

PROTECTING FILIPINO CHILDREN FROM ABUSE, EXPLOITATION AND VIOLENCE

*A Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection, 2006-2010
Building a Protective and Caring Environment for Filipino Children*



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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN
c/o Department of Justice, Padre Faura, Manila**

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F O R E W O R D

Our children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. This right to protection has been clearly laid out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989. In May 2000, two Optional Protocols to the CRC were likewise adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. These are the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the (a) Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and (b) Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. The Philippine Government ratified the CRC in July 1990 and the two Optional Protocols in 2002. By ratifying the CRC and its Optional Protocols, we have committed as a nation to translate the principles, provisions and standards of the Convention and the Optional Protocols into concrete programmes and actions that will make a difference in the lives of our children.

As a concrete expression of that commitment, the Philippine Congress enacted on 17 June 1992 Republic Act No. 7610, “An Act Providing Stronger Deterrence and Special Protection Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination”. To monitor the enforcement of RA 7610, the Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC) was created in 1995 through Executive Order No. 275. Chaired by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and co-chaired by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Committee has also been tasked to initiate and coordinate the formulation of a Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP). The first programme document was issued by the Committee in 2001. After five years, the programme has to reviewed, revised, and updated in light of the following developments:

- the increasing numbers of Filipino children who have become vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence;
- the need to address the growing complexity of child protection issues in our country as raised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its 2005 Concluding Observations on the Second Philippine Country Report on CRC implementation; and
- the need to strengthen the links between and among the CPCP, the National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC), 2005-2010 and the global goals on children and women articulated in the outcome document of the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children – A World Fit for Children – and the Millennium Development Goals.

This revised and updated Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection covering the period 2006-2010 is a companion document to the National Plan of Action for Children and is an elaboration of the NPAC Child Protection Component. Its major goal is to build a protective and caring environment for Filipino children who are at risk, disadvantaged and vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. By creating a protective and caring environment for children, we go beyond piecemeal and fragmented responses and move towards a more integrated child protection programme that will allow us to address the different levels of causes – immediate, underlying, and basic or root – of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children. Instead of just addressing a specific category of children in need of special protection (CNSP) such as child labour, street children, children in conflict with the law, and children involved in armed conflict, among others, we will focus on cross-cutting strategies and interventions that will address all CNSP categories. Such cross-cutting strategies and interventions will be institutionalized into existing structures at various levels and institutional settings: family, school, church or faith community, mass media, justice system, local

community or barangay, city, municipality, province, regional and national bodies – thus enhancing the protective and caring environment for children. The cross-cutting strategies and interventions can be grouped into the following: (a) preventive actions and early interventions, (b) rescue, psychosocial recovery and social reintegration, and (c) legal and judicial protection measures.

The revised and updated CPCP calls for a renewed shift from a needs-based to a rights-based approach to advocacy and programming. As already indicated earlier, consequent to CRC ratification, the government, non-government organizations, families and communities, religious communities and faith-based organizations, and the rest of civil society are obliged to respect, protect, facilitate, and fulfill the rights of children. In terms of child protection, it is no longer enough to address the immediate causes and risk factors that make children vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. It also requires actions that will tackle the root causes that have given rise, and will continue to give rise, to the especially difficult circumstances that lead to serious violations and non-fulfillment of children's rights.

In sum, the CPCP espouses vigorous advocacy and public consciousness-raising, capacity building, alliance building, family and community participation and empowerment, civil society mobilization and resource generation towards a broad-based response – akin to a social movement – for the promotion, protection and fulfillment of the rights of children, particularly those in need of special protection measures. Building on the experiences and lessons learned in implementing the CPCP from 2001-2005, this revised and updated programme emphasizes the strategic importance of coordinated actions at the family, community and LGU levels – backed up by responsive laws, policies, structures and systems at the regional and national levels – in responding to various instances of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC) met in December 2005 to review and assess the implementation of the first Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP) formulated in 2001. We were deeply encouraged by the honest and objective assessment of the SCPC member agencies and organizations, both government and non-government. They pointed out the major gaps and weaknesses of the first programme document and strongly recommended that a revised and updated programme for the period 2006-2010 be prepared in order to respond more effectively to the increasing cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against Filipino children.

The revised and updated Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP) for the period 2006-2010 has been a collective effort not only of the member agencies and organizations, both government and non-government, of the Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC) but also of various groups and individuals at regional and local levels including NGOs, local church communities and faith-based organizations. We therefore commend the Technical Working Group and Secretariat of the SCPC for coordinating and facilitating this collective effort of revising and updating the CPCP.

We are grateful to Mr. Leopoldo M. Moselina, former Chief of the Child Protection Section at UNICEF Manila and the Founder and National Coordinator of the Foundation for Grassroots Studies and Social Action (FGSSA), who was mainly responsible in preparing this programme document. As consultant to the SCPC, he emphasized the importance of participatory planning and recommended that regional and local level consultations be done. Aside from reading all the available studies on children in need of special protection (CNSP) as well as reports and materials on the CPCP provided to him by the SCPC and CWC, Mr. Moselina facilitated the conduct of three island-wide consultations involving all the Regional Committees or Sub-Committees for the Welfare of Children to gather more data, experiences and insights from the field level.

Two meetings with the CWC-CNSP Committee and its sub-committees were likewise held in the course of the revision and updating of the CPCP. These meetings provided venues for sharing of information, programme experiences, and lessons learned in the area of child protection. Their comments and suggestions have been integrated into the final programme document.

With this revised and updated CPCP, 2006-2010, we expect that all concerned agencies and organizations at national, regional, and local levels will be more proactive in their advocacy and programming work for and on behalf of children in need of special protection. We can all help build a protective and caring environment for our children.

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Acting Chair, SCPC

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

Background/Rationale

Children's rights to protection from violence, abuse and exploitation are clearly laid out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. The Philippines ratified the CRC in July 1990.

Two years later, on 17 June 1992, the Philippine Congress enacted Republic Act No. 7610, "An Act Providing Stronger Deterrence and Special Protection Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination", as a concrete expression of its compliance to the provisions, principles and standards of the CRC. In 2002, the Philippines also ratified the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on (a) the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and (b) the involvement of children in armed conflict.



To monitor the enforcement of RA 7610, the Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC) was created in 1995 through Executive Order No. 275. Headed by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Committee has been tasked to initiate and coordinate the preparation of a Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP). The first programme document was issued by the Committee in 2001; but it was not widely disseminated particularly at the local level. Given the increasing numbers of Filipino children who have become vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and violence as well as the growing complexity of child protection issues and challenges, particularly those highlighted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its 2005 Concluding Observations on the second Philippine report, an implementation review was done in December 2005 which resulted to the Committee's decision to revise and update the Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP).

The December 2005 review of the programme pointed out the following major gaps and constraints:

- ✍ The existing programme document does not include a discussion on the priority child protection issues that need to be addressed for a given period, say between 2001 and 2005.
- ✍ Following the lack of a situation analysis, there was no clear statement of goals and expected outcomes for the period. This makes tracking of progress and monitoring of outcomes difficult.
- ✍ The current programme has largely focused on child protection interventions at the level of national government agencies and NGOs, mainly those named as members of the SCPC. But in light of decentralization and devolution of basic social services, the role of local government units (LGU) needs to be highlighted.

