WE Act 1325: Six Years of Implementing the Philippine National Action Plan on Women and Peace and Security
WE Act 1325 projects the last six years were supported by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Manila, DFAT-Australia through Oxfam, UK-HRD through Conciliation Resources, Canada Fund for Local Initiative, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders and United Nations-Development Program-Philippines.
I n t r o d u c t i o n: “W o m e n h o l d u p h a l f t h e s k y”

Gabriela Silang. Melchora Aquino. Corazon Aquino. All Filipino women. All played a role in the unfolding of our country’s history—not only as witnesses, but as active participants. The first led a revolt against Spanish rule; the other nurtured and cared for the Filipino revolutionaries. The last became the first woman president of the Philippines. The multitude of roles that each played in her individual life—as leader, revolutionary, mother—and in our nation’s history, affirms the truism that women live their lives wearing many hats. In each of these roles, every woman contributes to our country’s progress.

Today, the women’s sector in the Philippines remains a vibrant agent of nation building. Filipino women from all walks of life are doing their share to build peace. Women have played an important role in the peace negotiations of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Until mid-2016, a woman, Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, was at the helm of the government’s side of the negotiations. Moreover, over the last six years, many women on the ground participated in the peace process in various capacities—through building, making, and propagating peace in their own lives, and in the lives of their communities which are at the center of the conflict.

Indeed, one cannot discount the important role that women continue to play. As an ancient Chinese proverb says, “Women hold up half the sky.” The evolving role of women in peace and conflict situations can no longer be ignored.

“The Philippines should be justifiably proud of the role that women played in the negotiations.”

— Warren Hoye, Australian Embassy, Manila
UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and the Philippine National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

The United Nations (UN) has consistently recognized the important role women play in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 (UN SCR 1325) emphasized the importance of women’s equal participation and full involvement in maintaining and promoting peace. Subsequently, the UN issued Security Council Resolution No. 1820 (SCR 1820), which condemned the use of sexual violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

In response to these landmark UN Security Council resolutions, the Philippine Government crafted the Philippine National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP-WPS). The NAP-WPS has been largely a collaborative effort between the government and civil society. In 2007, civil society approached government agencies—the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and then National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) now Philippine Commission on Women (PCW)—to discuss the idea of developing the NAP-WPS. A preparatory committee on WPS was created, with members from civil society, OPAPP, and PCW. The committee designed regional consultations, and after these were held, the NAP-WPS was adopted through the signing of Executive Order No. 865 on March 1, 2010 (“Shadow report,” 2016, p. 1).

To date, Government, together with its civil society partners, has implemented the NAP-WPS for six years.
WE Act 1325: Formed to help implement the NAP-WPS

The Women Engaged in Action on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (WE Act 1325) “is a national network of civil society organizations launched on November 17, 2010” (“Shadow report,” 2016, p.1). It is the primary civil society network that helps implement the NAP-WPS.

Civil society organizations, namely: Sulong CARHRIHL, Center for Peace Education-Miriam College, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZOPI) and Miriam College’s Women and Gender Institute (WAGI) banded together to “concretely bring [the NAP-WPS] to the women most affected by conflict situations in the country” (“Shadow report,” 2016, p.2). The network currently has 35 member organizations nationwide.

The NAP-WPS has 14 action points and four pillars. Of these, WE Act 1325 has largely focused on the following initiatives: “policy review, capacity building, and training of various stakeholders; engagement with negotiators of on-going peace processes; advocacy to increase women’s participation in peace-building in national and local levels; peace education and media campaigns” (“Shadow report,” 2016, p.1). These initiatives “are done as a network; individually by members; or through bilateral and multilateral cooperation among members of the network” (Claravall, 2012, p. 1).

Six years of NAP-WPS Implementation:
Women working with and for women

Remarkable experiences of women working with and for women have emerged from the last six years’ implementation of the NAP-WPS. Civil society tapped various stakeholders, and collaborated with different government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to work towards the fulfillment of the NAP-WPS agenda.

The NAP-WPS has four main pillars, they are: Protection and Prevention; Empowerment and Participation; Promotion and Mainstreaming and Capacity Development; and Monitoring and Reporting.

