



Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL
Old Capitol Building, Bacolod City
Tel. No. 707-8075 (Admin) * 435-7698 (Board Member) * 709-0121 (Legislative Division)
OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN OF THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL HELD IN THE CITY OF BACOLOD ON THE 12TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2025

PRESENT:

Hon. Jose Benito A. Alonso	Vice-Governor/Presiding Officer
Hon. Laurence Marxlen J. Dela Cruz	Member - 1 st District
Hon. Araceli T. Somosa	Member - 1 st District
Hon. Sixto Teofilo Roxas V. Guanzon, Jr.	Member - 2 nd District
Hon. Arthur Christopher D. Marañon	Member - 2 nd District
Hon. Hope Marey B. Depasucat	Member - 3 rd District
Hon. Andrew Gerard L. Montelibano	Member - 3 rd District
Hon. Patricia Paula M. Alonso-Valderrama	Member - 4 th District
Hon. Nicholas M. Yulo	Member - 4 th District
Hon. Rita Angela S. Gatuslao	Member - 5 th District
Hon. Hadji P. Trojillo	Member - 5 th District
Hon. Genaro G. Alvarez, IV	Member - 6 th District
Hon. Jeffrey T. Tubola	Member - 6 th District
Hon. Richard Julius L. Sablan	Member - ABC Rep.
Hon. Mayvelyn L. Madrid	Member - SKF Rep.

ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS:

Hon. Julius Martin D. Asistio	Member - PCL Rep.
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ORDINANCE NO. 016
Series of 2025

AN ORDINANCE INSTITUTIONALIZING THE SUSTAINABLE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRACK (SWEET) INITIATIVE IN THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, PURSUANT TO THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD) CODE OF THE PROVINCE, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Authored and Introduced by:
HON. RITA ANGELA S. GATUSLAO
HON. HOPE MAREY B. DEPASUCAT
HON. PATRICIA PAULA M. ALONSO-VALDERRAMA
HON. ARACELI T. SOMOSA
HON. MAYVELYN L. MADRID

WHEREAS, the 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates the State to recognize and promote the role of women in nation-building, and ensure the fundamental equality of women and men before the law;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9710, or the “Magna Carta of Women”, promotes the economic empowerment of women and guarantees their right to equal access to resources, opportunities, and development initiatives, particularly through entrepreneurship;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 7192, also known as the “Women in Development and Nation Building Act”, recognizes the importance of women’s economic participation and encourages their full integration into economic activities, including entrepreneurship;



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WHEREAS, the Provincial Gender and Development (GAD) Code of Negros Occidental underscores the importance of gender-responsive policies and programs that support women's economic empowerment, including the promotion of women-led enterprises and entrepreneurial development;

WHEREAS, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), emphasize the importance of promoting women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment as critical pathways toward inclusive and sustainable economic growth;

WHEREAS, the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental recognizes the significant role of women in the local economy and is committed to promoting sustainable women empowerment through entrepreneurship by providing them with access to resources, training, and support services, in accordance with the GAD Code;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Negros Occidental in session duly assembled, that:

SECTION 1. Title

This Ordinance shall be known as the "Sustainable Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Track (SWEET) Ordinance of Negros Occidental".

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy

It is hereby declared the policy of the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental to promote and support the economic empowerment of women through entrepreneurship, ensure their equal access to resources and opportunities, and foster the development of sustainable women-led enterprises, in alignment with the Provincial GAD Code.

SECTION 3. Objectives

The Sustainable Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Track (SWEET) Initiative shall aim to:

1. Encourage and support women's active participation in entrepreneurship and business development, particularly women from marginalized and disadvantaged sectors;
2. Provide women with the necessary training, mentorship, and access to financial and non-financial resources to establish, grow, and sustain their businesses;
3. Promote gender-responsive policies and programs that create a conducive environment for women entrepreneurs, ensuring they have access to markets, financing, and business networks;
4. Facilitate the integration of women-led enterprises into local, regional, and national supply chains, promoting inclusive economic growth and development;



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5. Foster a culture of innovation, sustainability, and social responsibility in women-led businesses across various sectors.