- ✍ There is very little discussion on appropriate actions at the family and community levels. Likewise, the aspect of children's participation in their own protection has not been given enough thought and consideration.
- ✍ Analysis of roles and capacities of major actors and stakeholders was also hazy. Hence, the appropriate mechanisms for child protection, particularly at local levels, were not clearly identified, e.g., the local councils for the protection of children particularly at the barangay level.

Taking the above as main considerations, this revised and updated Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection for the period 2006-2010 is a collective effort not only of the member agencies and organizations, both government and non-government, of the Special Committee for the Protection of Children but also of various groups and individuals at regional and local levels including local faith communities and faith-based organizations. The voices of children were likewise gathered through groups and organizations that work directly with them.

Building on the experiences and lessons learned in implementing the CPCP from 2001-2005, the revised and updated programme document emphasizes the strategic importance of coordinated actions at family, community and LGU levels – backed up by responsive laws, policies, structures and systems at the regional and national levels – in responding to various instances of child abuse, exploitation and violence. In short, the CPCP 2006-2010 goes beyond piecemeal interventions and aims at creating a protective and caring environment for children – thus addressing more effectively the underlying and structural factors that bring about abuse, exploitation and violence.

Legal and Policy Framework

National Laws on Child Protection

Recognizing the vulnerability of children as well as their key role in the future of the nation, the 1987 Philippine Constitution included the following provision: “The state recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well being” (Article 11, Section 13). Likewise, Article 15, Section 3 of the Constitution states that the Government must ensure “the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development”.

This state policy recognizing children's right to special protection had been translated into several legislative enactments such as “The Child and Youth Welfare Code” or Presidential Decree No. 603 as amended, RA 7610 as mentioned above, and RA 7658 or “An Act Prohibiting the Employment of Children Below 15 Years of Age”, among others. These pieces of legislation provide protection for Filipino children from various forms of abuse, violence and exploitation. Some of the more recent child protection laws enacted after RA 7610 and RA 7658 include the following (for complete listing, refer to Laws and Issuances on Children, Vols. 1 and 2 compiled and published by CWC:

- ✍ Republic Act No. 9165 or the Comprehensive Drugs Act for 2002
- ✍ Republic Act No. 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003

- ✍ Republic Act N. 9231 or the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child
- ✍ Republic Act No. 9255 Allowing Illegitimate Children to Use the Surname of their Father, Amending Article 176 of the Family Code of the Philippines
- ✍ Republic Act No. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004

Ensuring Child Protection through the CPCP

The Philippines, in particular, mindful of its commitments to the foregoing global agenda, strongly recognizes that the protection of children from abuse, exploitation and violence is fundamental to their survival and development and is therefore a pre-requisite to achieving a number of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Conversely, working towards some of the MDGs such as empowering women, achieving universal primary education and developing decent and productive work for youth will contribute to a reduction in the number of Filipino children becoming victims of abuse, exploitation and violence.

The Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) explicitly address child protection. A closer look at the MDGs shows that not a single goal can be achieved without including child protection strategies and interventions. Failing to protect children from such issues as abuse, exploitation and violence in schools, child labour, trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, and armed conflict, among others, will end up squandering society's most precious resource. Reaching all children who are most vulnerable, disadvantaged, and in need of special protection will help ensure the survival, health, development and well-being of all and is indispensable to achieve the MDGs.

In light of the MDGs and the UNGASS outcome document "A World Fit for Children", the Philippine Government has developed a "National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children". Popularly known as Child 21 and spanning 25 years up to 2025, its goal is to build a "child-sensitive and child-friendly society" as the country's promise to Filipino children in the 21st century. It is meant to "serve as a road map, a guide to make plans and programmes for children more focused". Child 21 also places strong emphasis on the rights and unique needs and circumstances of disadvantaged and vulnerable children and provides a sharper focus on the rights of all children to special protection.

The vision of Child 21 has been concretized through the formulation of the National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) for the period 2005-2010. NPAC translates the vision of Child 21 into "clear, actionable and time-bound plan within a shorter, five-year time frame". It is in the context of NPAC as well as the global policy directions articulated in the "World Fit for Children" and the Millennium Development Goals that the Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP) has been revised and updated. As such, the CPCP is a companion document to NPAC and is an elaboration of the NPAC child protection component.

Based on the foregoing, it appears that we already have existing laws and policies directed at protecting our children from various forms of abuse, exploitation and violence. All the existing child protection laws and policies combined are powerful instruments for action. The challenge now is for all sectors at all levels of Philippine society to ensure consistent enforcement of laws and effective

implementation of policies addressing all Filipino children who are disadvantaged, vulnerable and in need of special protection (CNSP). The revised and updated CPCP is a concrete step towards ensuring the protection of all Filipino children, particularly the disadvantaged, marginalized, and in need of special protection.

Conceptual Framework

The term “child protection” is used in different ways by different groups in various situations. In this document, the term will mean protection of children from abuse, exploitation and violence based mainly on the special protection provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child particularly Articles 19-23 and 32-40. In today's Philippine context, these conditions include child labour, children in armed conflict, children in conflict with the law, street children, child trafficking, sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation, children and substance abuse, children with conditions of disability, and children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, among others. Collectively, we refer to them as children in need of special protection (CNSP).

Why do so many Filipino children today find themselves becoming victims of abuse, violence and exploitation? What major factors affect the survival, development, protection and well-being of children? How can these factors be systematically and critically analyzed? What essential elements constitute a caring and protective environment for children? Of these elements, what could be considered as critical in the Philippine context and therefore should be emphasized – particularly at the community level where abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children could and should be prevented?

Analytical Framework for Understanding CNSP

Understanding the phenomenon of children in need of special protection (CNSP) requires an analysis at various levels of the key elements in the physical and social environment of child (see Figure 1). Taking an ecological approach, the child is viewed in the contexts of his or her family, immediate community, barangay, city or municipality and the larger society looking at the dynamic interactions that occur between the child and these institutional, social and geographic contexts. The outcomes of the dynamic interactions between the children and their physical and social environment from micro to macro levels will indicate the extent to which the children's rights to protection are being respected, promoted and fulfilled on one hand or denied, negated and violated on the other hand.

For example, the better the quality of care and education that the children receive from birth throughout the early years of childhood, the greater their chances for optimum health and development. Good quality of care and education from the early years through the middle years of childhood ensure children's success in school and provide a foundation for constructive social relationships. At the same time, the likelihood of their avoiding situations that lead to symptomatic high risk behaviors such as vagrancy, dropping out from school, substance abuse, delinquency, early sex, and teenage pregnancy, among others, is significantly increased. Given these conditions – in addition to responsive social policies, structures and systems at the national level – expectedly, there will be greater chances for the children to be properly cared for and protected. Conversely, without these conditions, children's rights and well-being may not be respected, promoted, protected and fulfilled.