The activities and initiatives of the civil society implementation of the NAP-WPS over the last six years are summarized by pillar and enumerated by action point. They are as follows:

I commend the Women Engaged in Action on 1325 (WE Act 1325) for its initiatives to bring together the various civil society groups that address women, peace and security.”

– Maria Cleofe Gettie C. Sandoval, former Undersecretary, Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process

1WE Act 1325 members: Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao (AFRIM), Al Mujadillah Development Foundation Inc. (AMDF), Aksyon para sa Kapayapaan (AKKAPKA), Asia-Pacific Centre on the Responsibility to Protect (APC-R2P), Asian Circle 1325, Balay Mindanaw Foundation, Inc., Balay Rehabilitation Center, Center for Peace Education (CPE), Coalition of Mindanao Indigenous Peoples for Peace Advocacy (COMMIPPA), Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Governance (CCAGG), GZO Peace Institute, Generation Peace (GenPeace), God-centered Women’s Association for Peace Advocacy (GWAPA), Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID), Isis International-Manila, Kutawato Council for Justice and Peace (KCJP), Lupah Sug Bangsamoro Women, Mindanao Peoples’ Caucus (MPC), Mother s for Peace, Nisa ul haqq fi Bangsamoro, Paghilusa sa Paghihaet Negros (PSPN), Peacebuilders Community-Kalinga, Philippine Action Network to Control Arms (PhilANCA), Philippine Coalition for the International Criminal Court (PCICC), Pilipina, Pinay Kilos (Pink), SLCB Cultural Heritage Center, Saligan, Samar Women’s Action Network for Peace and Development, Sulong CARHRIHL, Tarbilang Foundation, Teach Peace Build Peace Movement, Teduray Lambangian Women’s Organization, Inc. (TLWO), Young Moro Professionals Network (YMPN), Women and Gender Institute and United Youth of the Philippines Women (UnyPhil-Women)
Pillar 1: Protection and Prevention

The first pillar of the NAP-WPS ensures “the protection of women’s human rights and prevention of violation of these rights in armed conflict and post-conflict situations” (WE Act 1325, n.d.).

Action Point 4 – Promoting Women, Peace and Security Resolutions among State and Non-State Actors

WE Act 1325 partnered with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) to conduct “orientation and follow-up sessions on WPS and NAP among senior officers and Gender and GAD Focal points of the Philippine Army and the Philippine National Police” (“Shadow report,” 2016, p.2). The goal of these sessions was to have the NAP-WPS operationalized in the plans, programs, and activities of these two agencies.

As a result, the PNP has conducted further trainings on the following topics: Briefing/Orientation on the Framework Agreement on Bangsamoro for the PNP personnel; a Woman’s Forum on UNSCR 1325 and 1820; the Women Biennial Summit; and a Forum on Women in Peace and Security. The last was conducted nationwide for all PNP regional offices and their Regional Advisory Councils.

The PNP also incorporated the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in its PATROL PLAN 2030 or the PNP Peace and Order Agenda for Transformation and upholding the Rule of Law” (Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015). Additionally, “the plan aims to promote community safety awareness through community-oriented and human-rights based -policing”(Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015).

According to PNP Colonel Susan Jalla, PNP also included items on NAP-WPS implementation in its 2015 GAD Plan and Budget. (Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015).

The NAP-WPS orientation and follow-up sessions have also been particularly fruitful for the Philippine Army. General Rafael Valencia said that the Army has “published and implemented several policy directives promoting gender equality in training assignment, utilization, career path and promotion of female military officers” (as cited in Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015).

“Bilang isang lalaki, naniniwala ako na tunay na malaki ang kakayahan ng mga kababaihan upang maihatid natin ang serbisyon makatotohanan sa ating mga kababayan at dahil dito kailangan pa nating lalong pagtibayin ang sapat at pantay nilang karapatan sa bawat areas of operation sa ating organization.” (As a man, I believe that women have a large role to play in being able to serve our countrymen because of this we need to firm up and uphold their equal rights in the areas of operation of our organization)

– PCSUPT Rene D. Ong

Furthermore, General Valencia mentioned that the Army has “required staff officers involved in operations, intelligence and civil-military operations to promote the NAP on WPS in all aspects of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding” (as cited in Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015). Valencia said that “more women members of the Army are now deployed as civil-military relations staff working on community-based peace and development initiatives in conflict-affected areas” and stressed that “the recent recognition of women trailblazers in the different field of Army operations will set the tone for more participation of women in addressing situation in conflict-affected areas where the focus of the AFP is on conflict resolution and peace-building” (as cited in Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015).