SECTION 4. Institutionalization of the SWEET Initiative

The Sustainable Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Track (SWEET) Initiative is hereby institutionalized in the Province of Negros Occidental. It shall be implemented by the Provincial Gender and Development (GAD) Office in partnership with the Provincial Economic Development and Investment Center (PEDIC), the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO), and the Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation, among other relevant agencies.

SECTION 5. Key Components of the SWEET Initiative

The SWEET Initiative shall cover the following components:

1. Capacity-Building and Training Programs

- The Provincial GAD Office, in collaboration with PEDIC and other partners, shall organize regular training programs on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and business management for women, particularly for marginalized women, rural women, women with disabilities (PWDs), and indigenous women.
- The training programs shall be designed to equip women with the knowledge and skills needed to start and manage sustainable businesses, with a focus on innovation, digital transformation, and market competitiveness.

2. Access to Finance and Capital

- The Provincial Government shall facilitate women's access to credit, microfinance, and other financial services through partnerships with local financial institutions, cooperatives, and microfinance organizations.
- The establishment of a Women's Enterprise Development Fund shall be explored, with the goal of providing start-up capital and financial assistance to qualified women entrepreneurs under the SWEET Initiative.
- Financial literacy workshops shall be conducted to improve women's understanding of savings, investments, and responsible borrowing.

3. Mentorship and Networking Opportunities

- A mentorship program shall be established, connecting women entrepreneurs with experienced business leaders, professionals, and successful women entrepreneurs who can offer guidance, support, and networking opportunities.
- The Provincial GAD Office shall organize forums, conferences, and networking events to promote women's entrepreneurship, share best practices, and foster partnerships among women entrepreneurs across the province.



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4. Access to Markets and Supply Chains

- The Provincial Government, through the Provincial Trade and Industry Office, shall assist women entrepreneurs in accessing local, regional, and international markets by providing information on market trends, facilitating trade fairs, and promoting women-led enterprises in government procurement processes.
- Priority shall be given to women-led enterprises in participating in the Negros Trade Fair and other provincial economic initiatives.
- The creation of a Negros Occidental Women Entrepreneurs' Marketplace (physical and online) shall be explored to showcase and promote products and services by women entrepreneurs.

5. Support for Innovation and Sustainability

- Women entrepreneurs shall be encouraged to adopt sustainable and eco-friendly practices in their businesses. This may include the promotion of green technologies, waste management, and renewable energy in business operations.
- The Provincial Government shall provide incentives to women-led businesses that demonstrate innovation, sustainability, and social responsibility in their operations.

SECTION 6. Funding

The Provincial Government of Negros Occidental shall allocate funds for the implementation of the SWEET Initiative, pursuant to the GAD Code. The budget shall be sourced from the Provincial Gender and Development (GAD) Fund, ensuring that the GAD allocation contributes to the economic empowerment of women through entrepreneurship.

Additional funding may be sourced from:

1. National government programs and grants;
2. Development assistance from international organizations and agencies;
3. Partnerships with the private sector, non-government organizations (NGOs), and financial institutions;
4. Local government unit (LGU) contributions and allocations.

SECTION 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Provincial GAD Office, in collaboration with PEDIC and other relevant agencies, shall develop a monitoring and evaluation system to track the progress and impact of the SWEET Initiative. This shall include:

1. Regular assessments of the number and growth of women-led enterprises supported by the initiative;



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2. Evaluation of the economic and social impact of women entrepreneurs on their communities;
3. Compilation of success stories and best practices to improve program design and implementation. Annual reports on the progress of the SWEET Initiative shall be submitted to the Office of the Governor and the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

SECTION 8. Incentives for Women Entrepreneurs

Women-led enterprises that demonstrate success in terms of innovation, sustainability, and social impact shall be eligible for incentives and recognition. These incentives may include:

1. Access to provincial government programs and resources for business expansion;
2. Recognition in provincial events celebrating women's entrepreneurship and empowerment;
3. Priority inclusion in government procurement and provincial economic development projects.

SECTION 9. Effectivity

This Ordinance shall take effect after compliance with the posting requirements as provided by law.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, August 12, 2025.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:


HON. JOSE BENITO A. ALONSO
Vice-Governor/Presiding Officer

ATTESTED:


ATTY. MAKI ANGEL O. ASCALON
Provincial Secretary

APPROVED:


HON. EUGENIO JOSE V. LACSON
Governor

Date: SEP 08 2025