Locating children in the different societal levels and institutional contexts will enable us to analyze the different levels of causes affecting abuse, exploitation and violence against children. In turn, understanding the different levels of causes – immediate, underlying and root causes – will help us determine the relevant or appropriate strategies and interventions ranging from actions at the level of the child, the family, the local community or the barangay, the city or municipality, and the larger society. It also becomes clear that for these actions at various levels to be implemented, expanded, and sustained over time, a strongly coordinated multi-level mechanism to address child abuse, exploitation and violence must be in place.

Building a Protective and Caring Environment for Children

Addressing child abuse, exploitation and violence calls for the creation of a protective and caring environment for children. Ensuring that children grow up in a protective and caring environment is what is called for in the UNGASS outcome document, “A World Fit for Children” in which the Philippine Government is a signatory. UNICEF, through all its country offices around the world, has strongly advocated for this protective and caring environment, where every element of that environment contributes to child protection and where every actor does his or her part in addressing abuse, exploitation and violence.

A protective and caring environment for children must permeate all societal levels and institutional settings – family, school, church, mass media, justice system, local community or barangay, city or municipality, and the larger society. A protective and caring environment for children includes the following elements:

1. The government, national and local, is truly committed to child protection.
2. Laws are in place and are consistently enforced.
3. Attitudes, customs and practices, including gender discrimination, that facilitate or lead to abuse, exploitation and violence are challenged and changed.
4. Child protection issues are openly discussed in the mass media and among civil society partners.
5. Children are equipped with knowledge and skills to protect themselves from abuse, exploitation and violence.
6. All those who interact with children – parents, teachers, religious leaders, social workers, health workers, law enforcers, prosecutors, judges, etc. – know how to recognize and respond to abuse, exploitation and violence.
7. Basic and preventive social services as well as specialized services for rescue, recovery, healing and reintegration are available for all children without discrimination.
8. Monitoring systems are designed to identify, count and track children who are at risk and victims of abuse, exploitation and violence.

Many of the elements of the protective and caring environment are interlinked. For instance, governmental commitment may dictate whether basic social services as well as specialized interventions for victims of abuse, exploitation and violence are provided, or whether investment is made in setting up effective monitoring and reporting systems. Similarly, vigilant and active involvement of mass media and civil society organizations can be a critical factor in challenging and changing values and attitudes.

A protective and caring environment for children is an important aspect of the Child-Friendly Movement which has been propagated under the GOP-UNICEF Country Programme for Children as the main vehicle for translating the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols into a concrete reality in the lives of Filipino children.

CHAPTER - 2

PRIORITY CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

A growing number of Filipino children today find themselves in various situations of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence brought about by various factors including but not limited to: (a) broken families; (b) increasing school drop-out rate; (c) inadequate basic social services; (d) weak and inconsistent enforcement of child protection laws; (e) growing unemployment and underemployment; (f) inequitable distribution of wealth, income and opportunities; (g) continuing impoverishment and marginalization of millions of Filipino families; (h) intermittent armed conflict particularly in Mindanao; (i) rising materialistic and consumerist expectations; and (j) deteriorating moral values as demonstrated in the “commodification” of human sexuality perpetuated through mass media, among others.



While data still remain inadequate, available studies and reports from both government agencies and NGOs indicate that the number of children in need of special protection (CNSP) has grown over the years, particularly from the mid-1980s onwards. The 2005 Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the second Philippine Report on CRC implementation has corroborated this concern. The following sections will show the nature and magnitude of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence confronting large numbers of Filipino children today.

Child Labour

According to the 2001 survey on children 5-17 years old of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the National Statistics Office (NSO), 16.2 percent or 4.2 million of a total population of 24.9 million Filipino children and young people belonging to this age group in 2001 were working or economically active. This proportion is slightly higher than the 16 percent or 3.6 million Filipino children who were working in 1995. There were more working boys (63.4 percent or 2.5 million) than working girls (36.6 percent or 1.5 million).

Almost 60 percent of the working children were engaged in agriculture, hunting, and forestry. The second highest numbers of working children were found in the wholesale and retail trade, followed by children working in private households. More than 20 percent of working children were found in construction and other industries. More than one-third of the working children were paid; while more than 50 percent of them were unpaid family workers. About 23 percent of working girls spent more than eight hours of work every day, compared to 8.5 percent of the working boys.

In 2001, approximately 230,000 children were found working in private households. Of these, 120,000 children were living away from home while engaged in domestic work. Child domestic workers are very young, mostly 12 to 17 years old. Majority of them (92 percent) are female. Eighty-three percent live in the homes of their employers and 54.9 percent have no days off.

About half of the child domestic workers come from families working in the agricultural sector. Indicators that child domestic workers are one among the most exploited are: (a) they work with very little pay, (b) they work excessive hours, (c) they are abused or at risk of physical violence and sexual harassment, (d) they are bonded by debt which keeps them in servitude for long, (e) they are sold or trafficked, (f) they are deprived of education and other opportunities for development. The other worst forms of child labour in the country include children in prostitution, children involved in armed conflict, children in commercial plantations, children in mining, children in pyrotechnics production, and children in deep sea fishing, among others.

Why do children work? Various studies have cited the following conditions contributing to child labour: (a) poverty-stricken families tend to depend on child work to augment family income, (b) children unable to go to school or dropping out from school due to their parents' incapacity to support their education find themselves engaged in child labour, (c) dysfunctional households and abusive parents push children to leave home and fend for themselves and are likely to end up in the worst forms of child labour. At the meso and macro levels, the country's level of economic development and the existing social infrastructure affect the incidence of child labour, which is likely to be high under conditions where economic development is low, where poverty and inequality are pervasive, and where social amelioration programmes are weak or non-existent.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

Commercial sexual exploitation of Filipino children is taking place in various forms, namely, child trafficking, child prostitution, and child pornography. The Philippine Government, having also ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, has committed itself to address these cruel forms of child exploitation.

Child Trafficking

Trafficking of children for purposes of sexual exploitation takes different forms. Children may be forcibly abducted or deceived by a recruiter with the promise of better opportunity to earn. The latter is often the case in the Philippines. In many documented cases, parents of trafficked children were easily convinced into letting their children go with a recruiter due not only to poverty and unemployment but also to lack of knowledge about the modus operandi of recruiters engaged in illegal trade such as prostitution.

Although the exact numbers of trafficked children are not yet known, based on a study by ECPAT, the children who become victims of trafficking are predominantly girls whose ages range from 14 to 17 years old. They are lured by offers of jobs in households, restaurants, factories, and entertainment agencies only to end up as sex slaves. As reported by ECPAT, "there were cases of children who were trafficked both for sexual purposes and for labor – storekeepers at daytime and sexual slaves at nighttime".

Trafficked children suffer a multiple violation of their rights. They are separated from their families and communities, making them powerless to seek help or avail of needed services. They are exposed to all kinds of abuse and exploitation – physical, mental, emotional, and psychological. They are treated like commodities by the people who exploit them. They are exposed to illnesses including sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. Cross-border trafficking is also a growing phenomenon

confronting children. Many of the children being recruited from different parts of the Philippines are transported to other countries. Japan and Korea have been identified as two common offshore destinations of child trafficking victims from the Philippines.