Like the PNP, the Philippine Army has also “integrated
WPS in the 2016 GAD Plan and Budget in all Philippine Army Major Units” (as cited in Nario-Galace & Viar, 2015).

WE Act 1325 conducts WPS orientation sessions for members of the security sector other than the PNP and the Philippine Army. Since May 2011, WE Act 1325 has conducted WPS orientation sessions for UN peacekeepers from the Philippine prior to their deployment to Golan Heights, Haiti, and Liberia. With support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, WE Act 1325 has trained over 3,000 UN Peacekeepers to date. This was accomplished in coordination with WE Act 1325 member organizations, the Asia-Pacific Centre on the Responsibility to Protect (APC-R2P) and Women and Gender Institute (WAGI).

As for promoting WPS among non-state actors, WE Act 1325 conducted an action research entitled, “Women Working on the Ground for Peace.” Through this study, WE Act 1325 “reach[ed] out to women in indigenous communities affected by armed conflict” (“Shadow report,” 2016). The study involved the conduct of a series of workshops in Agusan del Norte, Surigao del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, North Cotabato, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley. In these workshops, women’s perspectives on the armed conflict between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front (NDF) were gathered. These perspectives were published as “Voices from the Field: Community Women’s Perspectives on the GPH-NDF Armed Conflict.”

**Action Point 5 - Sustaining Peace Negotiations and Working for Gender-Responsive Peace Agreements**

Emphasizing the importance of dialogue, WE Act 1325 has constantly called for ceasefire between armed groups, specifically the military and the NDF. The network has issued statements for the resumption of peace talks between GPH and NDF, citing the effect of armed conflict on civilians, especially women and children.

WE Act 1325 has also actively engaged in dialogue
with both the GPH and MILF panels, as well as the Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC). The objective of these dialogues was to lobby for a gender-responsive GPH-MILF agreement. The network “also met with women in the Cabinet to dialogue on what [WE Act 1325] and its members can do to support peace negotiations” (“Shadow report,” 2016). During the negotiations between the GPH and MILF in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, three members of WE Act 1325 were given the chance to participate as observers in the peace talks.

WE Act 1325 “actively lobbied and campaigned for an engendered Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL)” (“Shadow report,” 2016). It participated, organized, and co-organized “several public actions to underscore the call for a BBL that integrates language on gender equality and women’s human rights, particularly women’s right to participation” (“Shadow report,” 2016). The lobby points that WE Act 1325 pushed came from its consultations with thousands of women on the ground, who were given the opportunity to express what they wanted to be contained in the law. WE Act 1325 also co-organized, together with Anak Mindanao (AMIN) party list, a breakfast meeting to dialogue with women parliamentarians about the women’s agenda.

**Participation in arms control and disarmament campaigns**

Over and beyond these efforts, WE Act 1325 worked for the protection of women’s human rights and the prevention of violations of these rights by working for arms control and disarmament.

Through its member organization the Center for Peace Education (CPE), which also served as its secretariat during the first six years of the NAP-WPS implementation, WE Act 1325 campaigned for an engendered Arms Trade Treaty. It “helped work for the adoption of the language in the UN level by working with other organizations such as International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) Women’s Network, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Global Alliance on Armed Violence...
Pillar 2: Empowerment and Participation

The second pillar of the NAP-WPS emphasizes “empower(ing) women and ensur(ing) their active and meaningful participation in areas of peacebuilding, peacekeeping, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post conflict reconstruction” (WE Act 1325, n.d.).

