

Mother's Stories from the Family Members of 'Comfort Women' Survivors: Restoring Survivors' Dignity through the Storybook

PROJECT VENUE

Bahay ng mga Lola: Lila-Pilipina Resource Center, Amihan, Project 3, Quezon City, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Around 1,000 Filipino women and girls were forced to become 'comfort women' during World War II. In the 1990s, the Filipino 'comfort women' survivors, or the lolas, spoke up to fight for justice. However, they were often stigmatized as Japanese military sex slaves or prostitutes.

This project aims to contribute to restoring the dignity and humanity of the lolas by producing a storybook about them from their daughters and granddaughters' perspective. The storybook hopes to educate the young generation about the 'comfort women' and describe another side of the lolas' experiences who lived not only as former 'comfort women' but also as women and mothers. We made a storybook titled "My Mother Is More Than A Comfort Women" in English and Tagalog versions.

We applied the human rights-based approach and qualitative method by interviewing three daughters and a granddaughter of the lolas to learn how they treated their children, what they were taught, what their hobbies/livelihood were, and how they coped with their trauma.

In the long term, we hope that our storybook will be utilized as a tool to learn about wartime experiences and each survivor's family story, to raise people's awareness, and to change people's perception toward 'Comfort Women'. We feel confident that this storybook can contribute to restoring the lolas' dignity as human beings and to convey their legacies to future generations.

