

# ADDRESSING WOMEN IN POVERTY

## through Communication for Development and Empowerment Actions

A case in The Philippines

### INTRODUCTION

One-fifth of the world's population is living in poverty; people who live with less than US\$ 1.25 a day (UNDP, 2015). In addition, poverty affected dramatically most of the women and children of rural areas of developing countries. Despite the fact that in the last 20 years about 700 million people around the world have come out from extreme poverty (USAID, 2014), it is still a reality in major rural areas of the global south.

The Philippines is one of those developing countries that are strongly struggling with poverty: 51.9% of Philippines' population are in multidimensional poverty and, 4.2% of Filipino are in extreme multidimensional poverty, in addition, in terms of income, 19% of the population is living below the poverty line of US\$ 1.25 a day (UNDP, 2015). Women are dramatically affected by poverty; 25% of Filipino population are women in poverty and 22% of women's employment is in agriculture. Therefore, as part of one the strategies to addressing poverty amongst women in rural areas, multilateral organisations, NGOs and grassroots organisations have promoted or led the conformation of women's organisations around agriculture boosting women empowerment and alleviate poverty.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Thus, through the Women's empowerment framework steps towards increasing gender equality, starting with meeting basic welfare needs to equality in the control over the means of production. The advantage of the framework is that link women's inequality and poverty to structural issues so that empowerment will be addressed to tackle core causes of inequality rather than only assess income (Longwe, 1995).

#### WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT APPROACH

Control  
Mobilisation  
Conscientisation  
Access  
Welfare

#### PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

Dialogue  
Voice  
Liberation pedagogy  
Action-Reflection  
Participatory spaces

Then, the Participatory Communication Principles will complement the previous with guiding and assessing the participatory communication towards enable and boost empowerment. For instance, through the principles one may address aim of the change, development problem, culture, capabilities, stakeholders among others. Thus, the following principles can be complemented due to those are a suggestion of the most relevant (Tufte and Mefalopulos, 2009).

In addition, for communication and empowerment actions to be effective and have long-term effects should involve as many stakeholders as possible which means consider as well CSR initiatives in the sector.

#### IMPACT FRAME

Institutional forces  
Resources, roles & research

Finally, the Impact Evaluation Frame will allow assess the scale of the dynamics of the WEF and PC at different levels such as institutional forces, resources, research, men, women among others.

Source: Vladimir Figueroa, 2016

### JUSTIFICATION

To analyse to what extent Communication for Development can foster empowerment in women's organization in fisheries, a conceptual framework has been proposed comprising; Women's empowerment framework (WEF), Participatory Communication Principles (PC) and, the Impact Evaluation Frame (IE).

### FINDINGS

What affects women affect the whole system (market, community, society, household, democracy). Therefore, empowerment interventions should bring into programmes as many stakeholders as possible to foster long-term changes.

Integrated empowerment interventions may ensure major structural changes in gender inequalities when tackled specific cultural, political and market inequalities.

Empowerment and communication interventions may aim to change structural causes of poverty, as lack of capabilities, rather than consequences; low income.

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