Action Point 7 – Involvement and Participation of Women in Addressing Armed Conflict

Taking its cue from UN SCR 1325, which emphasizes the vital role of women’s participation in decision-making, particularly in relation to peace and security, WE Act 1325, together with its partners, engaged in the following activities to bring women’s voices to the fore, especially on matters relating to peace and security in their communities:

“Women Working for Normalization”. Supported by the Australian Government, this project was a series of consultation and capacity building workshops. The perspectives of women in conflict areas in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)—particularly on normalization—were gathered during these workshops and then “submitted to the members of the negotiating panels that drafted the final peace agreement as well as to the Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC) which was tasked to draft the BBL” (“Shadow report,” 2016). Women from Maguindanao, Lanao, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Zamboanga participated in these workshops.

“Advocacy Training on the Bangsamoro Basic Law”. This training was intended to “ensure that provisions on women’s meaningful participation will be strongly reflected in the [BBL]” (“Advocacy Training,” 2014). Supported by the UK Embassy in Manila and Conciliation Resources, the activity helped women come up with “strategies and activities, both at the national and community level, to push for women’s meaningful participation in the Bangsamoro” (“Advocacy Training,” 2014).

“The woman working for normalization will help prevent conflicts. She will keep the peace in communities and mediate in disputes. She will educate for peace, nonviolence and respect for diversity.”

– Jasmin Nario-Galace, Executive Director, Center for Peace Education-Miriam College
Kroeker, the training reviewed local indigenous and traditional methods of conflict resolution and mediation. Input on mainstream methods of mediation, and a session on “Creating the Process” were also provided ("Advanced Conflict Resolution," 2015). The training was attended by Moro and IP women from Maguindanao and Zamboanga. A highlight of this activity was the formation of an Ad Hoc Group of Mediators among the training participants.

The initiative was the first partnership of WE Act 1325 and the Embassy of Canada through the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). WE Act 1325 member organizations—namely, the Kutawato Council for Justice and Peace, Nisa ul haqq fi Bangsamoro, and Pinay Kilos—coordinated with CFLI on this project.

"Training Workshop on Women’s Political Participation in the Bangsamoro". This activity emphasized the importance of “promoting the meaningful participation of women in the Bangsamoro” ("First Leg of the Training Workshop," 2015). Women from different parts of the ARMM region, particularly from Zamboanga, Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-tawi, Lanao provinces and Maguindanao, and Cotabato provinces from Central Mindanao, attended sessions on “Mindanao history, early warning and early response, conflict resolution, human rights monitoring, advocacy and campaigning, political platform development and winning elections, and resource mobilization, specifically...project proposal making” ("First Leg of the Training Workshop," 2015). Towards the end of the training, the women attended a panel discussion with elected women public officials in the region. These officials gave tips on how women can overcome challenges in relation to political participation and offered advice to women who desired to lead and be elected to public office. Notably, some participants ran for public office in the most recent elections.

**Pillar 3: Promotion and Mainstreaming**

The NAP-WPS’s third pillar focuses on “promot(ion) and mainstream(ing) (of) gender perspective in all aspects of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding” (WE Act 1325, n.d.).

**Action Point 10 – Mainstream NAP into national, regional and local development plans**
particularly in their GAD planning processes and allocate funds from the GAD budget as well as tap other resources for its implementation.

Localizing the NAP: From NAP to LAP

The NAP was promoted and mainstreamed at the local level through the localization of NAPs. WE Act 1325, together with GNWP, worked with selected local government units (LGUs) to draft Local Action Plans (LAPs). This localization program aimed to: “enhance women’s capacities to participate in discussions and decision-making on peace and security issues and amplify their voices; identify the provisions of the NAP on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 that are relevant to the local government and initiate local multi-sectoral action planning for the implementation of the provisions, particularly as they relate to women’s participation in decision-making and the protection of women and girls’ rights; and promote shared responsibility and accountability between national and local government entities; and national and local CSOs in implementing UNSCR 1325 and 1820” (“Shadow report,” 2016).

The initiative also resulted in the “adoption of municipal legislations in other conflict-affected areas such as Calbiga, Basey and Marabut in Samar, various municipalities of Agusan del Norte and Sultan Mastura in Maguindanao” (“Shadow report,” 2016).

