

Annex V

Notes on the Open Forum on Policy, Research and Advocacy Work

The following points/ideas were shared in the discussion:

- 1) It is important to do internal scanning or identify the capacity of the organization to undertake advocacy
- 2) One needs to make policy research before undertaking policy advocacy. Is this true? Because there are many organizations that “borrow” issues/data and make a campaign out of it.
- 3) There is a law in India prohibiting others to label women as witches or practitioners of witchcraft. The law now is being implemented. This law was passed by advocating in executive department.
- 4) The WLB’s experience on Engendering the Barangay Justice System is about equipping community women on documenting community-based incidences of women battering. We should document what we have been doing so that others can replicate it.
- 5) Anti-Rape Law and the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Law. It took us 18 years for these laws to be passed. It involved a lot of convincing on the part of the legislators and continuous efforts to increase the awareness of the people on these issues.
- 6) It is not enough that laws are passed. We should be vigilant so as to ensure that they are implemented. The challenge is how to translate the law into practice.



7) Women made Christmas cards and distributed it to legislators with info-messages on passing the two critical laws. It was not successful, so another campaign was launched in February, coinciding with Valentine's Day. They gave out flowers.

8) Policy research might not be necessary at all times; doing one will depend on the policy issue being discussed. If warranted, then we must do policy research.

9) It is good if an organization makes its own policy research so that member-organizations can participate in its process and campaign for it.

10) Thailand is a good area for policy research on HIV/AIDS because of the high HIV/AIDS incidence there. Our woman partners are empowered if they themselves can talk and discuss their problems openly. Now, women's groups are advocating a law allowing women to undergo abortion for HIV/AIDS-afflicted pregnant women. But some women's groups disagree.

11) There is a need to do research before doing policy advocacy.

12) About 50% of women represented in local government up to the state level; we are now advocating a) that women should also be represented in the assembly and b) that Muslim children be in school. We are mobilizing many people to make changes in government benefiting women. Groups can easily mobilize 25,000 people without printing any posters.

13) There is a need to advocate to legislators, not only through rallies but also through painstaking education and information sessions [as was the case of Manny Pacquiao].

14) ILHZ in Negros Oriental Philippines is focused on 2 MDGs – reducing child mortality and maternal mortality. The Philippines is fast approaching zero death rates because every time gaps surface, the solutions are identified. This is also true in terms of pooling of resources.

15) There is a need to put a "face" to our advocacies, one who can articulate the issues well.



16) There is a need to identify champions of our advocacies. Cambodia groups train women leaders with different skills so that they can effectively address their issues and campaigns.

17) Identification of gaps, putting faces into campaigns, bench markings, a call for action, media campaign; these are all important items that we need to consider in implementing campaigns.

