

# Quota Profile: Philippines

## A. Country wise quota profile

### 1. Status of quotas in Philippines

#### *Election Law Quota Regulation, National Parliament*

The 1986 Constitution clearly states: "For three consecutive terms after the ratification of this Constitution, one-half of the seats allocated to party-list representatives shall be filled, as provided by law, by selection or election from the labor, peasant, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, women, youth, and such other sectors as may be provided by law, except the religious sector." (Article VI, section 5.)

Number of Women in Lower House:	Election Year: <b>2004</b>	Number of Women Elected: <b>36 of 236 , 15.3%</b>
Number of Women in Upper House:	Election Year: <b>2004</b>	Number of Women Elected/Appointed: <b>4 of 24, 16.7%</b>

#### *Constitutional or Legislative Quota, Local Government/Sub-National Level*

The 1991 Local Government Code requires that a woman be one of three sectoral representatives that sits in every municipal, city, and provincial legislative council.

#### *Political Party Quota for Electoral Candidates*

The Party List Law (RA 7941) passed in 1995 makes it compulsory to include women on political party lists. The law provides for the election of party list representatives from different sectors. The law allocates 20% of the 250 seats in the Philippine House of Representatives (Lower House) for marginalized sectors of society including women. It aims to ensure that representatives of small parties and sectors of society have a voice in the policy making process that is dominated by traditional politicians. The law mandates that voters elect not only a district representative to Congress, but also a party or sectoral group of their choice. To elect one candidate, each sector must get at least 2% of the total number of votes cast for the party list system.

### 2. Forms of quotas

- a) Election Law Quota Regulation, National Parliament
- b) Constitutional or Legislative Quota, Local Government/Sub-National Level
- c) Political Party Quota for Electoral Candidates

### 3. Positions of Major Political Parties on Quotas

The multi-party system that emerged out of the post-Marcos democratization in 1986 has not dislodged the traditional politics and elitist democracy that governed the country for many years. Firstly, the main political parties are not ideological or programmatic. They are primarily “personality oriented” that revolves around a presidential candidate or a political family. This makes the meaningful measurement of women membership almost impossible since these parties have “revolving door membership” as individual or organizational alliances constantly shift in every election – with the winning president’s party taking a windfall in membership at the start of his/her term. The main parties are:

Party	Details, Quota provisions:
<b>Lakas-National Union of Christian and Muslim Democrats</b>	Party of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; established as a presidential vehicle of former President Fidel-Ramos
<b>Nationalist People’s Coalition (NPC)</b>	Party organized by Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco as his presidential vehicle in 1992
<b>Liberal Party (LP)</b>	Old party led by the family of former President Manuel Roxas
<b>Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP)</b>	Originally, the informal party of Corazon Aquino but evolved as the allied party of the ousted President Estrada
<b>Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP)</b>	Base party of former president Estrada; is now political vehicle of his Senator-wife and cose allies
<b>Akbayan! Citizens Action Party (AKBAYAN)</b>	House Bill 5496, or the Gender Balance Act of 2006, wants 30 percent of all positions in the bureaucracy, military, police, government-owned and controlled corporations and other agencies, allotted to women starting next year. Political parties shall also reserve for women 30 percent of their official candidates for national and local posts. The proportion will increase to 40 percent by 2010, and further to one-half in 2013.
<b>Gabriela Women’s Party</b>	An all Women's party associated with the extreme Left, representing 250 women's organizations. The party got 3.7 percent of the votes in the 2004 national elections.
<b>Philippines Democratic Socialist Party (PDSP)</b>	PDSP has a 25 percent quota for women.

#### **4. What's in the pipeline / Immediate areas for advocacy**

a) Since the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress (1992-1995), several legislative measures have been proposed to enhance women's political participation, but none has been enacted into law. Among them was the "Women Empowerment Act" which allocated a one-third quota for women in all appointive positions at both national and local governments. Although 29 members of the House of Representatives drafted and supported the bill in the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress, the other 215 members did not agree. The bill was re-filed in the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress (1995-1998) and 11<sup>th</sup> Congress (1998-2001), but was not seen as a priority issue.

b) In the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress (2001-2004) there are two bills filed in the Senate by Senators Loren Legarda-Leviste and John Osmena III specifically addressing the need to include women in the political sphere by allocating at least 1/3 of appointive positions in the national and local government. In the House of Representatives, a similar measure was filed by Representative Josefina Jison.

c) Akbayan Representatives Ana Theresia Hontiveros-Baraquel, Loretta Ann Rosales and Mario Juyo Aguja filed a measure during the current 13<sup>th</sup> Congress that allocates 30 percent of the positions in the bureaucracy, military, police, government-owned and controlled corporations and other agencies to Filipino women. Calling the proposed act as the "Gender Balance Act of 2006 which seeks to adopt a quota system that progressively widens representation for women in power structures and decision mechanism." Baraquel said. Under the bill, 30 percent of cabinet positions should be allocated to women. Likewise, women shall be designated as undersecretaries, assistant secretaries, directors, division chiefs, ambassadors, justices of the Supreme Courts, judges and prosecutors. The bill provides further that all political parties shall reserve 30% of its official candidates to women in national and local elections at the provincial, regional, city and municipal levels. The military, police and other law enforcement institutions shall reserve at least 30% of its table of organization, from the rank-and-file to the top positions to women.

#### **5. Who's pushing it?**

Some of the groups that are particularly active advocating for a 30% quota are: The Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines (DSWP), the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), Center for Legislative Development (CLD), and Akbayan! Citizen's Action Party (Akbayan).

#### **6. Major Achievements/ Best Practices**

- a) Several women's sectoral groups have registered with the Election commission. These groups support the introduction of legislation to ensure a 30% quota for women in all decision-making bodies.
- b) In 1992 two seats were reserved for women in the category 'women' in the House of Representatives.

#### **7. What to avoid**

- a) Disregarding the necessity of improving also the quality of women's participation – the introduction of quota does not guarantee that topics relevant for women are given more importance
- b) Increasing the number of women in high official positions just in order to fulfill the quota, without vesting them with the respective powers

## **8. What helps/ what hinders the effective working of quotas**

### **Hindrances**

- a) Women were always relegated to the political background.
- b) Lack of confidence and capacity of women leaders to run and stay in office.
- c) Women in government offices does not immediately create woman-friendly measures, or even good government

### **Enabling factors**

- a) Creation of an enabling environment for women's political empowerment and gender parity in representation in government.
- b) Full and effective implementation of policies and programs on women's participation in politics and decision-making and promoting gender balance.
- c) Affirmative action for women and electing more women in key positions, including Congress and in local governments.
- d) Gender awareness trainings for women and men leaders/government officials.

### References:

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