Provincial, city, and municipal resolutions and ordinances were also passed in response to the “localization” of the NAP-WPS. Local legislation on the “allocation of reserved seats for women in local conflict resolution bodies such as the Peace and Order Councils (otherwise known locally as Lupong Tagapamayapa) and other mechanisms of local government; funding legal, economic, educational psycho-social support and spiritual services for women and girl survivors of conflict; and providing emergency and livelihood assistance to children and women victims of armed conflicts among others” are some examples of the foregoing (“Shadow report,” 2016).

Another significant offshoot of the network’s localization workshops is the formation of new member organizations. WE Act 1325 member Samar Women’s Action Network (SWAN) was born during the one of the localization workshops held in Samar. SWAN was “started by four women from government and civil society who attended these localizations workshops and who wanted to pursue and monitor the implementation of the local legislations crafted” (“Shadow report,” 2016).

Capacity building to promote and mainstream gender perspective

For this particular pillar, WE Act 1325 has “conducted a total of 54 capacity building initiatives from 2010-2013 (Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, 2016). To strengthen its localization work, WE Act 1325 and GNWP organized a capacity building workshop on WPS and the NAP-WPS for officials of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The workshop aimed to “raise the awareness of the DILG officials and personnel of the relevant Security Council Resolutions and other international policies and directly engage them in identifying
concrete actions toward the implementation of the PNAP” (“Capacity Building,” 2015).

Promoting Awareness of Women’s Issues in Peace and Conflict

A large part of the promotion and mainstreaming activities that WE Act 1325 has implemented engaged women in different sectors and from different professions.

**Action Point 11 – Integrate peace, human rights, international humanitarian law, non-violence, and gender education in all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education**

**Gender education in schools**

WE Act 1325 promoted the NAP-WPS agenda by holding activities in schools. WE Act 1325 partnered with the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) to hold forums that raised awareness on the BBL. These forums, which were held in CEAP member schools, “address[ed] misinformation regarding the Bangsamoro Basic Law” and served as “an opportunity for the students to appreciate the role that women play in the peace process” (“WE Act 1325 holds,” 2015).

“It’s also important for women to have choices. I don’t want to get bangs but I want to show my support.”

– Natalia Baltao, Miriam College student who had her hair colored during the Bangs for Bangsamoro event (http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/624225/miriam-students-sport-bangs-for-bangsamoro)

Another activity involving students was the “Bangs for Bangsamoro” campaign. Women students were invited to show their support for the proposed BBL by having their hair cut to sport bangs. It “was actually a nonviolent way of expressing their sentiments particularly on the importance of women’s participation in the Bangsamoro” (“Shadow report,” 2016).

A poster-making contest held in partnership with GNWP was another avenue to encourage youthful expression about peace issues in the country, specifically issues tackled in the NAP-WPS. The theme of the contest was, “Young People Painting Women Making Peace.”

**Action Point 12 – Promote the involvement of civil society organizations, particularly peace and women’s groups in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NAP.**

**Activities that promote involvement of key women leaders from grassroots communities**

One hundred twenty women community leaders from grassroots communities participated in a Women’s Forum on the theme: “Upholding Women’s Meaningful Participation in the Bangsamoro.” The forum, which has held in Cotabato City, “focused on strengthening and consolidating the gains of advancing women’s participation in the Bangsamoro” (“Women’s Forum,” 2015). One of the forum highlights was the presentation of the results of 21 action research studies. These studies, which were completed months before the forum was held, “inform[ed] relevant transition bodies of the roles and responsibilities that women envision in the Bangsamoro government” and “identif[ied] policy recommendations and actions plans for the engagement of women in the Bangsamoro particularly in areas of politics, governance, transitional justice and community security” (“Women’s Forum,” 2015). The forum was organized and initiated by WE Act 1325 member organizations United Youth of the Philippines- Women (UnYPPhil-Women), Teduray Lambangian Women’s Organization Incorporated (TLWOI), Nisa Ul Haqq Fi Bangsamoro, with support from the British Embassy in Manila, and Conciliation Resources.
Action Point 13 – Promote gender-responsive and culture-sensitive advocacy campaigns through mainstream, alternative, and community media to make the community, especially women, aware of women’s issues in peace and conflict including the vital role of women in peace and security work.

