on gender mainstreaming implementation to ensure inclusive facility management.

7. The general public should be encouraged to participate in awareness campaigns to better understand the importance of gender mainstreaming in infrastructure.

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