Child Prostitution

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography defines child prostitution as the “use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration”.

There are no precise numbers of children involved in prostitution. Estimates vary from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands, depending on the source of these estimates. The Department of Social Welfare and Development handled 247 cases of children in prostitution from 2000-2003. In most instances, children are lured into prostitution because of poverty. Various case studies reveal that most of the victims and survivors of child prostitution are offspring of blue-collar workers or unemployed parents; they are mostly females aged 13-18 years old. These children assume the burden of augmenting the family income. More often than not, they have also dropped out of school.

However, poverty is not the only factor that pushes children into prostitution, as not all poverty-stricken children end up in prostitution. Unstable family relationships and peer pressure have also pushed many children to work in the sex industry. Some children are even forced into prostitution by their own parents.

Children in prostitution are subject to numerous physical and sexual abuses, are likely exposed to drug and alcohol abuse, and are vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, there have been cases of children in prostitution who had been photographed by both foreign and local customers who produce pornographic materials for profit.

Child Pornography

The extent of pornography in the Philippines is not yet exactly known. The Department of Social Welfare and Development reported that it handled thirty-three (33) cases of child pornography for the period 2000-2003. While this may seem to be a small number, it does not mean that child pornography is not a serious problem. Considering that child pornography is clandestine and illegal, the number of actual cases of child pornography may be higher than documented.

Based on a survey of available literature on child pornography done in 2004 by the Center for Integrative and Development Studies of the University of the Philippines for UNICEF Manila, most documented cases of child pornography in the country have been initiated by foreigners with Filipino accomplices. The UP report states: “Boosted by the wide reach of the Internet, foreign nationals, with local partners, have established companies dealing in cyber sex. There are Filipinos who produce pornographic materials using mobile phones and digital images for themselves or for sharing with other like-minded individuals. There are also big-time publishers of pornographic magazines and tabloids that often involve young models in their teens”.

The same study pointed out that Filipinos generally lack the awareness of the dangers and implications of child pornography. “In the Philippine context, children are normally not seen as objects of sexual desire. Filipinos generally do not invest malice in the nakedness of children, especially in children who have yet to reach puberty”.

A 2002 report by Alecks Pabico indicated that child pornographic websites called Paradise Lolita and Lollipop were shut down by Philippine law enforcement agencies because they featured Asian children, including Filipinos, in nude poses and sexual acts. The same report showed that organized pornographers have already crossed borders in setting up their exploitative operations.

In 2004, the largest case of organized child pornography in the Philippines involved some 70 children who had fallen victims to a suspected syndicate of pornographers. The suspected syndicate involved a Japanese national and his Filipino cohorts who served as his procurers. The children were hired to perform for pornographic videos and model for pornographic images. The suspected pornographers were successfully arrested by the NBI following an entrapment operation set up against them.

Sadly, the effects of pornography on children are still not fully recognized according to the UP report. Yet the effects on the victims are “far-reaching and may actually last a lifetime because these images are lasting testaments of a child's exploitation”.

Physical and Sexual Abuse of Children

Incidence of child abuse is still on the rise. Based on DSWD data, sexual abuse appears to be the highest reported case for the period 1994 to 2001 compared to other cases of child abuse. Child sexual abuse cases increased from 2,785 in 1994 to 3,216 in 2001. Reported cases of physical abuse and maltreatment of children also increased from 311 in 1994 to 1,021 in 2001. Many perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse are often family members, in many cases the father. As in commercial sexual exploitation, child victims of sexual and physical abuse suffer from psychological and emotional trauma which may adversely affect their life chances in the future especially if they are not provided with appropriate and timely psychosocial interventions.

The rise in reported cases is seen as an indication of the growing awareness and better monitoring and reporting system on the issue brought about by the continuing advocacy by the government and the NGO community. The actual number of child abuse cases may even be higher as there are still those which remain unreported, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach communities.

Children in Conflict with the Law

More than 52,000 children were reported to be in conflict with the law (CICL), based on data collected by the Council for the Welfare of Children from the relevant agencies for the period 1995-2000. According to the Public Attorney's Office of the Department of Justice, there were more than 13,000 cases of CICL in 2002-2003. The Department of Social Welfare and Development reported having served a total of 6,313 children in conflict with the law during the first six months of 2005. Almost 90 percent (or 5,578) were males. Seventy percent (70%) of the children in conflict with the law commit petty offences like theft, sniffing of solvents, and vagrancy. In many instances, children in conflict with the law go through a long pre-trial process and pre-trial detention where they are mixed with adult offenders under very poor conditions.

Studies and surveys have shown that the rise in the numbers of CICL could be attributed to poverty, dysfunctional family, low educational attainment, and gang membership and peer influence, among other factors.

The profile of the Filipino child in conflict with the law shows that the CICL is usually male, between the ages of 14-17 years old, has low educational attainment, belongs to a large family, is charged with property-related crimes (robbery and theft) and exposed to drugs or gang influence.

Until the passage of RA 9344 or the “Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006”, the rules and procedures applicable to CICL were no different from those being used for adult offenders and therefore were insensitive to the unique situation and psychosocial make up of children and young people.

Street Children

Street children are mostly the sons and daughters of urban poor families living in informal settlements and slum communities in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, Metro Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Cotabato, Zamboanga, General Santos, Bacolod, Iloilo, Angeles, Baguio, Legapsi, Naga, Olongapo and other major Philippine cities. Pushed by various factors such as poverty, unemployment or underemployment, dysfunctional family relationships, and peer influence, among others, these children have made the streets their abode and source of livelihood. They engaged in work activities like shining shoes, vending (newspapers, cigarettes, sampaguita leis, candies, chewing gum and other food items), washing and watching cars, making deliveries, and begging, among others. Some of them are even forced into drug pushing and prostitution. They do these various work activities to augment the meager income of their impoverished families.

Determining the exact number of street children has always been difficult since they are highly mobile. A head count survey done in 1996 by DSWD and NGOs in Metro Manila revealed a relatively small number of 6,300 street children. However, a later study (2002) commissioned by UNICEF and conducted by Exaltacion E. Lamberte of the Social Development and Research Center of De La Salle University, estimated the number of street children in 22 major Philippine cities at 246,000. Of this number, between 45,000 to 50,000 are considered “highly visible street children” who are engaged in high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse and early and unprotected sex. As such, they are highly susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. They also experience being arrested by the police for vagrancy, substance abuse, and other anti-social activities. (Note that the various acts committed by street children for which they are arrested are largely their own “survival strategies” for living on the streets).

Based on the Lamberte study, the average age of children on the streets is 14.6 years. The majority are boys (80%). Most of the street children interviewed (96%) still have families but their contacts have become infrequent or irregular, thus the increasing separation of street children from their families.

