- Women's rights

Belmonte touts pro-women programs

The Philippine Star · 10 Mar 2025 · 8 · — Janvic Mateo

Despite significant strides made by the Quezon City government in recent years, Mayor Joy Belmonte believes that there is still much work to be done to advance women's rights.

To mark National Women's Month, Belmonte on Saturday delivered her State of the Women's Address and touted the progress made by the city in advancing women's rights and welfare.

But she underscored the need to further strengthen programs and initiatives to pursue equal treatment for women across all sectors.

"The fight for gender equality is not just a fight exclusive to women — it is everyone's fight, whether you are male or female, young or old, regardless of color or social status," Belmonte said. "Together, let us push for a city where every woman has a voice, dignity, freedom and equal opportunities to succeed."

In her address, Belmonte outlined several programs implemented by the local government to create inclusive opportunities for women.

"Our women are now more financially capable and independent," she said, citing data from the city's online business registry showing an increase in the number of businesswomen.

Out of 70,000 businesses in the city, 40 percent are led by women entrepreneurs, providing employment to over 200,000 female "QCitizens," Belmonte said.

She noted an increase in women beneficiaries of various livelihood and employment programs.

Belmonte also reported the expansion of educational opportunities for female students.

For the past five years, she said the city government has provided scholarships to almost 25,000 students from senior high school to post-graduate studies.

The mayor also reiterated the local government's commitment to address the leading causes of death among women, including hypertension, pneumonia and diabetes.

Quezon City has rolled out health programs such as free medical checkups, provision of maintenance medicines, administration of pneumococcal vaccines and promotion of nutrition education.

"Aside from this, we are also the first local government to pass the Integrated Cancer Control Ordinance, which aims to implement a whole-of-society approach in addressing all types of cancer," Belmonte said.

She vowed to strengthen efforts to address violence against women as she expressed alarm over the increase in cases of physical and psychological abuse.