Women in Community Media

WE Act 1325 conducted training sessions with Women in Community Media on the Bangsamoro. The training aimed to get women involved in community media “to generate greater public awareness on the peace process, the draft bill [the BBL], and on women’s provision [sic] on the BBL” (“Women in Community Media,” 2014). The British Embassy Manila and Conciliation Resources supported the initiative.

Mindanao Women Meet the Media

Another initiative that promoted and mainstreamed gender perspectives took the form of a meeting between women from Mindanao and women members of the national media. The engagement, which was implemented by WE Act 1325 member Isis International with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, “provided a space for women affected by armed conflict to share with women in national media their lived realities” (Shadow report,” 2016). This then “paved the way for the publication of these women’s stories in several major dailies as well as in social media (”Shadow report,” 2016).

Mainstreaming: Conveying the Message of Women, Peace and Security

Action Point 13

Forum on “Women Harvesting Gains, Keeping the Peace in a Stalled Peace Process”

In commemoration of Women’s Day, WE Act 1325 held a forum featuring women involved in the peace process: Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, then head of the government peace panel in negotiations with the MILF; Ms. Karen Tañada, Executive Director of WE Act 1325 member organization, Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZOPI); and National Civilian
Peacekeeper from Nonviolent Peaceforce, Ms. Xarifa Sanguila. The forum was held at Miriam College.

Each panel member spoke about the important roles that women played in the peace process, the lessons they have learned in the course of their peace work, and the way forward for women peacemakers and peacebuilders. Participants found the guests’ sharings valuable, and learned much about what was happening on the ground and at the peace table. The event was supported by the Embassy of Canada through the CFLI.

**GNWP’s Women Speak Out for Peace campaign**

To further mainstream a gender perspective, WE Act 1325 took part in the GNWP’s Speak Out for Peace Campaign, which was held in celebration of the International Day of Peace. The celebration included the following activities: a mini-exhibit on UN SCRs 1325 and 1820, and the NAP-WPS; a video presentation; and a photo booth where participants posed with messages about peace and women’s participation.

“Women have proven themselves to be good at conducting listening workshops for Bangsamoro communities...It provided peaceful platforms for reflective expressions of their anger and frustrations due to the non-passage of the BBL.”

- Xarifa Sanguila, National Civilian Peacekeeper, Nonviolent Peaceforce

(http://www.philstar.com/nation/2016/03/10/1561218/women-play-key-role-peace-process)
**Biyaheng Bangsamoro, Biyaheng Kapayapaan Peace Caravan**

WE Act 1325 also joined Biyaheng Bangsamoro, Biyaheng Kapayapaan Peace Caravan, an activity of the All Out Peace network. The activity aimed to intensify support for the BBL. It was an opportunity for civil society to persuade legislators to work towards the passage of a BBL that complied with the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro. WE Act 1325 members Center for Peace Education (CPE) and the Women and Gender Institute (WAGI), both based in Miriam College, organized the welcome and program for the peace caravan’s pit stop along Katipunan Avenue.

**Women on the Airwaves for Peace and Security**

WE Act 1325, through its member-organization, SWAN, also mainstreamed WPS agenda through the radio show, “Women on the Airwaves for Peace and Security.” Anchored by a SWAN Member, Rachel Arnaz, the show featured topics like: women’s role as peacebuilders in their communities; tips for conflict management and resolution; women’s empowerment; the kind of leaders women should vote for; issues that women want elected leaders to prioritize; women’s rights—including the Violence against Women and Children (VAWC) Act; and opportunities for the betterment of women particularly livelihood initiatives for single mothers/solo parents. The show was conducted in Waray and was broadcast in Catarman, Northern Samar.

“You (WE Act 1325) recognized the value of going back to the communities. That is where we are most needed, and where we can make the most impact.”

– Hon. Djalia Turabin-Hataman, Party List Representative, Anak Mindanao

The show reached out to women especially in Catarman. It gave them an avenue to not only learn more about women empowerment, the LAPs, and gender but also to voice out their opinions and concerns, and how they want their issues to be addressed.