In 2002, about 350 government agencies and non-government organizations were reported to have ongoing interventions for street children in 22 major cities in the country. These interventions include basic education, alternative education, vocational training, psychosocial services, legal assistance, life skills education and opportunities for building self-esteem and participation skills. The

agencies have been organized under the National Network on Street Children (NNSC) coordinated by the Social Technology Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Children Affected by Armed Conflict and Displacement

Children are not spared from the ongoing armed conflict between the government forces and insurgent groups in the country. According to Amnesty International, 50 percent of people displaced by armed conflict are children. Since 2001, more than 200,000 children have been displaced by these conflicts. Children occasionally witness atrocities committed against individuals, notably their families or friends, which may have adverse psychosocial effects on them. Based on a study presented to ILO in 2002, there have been increasing numbers of children involved in armed conflict particularly in Central and Western Mindanao where 10 to 30 percent of children in any given community which is influenced by either the NPA or MILF are taken as child soldiers. The same study calculated that if there are at least 2,000 people in each of the 10 MILF-influenced municipalities in Maguindanao, there would be at least 2,000 to 6,000 minors or children involved in armed conflict.

Various reports from the ICRC, the Philippine Military, and Amnesty International, among others, as well as case studies conducted by the UP-CIDS Programme on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights reveal the existence of children involved in armed conflict among the major armed groups such as the MILF, NDF and ASG. Children's involvements in armed conflict are due to several behavioral, societal, ideological and cultural factors. Children who are poor, separated from their families, out of school, displaced from their homes, and living in war-torn areas have greater tendencies to be involved in armed conflict.

The DAP report on the situation of children and women conducted for CWC, NEDA and UNICEF state the following consequences of children's involvement in armed conflict: (a) arrest, torture, and detention; (b) rape, particularly of girls, and its attendant effects including sexually transmitted diseases; (c) physical injuries as result of bloody bombings, strafing encounters from military and paramilitary groups of the government, torture after being caught, and accidents while performing their duties; and (d) psychological effects manifested in generalized fear of their immediate environment, excessive anxiety at the sight of a stranger, sleeping problems, hopelessness and apathy, and other behavioral changes such as withdrawal, aggression, destructiveness and over dependence on adults.

Children and Drugs

According to the ILO Convention 182, one of the worst forms of child labor is the use of children in illicit activities including the production, sale and trafficking of drugs. Children involved in drug sale and trafficking are difficult to trace and identify given the hidden and illegal nature of the trade. However, the YAFS 2002 survey reported that 22 percent of Filipino children and youth numbering 1.66 million were involved in drug abuse for the period 1994-2002. This is an alarming situation since drug abuse and trafficking go together in many instances.

In another survey conducted by the Social Weather Station (SWS) in 1997 for the National Youth Commission (NYC), it was reported that Filipino children and youth hooked on substance abuse comprised 7 percent or 1.5 million. Of these, 1.3 million had sold illegal drugs.

Children involved in the drug trade started between the ages of 14-16 although there were children who started as early as age 12. The majority acted as runners; others were engaged in posting, repacking, or cleaning up of paraphernalia, and as lookouts and barkers. Most of the children involved in the drug trade were drug users and many were frequent users.

Money is the children's main motivation for engaging in the drug trade. The income is spent on the daily requirements of the family. Children are preferred by exploiters to undertake activities in drug trafficking because they are obedient and not easily detected. They also think that because of their status as minors, children may escape arrest and detention.

Children with Disabilities

Based on the 1995 Census of Population, children and young people with disabilities totaled 158,302. Available data at the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons reveal the following: (a) one out of five children in the 0 to 6 age group has some form of disability or impairment, (b) children in the 15 to 19 age group have the highest disability prevalence rate per 100,000 population, (c) hearing and visual impairment and difficulty in moving are the most prevalent forms of disability among children, (d) there are more boys with conditions of disability than girls, and (e) children with disabilities generally belong to poor families.

More than 50% of disabilities among children are acquired and therefore highly preventable. But there are not enough appropriate interventions for prevention and early detection of disabilities. Largely, children with disability from poor families and those found in the rural areas do not have access to appropriate basic education. Only those children with disability coming from rich families have been able to avail of special education.

Tuloy Aral Walang Sagabal (TAWAG) project was developed in 1999 to address the situation of children with disabilities. It is a community-based project designed to provide opportunities to develop the children's physical, social, mental and psychological functioning in preparation for their integration into day care, regular or special education, and into community life. However, wider community-based efforts in the prevention and early detection of disabilities have not yet received enough attention and support.

Children Belonging to Minorities and Indigenous Peoples

There is an estimated 2.5 million children of indigenous peoples (IP) based on the 1995 Population Census. The exact figures are difficult to get since their births are usually not registered. The total IP population was estimated at 12 to 15 million as of 1998 by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP).

Most IP children live in far-flung remote communities usually accessible only by foot. These communities usually have inadequate basic social services. Unregistered births, high malnutrition and mortality rates, low school participation and cohort survival rates, and poor environmental sanitation, among others, prevail among IP children.

Moreover, many IP communities are armed conflict areas; therefore their children are often caught in armed encounters between the government forces and insurgent groups. Likewise, the entry of development projects and investments of big multinational corporations in IP communities has caused physical and economic dislocation of IP children and families.

Other Children in Need of Special Protection

Other groups of children that need special protection are: (a) children victims of natural disasters such as typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions; (b) children without parental care or deprived of a family environment, including the children of overseas Filipino workers; and (c) children affected by HIV/AIDS.

While there are no available accurate data on these children, various DSWD and NGOs involved in direct services for children have indicated an increasing number of children experiencing these difficult circumstances. For instance, DSWD had served through placement services more than 2,500 children without families during 2004-2005. The Department has also recorded the following number of children affected by natural disasters: 3.8 million in 2004 and 871,363 in 2005.

Priority child protection issues by Islands

Based on the results of three island-wide consultations involving government agencies and NGOs comprising the Regional Sub-Committee/Committee for the Welfare of Children (RS/CWC), the following shows the regional distribution of child protection issues by major island groupings, namely, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

LUZON

- ✍ Commercial sexual exploitation of children: child trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography
- ✍ Children in conflict with the law
- ✍ Child labour
- ✍ Physical and sexual abuse
- ✍ Street children
- ✍ Children and drugs
- ✍ Children with disabilities
- ✍ Children victims of natural disasters
- ✍ Children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples

VISAYAS

- ✍ Commercial sexual exploitation of children: child trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography
- ✍ Children in conflict with the law
- ✍ Child labour
- ✍ Physical and sexual abuse
- ✍ Street children
- ✍ Children and drugs

MINDANAO

- ✎ Commercial sexual exploitation of children: child trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography
- ✎ Children in conflict with the law
- ✎ Child labour
- ✎ Physical and sexual abuse
- ✎ Street children
- ✎ Children and drugs
- ✎ Children in armed conflict
- ✎ Children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples

Based on the above distribution, six priority child protection issues are common across the major islands and regions. These are: (a) commercial sexual exploitation of children, (b) children in conflict with the law, (c) child labour, (d) physical and sexual abuse, (e) street children, and (f) children and drugs. The issue of children victims of natural disasters was highlighted mainly in Luzon while the phenomenon of children in situation of armed conflict is considered to be predominant in Mindanao.

Summary of issues and problems across CNSP groups that need to be addressed

Based on currently available data, the foregoing situation analysis shows the following major issues and problems affecting various CNSP groups that need to be addressed:

- ✎ The increasing separation of CNSP from their families or primary caregivers makes them more vulnerable to abuse, violence and exploitation. Reunifying them with their families and making their families more stable will prevent their becoming more disadvantaged. At the same time, there is a need to support their parents in terms of responsible and effective parenting skills, better caring practices and protective behaviors.
- ✎ The CNSP increasingly constitute the bulk of those who drop out of school. There is therefore a need to facilitate effective access of CNSP to relevant basic education and vocational training. Doing this will also contribute to achieving the goal of education for all.
- ✎ There is a need to address the issue of inadequate family income, the parents' lack of effective access to credit and employment opportunities, and the growing dependence of families on child work to augment family income. Moreover, it is important to include children's issues in PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) and advocate for increased social spending and budget allocation for basic social services. Reducing poverty and promoting social equity should begin with investments for children.
- ✎ There is a need to promote the healthy development of children and young people and to equip them with life skills that will enable them to participate in decisions affecting them as well as to protect themselves from various instances of abuse, exploitation and violence.
- ✎ There is a need to address the emotional and psychological distress experienced by CNSP owing to circumstances of abuse, exploitation, violence, armed conflict, displacement, neglect and abandonment.

- ✍ There is a need to upgrade competencies and skills of parents, community volunteers, programme managers, social workers, health workers, teachers, and other service providers including the pillars of the justice system to identify and respond to child protection issues through the creation of a caring and protective environment for children.
- ✍ There is the challenge to improve enforcement of laws protecting children, to make judicial processes and procedures sensitive to the unique situation of children, and to expedite prosecution and disposition of child abuse cases and cases involving children as accused – in short, to make the justice system child-sensitive and child-friendly.
- ✍ There is a need to build, reorient and strengthen response mechanisms, as well as monitoring systems, for child protection at various levels particularly at the family and community levels (e.g., the barangay council for the protection of children).
- ✍ There is a challenge to build and expand partnerships – particularly among religious groups, NGOs, business sector, media, and professional associations, among others – and to mobilize more resources for child protection. At the same time, there is a need to strengthen LGU capacities for child protection advocacy and programming.
- ✍ There is a need to address the issue of sustainability of various initiatives as well as the lack of coherent structures at various levels that will ensure effective coordination and continuity of efforts addressing child protection issues and concerns.
- ✍ It is important to recognize that armed conflict, particularly in Southern Philippines, is a major cause of children's vulnerability. Therefore, there is a need to put children on top of the peace agenda and process – in short, promoting a culture of non-violence and peace and translating the provision of RA 7610 on children as zones of peace.

The insights from the foregoing situation analysis and the lessons learned from past programme experiences clearly indicate that child protection strategies and interventions must address not only the immediate causes but also the underlying and root causes of the CNSP phenomenon. The CPCP strategies and interventions must therefore be linked with broader development initiatives aimed at reducing poverty and promoting social equity in order to reach a greater number of CNSP. In the long run, the underlying and root causes that bring about the phenomenon of CNSP can only be addressed effectively through an integrated child protection programme that aims to create a protective and caring environment for children.

CHAPTER - 3

CHILD PROTECTION GOALS, TARGETS AND INDICATORS

Goals and Targets

In Chapter 2, the priority child protection issues that need to be addressed were presented. The analysis has clearly shown the imperative of charting directions, strategic thrusts and core interventions for the next five years to address the immediate, underlying and root causes of child abuse, violence and exploitation at local, regional and national levels involving all relevant actors and stakeholders from the different sectors of society.



The overall goal of the CPCP is to build a protective and caring environment for Filipino children who are at risk, disadvantaged and vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and violence. With a protective environment in place, by 2010, all identified children in need of special protection (CNSP) are provided with appropriate interventions including rescue, recovery, healing and reintegration services as well as legal and judicial protection measures. More importantly, under a protective environment, children at risk are prevented from becoming victims of various forms of abuse, exploitation and violence by facilitating their effective access to basic social services such as health and nutrition as well as opportunities for basic education, life skills education, and vocational training, among others.

A protective and caring environment for children, as already discussed in Chapter 1, must be the concern of all actors at various levels of society. Everyone must get involved in the following critical actions:

1. Strengthening government commitment and capacity to fulfill children's rights to protection.
2. Facilitating enactment and enforcement of child protection laws consistent with the CRC.
3. Challenging and changing attitudes, customs and practices that lead to abuse, exploitation and violence against children.
4. Promoting open discussion and responsible reporting of child abuse, exploitation and violence through the mass media and among civil society partners.
5. Equipping children with knowledge, life skills and capacity for meaningful and effective participation.
6. Building capacities of parents, teachers, religious leaders, social workers, health workers, law enforcers, prosecutors, judges, etc. to recognize and respond to abuse, exploitation and violence.

7. Making available without discrimination basic and preventive social services as well as specialized interventions in rescue, recovery, healing and reintegration of child victims.
8. Establishing effective monitoring, reporting and coordination mechanisms.

Creating a protective and caring environment in the Philippine context is one concrete way to implement what the CRC outlines as the fundamental protection rights of children, including the right to be protected from economic exploitation and hazardous labour, from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation, from physical or mental violence, and from physical and psychosocial threats due to armed conflict, among others, as well as ensuring that children will not be separated from their families against their will. These rights are further refined by two Optional Protocols, one on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and the other on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

Key Results Expected for 2006-2010

For the period 2006-2010, the revised and updated CPCP will aim at the following expected results that will continuously ensure a protective and caring environment for children – thus responding effectively to all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence:

- ✍ Heightened public awareness of child abuse, violence and exploitation and proactive engagement of civil society partners in child protection;
- ✍ Expanded coverage and improved technical quality of programmes and services for CNSP ranging from preventive actions and early interventions to rescue, recovery, healing and reintegration services as well as legal and judicial protection measures;
- ✍ Improved response capacity of parents, teachers, religious leaders, social workers, health workers, law enforcers, prosecutors, public attorneys, judges, and other service providers in addressing child abuse, exploitation and violence;
- ✍ Increased resiliency, knowledge, and life skills among CNSP towards their own protection and participation;
- ✍ Effective and consistent enforcement of laws and ordinances to protect children from all forms of abuse, exploitation and violence;
- ✍ A child justice system that is child-sensitive and child-friendly capable of adjudicating children's cases expeditiously;
- ✍ Functional barangay councils for the protection of children (BCPC) in at least sixty-five percent (65%) of barangays with effective linkages with the M/C/P/CPC, RCWC and CWC;
- ✍ Improved data base and monitoring system on CNSP at national and local levels;
- ✍ Reduced number of CNSP particularly those involved in armed conflict, child labour and commercial sexual exploitation.

Key Protection Indicators

Child protection indicators can be categorized in three types: (a) protection environment indicators including risk factors, (b) protection situation indicators, and (c) protection responses and results indicators.