**WE Act 1325 publications promoting the WPS agenda**

WE Act 1325 published 12 publications as part of its efforts to mainstream the WPS agenda. These are:

- ARMM NAP Implementation, 2016
- Voices from the Field, 2015
- Women Making Peace in the Eyes of Young Artist, 2014
- Women Speak: Perspectives in Normalization, 2012
- NAP Implementation November 2010-Mid 2012, 2012
Publication of these volumes were made possible with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, UK Embassy, Oxfam-Australian Aid, Conciliation Resources, and the GNWP.

Pillar 4: Capacity development, and monitoring and reporting

The fourth pillar of the NAP-WPS highlights the importance of “institutional(izing) a system to monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the NAP in order to enhance accountability for successful implementation and the achievement of its goals” (WE Act 1325, n.d.).

Through the following initiatives, WE Act 1325 has been able to monitor, evaluate, and report on the implementation of the NAP-WPS. They are also examples of initiatives under Action Point 14:

Localization of stock-taking exercises and publication of the results

Stock-taking exercises are an integral part of the localization initiative. WE Act 1325 conducted these exercises together with GNWP. These exercises were conducted in the LGUs that drafted local action plans. Where localization initiatives had begun a series of focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) were undertaken. All these activities took place in: Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija; Real, Quezon; Calbiga, Samar; Tabuk, Kalinga and Butuan City in Agusan del Norte.

The results of the FGDs and KIIs have been gathered for publication. The latter will document what took place in the localization initiatives, and how they have made an impact on the lives of women on the ground and on the local peace and security situation. It will also identify what worked and what didn’t work in the implementation.

“Monitoring and evaluation” publications

Aside from the localization publication mentioned, the network has continually published monitoring and evaluation publications over the years. Among these research publications are:

- We Act 1325: Initial Initiatives at NAP Implementation November 2010 to mid-2012
- Women Count: four publications, from 2011 to 2014

These publications were made possible with the support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Oxfam-Australian Aid and the GNWP for the four Women Count volumes.

“This work by WE Act 1325 on Peace and Security in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao gives a detailed account of the recent history of women’s role in the peace process. It also highlights the actions taken, and those still outstanding, to fully implement the National Action Plan for the Philippines to implement the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820.”

– Justin Morgan, Country Director, Oxfam in the Philippines
The results of the Bangsamoro Barometer of Women’s Security action research, which was conducted by the network in 2015, have also been published. The research produced a volume entitled “Policy Paper on Women’s Security Issues in the Bangsamoro,” also published with assistance from Oxfam-Australian Aid. The policy paper articulated women’s security issues in various areas in ARMM. It also offered possible solutions to women’s security issues and interventions to address them. Lastly, the paper also highlighted that which women consider as indicators to measure changes in their safety and security.

“WE Act 1325’s commitment to the civil society monitoring of UN SCR program is a key contribution in reducing the accountability gap on the women and peace and security agenda.”

– Mavic Cabrera-Belleza, International Coordinator, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

“Monitoring” meetings

WE Act 1325 regularly holds members’ meetings. During these meetings, the WE Act 1325 secretariat reports to the members what transpired over the past year; what projects were implemented; and what challenges were faced. The members recommend how the network ought to move forward.

These meetings also serve as “monitoring meetings”—opportunities for the network to keep abreast of the activities being implemented nationwide by its member organizations. In this sense, the members’ meetings perform a dual function.

In the latest members’ meeting, the WE Act 1325 secretariat summarized all the agreements made by member organizations into a score card. The score card would enable the network to identify the status of WE Act 1325 initiatives. The members also discussed how the network might move forward, especially in terms of passing the baton to the next member-organization that would handle the secretariat.

Conclusion: Moving forward and continuing to work with and for women

The Philippines is the first country in Asia that adopted a national action plan for women, peace and security. Throughout the first six years of NAP-WPS implementation, the WE Act 1325 network brought together women from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao to pursue the common goal of building a shared peace with the country, most especially in their communities.

Much has been undertaken to build better security with and for women over the last six years. In implementing the NAP-WPS, government and civil society, including WE Act 1325, engaged with various actors and reached many women. However, there is a need to continue propagating this cause so that the fruits of the NAP-WPS might further be felt on the ground where peace and security are most needed.
References