Protection environment indicators relate to the macro and structural factors affecting child protection issues and therefore require continuing and longer-term interventions. Risk indicators point to the categories of children who are disadvantaged and therefore vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and violence. Preventive actions and early interventions can prevent these children from becoming victims of abuse, exploitation and violence. Protection situation indicators identify the children who are already affected by or trapped in various forms of abuse, exploitation and violence and therefore need special protection measures including rescue, recovery, healing and reintegration services as well as legal and judicial protection. Protection responses and results indicators identify the critical actions and interventions necessary to bring about desired results or outcomes for a given period.

Protection Environment Indicators

- ✍ Ratification and implementation of Optional Protocols to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- ✍ Number and category of national laws and local ordinances on child protection consistent with CRC and other international standards effectively enforced
- ✍ Collection and availability of national and local data on reported cases of child abuse, exploitation and violence
- ✍ Allocation of adequate government resources at national and local levels for child protection programmes and interventions
- ✍ Functional multi-sectoral networks and alliances for child protection, particularly among NGOs, faith-based communities and organizations and other CSOs at the community level
- ✍ Functional multi-level child protection system showing effective linkages between and among the BCPC, M/C/PCPC, RCWC and CWC in responding to child abuse, exploitation and violence
- ✍ Open discussion of child protection issues (and the underlying values, attitudes and practices that led to abuse, violence and exploitation) in the mass media with the active involvement of civil society organizations
- ✍ Opportunities for building resilience, self-esteem, participation and empowerment of children for their own protection

Risk Indicators

- ✍ Children in families living below the poverty line
- ✍ Children from big families in urban poor areas
- ✍ Children from dysfunctional or separated families

- ✘ Children in conflict-affected communities
- ✘ Unregistered children
- ✘ Children living away from home
- ✘ Children without primary caregivers
- ✘ Children not in school
- ✘ Children with disabilities
- ✘ Children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples
- ✘ Children in remote and hard-to-reach areas

Protection Situation Indicators

- ✘ Number of children engaged in exploitative and hazardous labour
- ✘ Number of children affected by and involved in armed conflict
- ✘ Number of children being trafficked within and outside the country
- ✘ Number of children in conflict with the law
- ✘ Number of children in jails and detention centers
- ✘ Number of children in care institutions
- ✘ Number of reported cases of child abuse (physical and sexual)
- ✘ Number of children in pornography and prostitution or commercial sex trade
- ✘ Number of children involved in substance abuse
- ✘ Number of street children
- ✘ Number of children of OFWs left behind
- ✘ Number of children affected by natural disasters

Protection Responses Indicators

- ✘ Number of BCPCs involved in child protection advocacy, resource mobilization, situation analysis, programme planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation
- ✘ Number of family courts applying appropriate and child-sensitive judicial rules and procedures and adjudicating children's cases expeditiously
- ✘ Number of community-based prevention and diversion programmes for children in conflict with the law
- ✘ Number of local social welfare offices and NGOs with effective monitoring mechanisms for children at risk and protective services for victims of abuse, exploitation and violence
- ✘ Number of police stations with operational women and children's concerns desk (WCCD) engaged in monitoring of children at risk and protection of child victims of abuse, exploitation and violence

- ✘ Number of national government agencies and LGUs adopting child-friendly budgets and percentage of government budget allocated for social services and child protection programmes
- ✘ Number of faith-based communities and organizations integrating child protection in their programmes and services
- ✘ Number of social workers, police officers, prosecutors, public attorneys, judges and other service providers applying child-sensitive procedures in handling CNSP
- ✘ Percentage of families at risk demonstrating knowledge and skills in effective parenting and protective services

Protection Results Indicators

- ✘ Number of CNSP rescued and removed from the worst forms of child labour
- ✘ Number of CNSP provided with recovery, healing and reintegration services
- ✘ Number of CNSP provided access to education and vocational training
- ✘ Number of children in conflict with the law who are diverted from the formal justice system
- ✘ Number of cases prosecuted for crimes against children
- ✘ Number of conviction of crimes against children
- ✘ Number of urban poor children prevented from becoming street children
- ✘ Number of CNSP reunited with their families
- ✘ Number of CNSP placed in adoption, foster family or other alternative parental care arrangements
- ✘ Number of CNSP provided opportunities for developing resilience, life skills, self-esteem, participation and empowerment
- ✘ Number of children involved in armed conflict who have been demobilized and reintegrated into their families and communities

Note that most, if not all, of the above indicators can apply at local, regional and national levels. As such, they can easily be linked with the Child 21 Subaybay Bata monitoring indicators developed by CWC which are grouped into macro and micro indicators. They can also be linked with the NPAC monitoring indicators. This will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

Developing a Child Protection Index (CPI)

The Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC) and CWC can develop a Child Protection Index (CPI) using the three categories of child protection indicators as building blocks. The SCPC and CWC may decide to give weights to highlight the importance of the indicators – either protection environment indicators or protection response and results indicators – and use the CPI as a tool for advocacy, planning and budgeting for child protection at local, regional and national levels. The CPI could be used to measure the situation and progress made by local government units, NGOs, FBOs, national government agencies and the entire country in terms of child protection.

CHAPTER - 4

MAJOR STRATEGIES & CORE INTERVENTIONS

Cross-Cutting Strategies and Interventions

Experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the GOP-UNICEF Country Programme for Children (CPC 4 and 5) for the last ten years show the need for an integrated child protection programme which will address the different levels of causes – immediate, underlying, and root – of abuse, exploitation and violence against children. Instead of just addressing a specific CNSP category (such as child labour, street children, children in armed conflict, etc.) as a stand alone initiative, the CPCP will focus on cross-cutting strategies and interventions which will address all CNSP categories. Such cross-cutting strategies and interventions will be institutionalized into existing structures at various levels and institutional settings: family, school, church, mass media, justice system, local community or barangay, city, municipality, province, regional and national bodies – thus enhancing the caring and protective environment for children. The cross-cutting strategies and interventions can be grouped into the following:



- ✧ Preventive Actions and Early Interventions
- ✧ Rescue, Psychosocial Recovery and Social Reintegration Services
- ✧ Legal and Judicial Protection Measures

The revised and updated CPCP calls for a renewed shift from a needs-based to a rights-based approach to advocacy and programming. Consequent to CRC ratification, the government, non-government organizations, families and communities and the rest of civil society are obliged to respect, protect, facilitate and fulfill the rights of children. In terms of child protection, it is no longer enough to address the immediate causes and risk factors that make children vulnerable to abuse, violence and exploitation. It also requires actions that will tackle the root causes that have given rise, and will continue to give rise, to the especially difficult circumstances that lead to serious violations and non-fulfillment of children's rights. In sum, the CPCP espouses vigorous advocacy and public consciousness-raising, capacity building, alliance building, family and community participation and empowerment, civil society mobilization and resource generation towards a broad-based response – akin to a social movement – for the promotion, protection and fulfillment of the rights of children, particularly those in need of special protection measures.

Preventive Actions and Early Interventions

Prevention of abuse, exploitation and violence is a long-term goal requiring structural changes in the economic, social, political and cultural systems existing in the country today. In the medium-term, during the period 2006-2010, preventive actions will focus mainly on accelerating community-based prevention and early intervention programmes. These will build on existing initiatives of relevant government agencies, non-government organizations, and faith-based communities.

What Have Been Done So Far

With the issuance of Proclamation No. 731 declaring a “National Awareness Week for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation”, a coalition of government agencies and NGOs has conducted various advocacy and awareness-raising activities on the issue of child sexual abuse among families and the general public. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as part of the implementation of RA 6972 or “The Barangay Level Total Protection of Children Act”, has introduced a module on child rights education in its day care programme and in the training of day care workers. With the passage of RA 8980 or the “Early Childhood Care and Development Act”, early childhood education has been institutionalized nationwide and has been viewed as one of the most important and potentially most effective components of a child abuse prevention programme.

The National Network on Street Children (NNSC), coordinated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, has existing inter-agency working committees in thirty-three (33) cities and urban municipalities nationwide which have taken responsibility at the LGU level for child rights education among street children themselves, street educators, and law enforcers. Initiatives in alternative education provided by the NPSC and the city inter-agency working committees have enabled street children to continue their schooling – thus preventing them from becoming more disadvantaged and vulnerable to further abuse, exploitation and violence. Through the NPSC, a number of tools for the prevention of violations of children's rights have been developed, notably the “Police Handbook in Handling Cases of CEDC”, the “Handbook for Street Educators” and the “Primer on Street Education”.

NGOs like the Center for Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (CPTCSA) have developed modules and materials for educating children about their rights and their personal safety, with emphasis on the prevention of sexual abuse. In collaboration with public high schools particularly in Metro Manila and other NGOs, CPTCSA has been running a child abuse prevention education programme using a “Manual on Protective Behavior” developed jointly with DSWD and with support from UNICEF. The Philippine Children's Television Foundation (PCTVF), with support from the Children and Youth Foundation of the Philippines (CYFP) has likewise developed child rights teaching videos and a facilitator's guide for use in schools and in community-based programmes. PCTVF and UNICEF have published a series of books on children's rights. Also with UNICEF support, the Children's Laboratory for Drama in Education has developed a module and leaflet on child rights education for use in various street children programmes.

What More Need To Be Done

Sensitizing families, communities and LGUs on the CRC

Preventive actions and early interventions against child abuse, exploitation and violence require massive awareness-raising among families, communities, LGUs and the general public on the CRC, particularly the protection provisions. This will mean producing popular versions of the CRC in the major regional languages (Cebuano, Ilocano, Tagalog, Muslim) so that the CRC and its provisions will become a by-word among families and communities. Concretely, awareness-raising can be facilitated through a participatory situation analysis of CNSP at local levels and development of key messages on child protection based on information and data gathered from the local community. Generating awareness at family, community and LGU levels will be linked with the national CRC

popularization initiative of the CWC, the Child Rights Center of the Commission on Human Rights, the Committee for the Special Protection of Children and other bodies.

In addition to the usual forms of media, key messages on child protection can be disseminated through the use of creative arts, community drama and other cultural presentations with the children and the community involved from script writing to production to actual presentation. The role of community child rights advocates (CRA), teachers, social workers, community volunteers, and church workers, among others, will be critical in this process.

Basic child protection messages can likewise be integrated into literacy materials, modules on responsible and effective parenting education, as well as into the BEC (basic ecclesial communities) or parish pastoral programmes. Partnership among DepEd, CWC, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines National Secretariat for Social Action (CBCP-NASSA), the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) and the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) should be facilitated to push further CRC popularization, with emphasis on child protection. Open discussion and recognition of issues of child abuse, violence and exploitation should be encouraged involving particularly the mass media, FBOs and other civil society organizations.

Facilitating effective access of children at risk to relevant early and basic education and vocational training

DepEd must further develop an educational policy that will address the needs and realities of CNSP. Already, DepEd has been integrating CNSP data into its management information system (MIS) as part of the Child-Friendly School System (CFSS) initiative. These data can serve as basis not only for understanding CNSP and their educational needs but also for monitoring and tracking of CNSP and other children at risk or potential drop-outs. A policy dialogue between DepEd and NGOs involved in child protection programmes can be conducted to ensure relevance and responsiveness of existing DepEd educational programmes to the various categories of CNSP.

Models of educational interventions for CNSP may take the following tracks: (a) balik-paaralan or back to school scheme, (b) alternative learning system (ALS), and (c) vocational training through TESDA or NGOs such as Don Bosco, Laura Vicuna, ERDA and other NGOs, and (d) inclusive education for children with disabilities. In all four schemes, the role and participation of CNSP, their parents and the community, through the BCPC, will be emphasized. The BCPC will mobilize resources for educational subsidy for needy and deserving CNSP. The BCPC can set up a Community Education Fund (CEF) for children particularly the CNSP. Through the CEF, the barangay will have the means to provide its children the opportunities for education and vocational training – which are important inputs in preventive actions and early interventions against child abuse, exploitation and violence.

Equipping children with knowledge and skills to protect themselves

Providing children with the appropriate information and skills, helping them build their self-esteem and psychosocial competence, and providing them opportunities for participatory leadership will enable them to take responsible decisions and actions for their own health, protection and development. Life skills will empower them to avoid drugs and alcohol; protect themselves from recruiters and pimps for exploitative labour and commercial sex; practice safe and responsible sexual behavior and thus avoid the dangers of early and unwanted pregnancies, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, among others.

Peer education using the life skills approach should be supported, particularly among children and young people who are out of school. Local government social welfare offices and NGOs such as Children's Laboratory for Drama in Education, Kabalikat, Childhope, and the NCSD network, among others, must expand and sustain their ongoing peer education programmes to reach a greater number of CNSP. Organizations of young people such as the Pag-asa Youth Association (PYA) and the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) should be involved in peer education programmes. For even broader coverage of peer education and life skills education, the National Youth Commission (NYC) will be tapped to facilitate orientation and training of SK officers and members.

Promoting responsible and effective parenting education for families of CNSP

Situation analysis has shown that many of the CNSP come not only from poverty-stricken families but also from dysfunctional or broken homes. A major preventive and early intervention effort, therefore, needs to focus on promoting responsible and effective parenting. In particular, considering the situation of the Filipino family today, the greater challenge is towards the promotion of responsible fatherhood.

Current modules on parent effectiveness service (PES) implemented by DSWD and the family life education programmes of NGOs and church groups such as the CBCP Commission on Family and Life, the NCCP Division of Family Ministries, the Center for Family Ministries (CEFAM) based at the Ateneo de Manila University, the Family Life Institute (FLI) of Philippine Women's University and the member agencies of FAMNET, among others, could already be utilized and, if needed, revised in the light of the principles and provisions of the CRC and the challenges of child protection and development, while emphasizing the critical role of fathers.

In like manner, existing movements on the family such as the Christian Family Movement (CFM) and the Couples for Christ (CFC) should be challenged to reorient their apostolate to incorporate child rights promotion and child protection. In addition, they will be encouraged to bring down their respective apostolate to the level of families at the grassroots. They can draw inspiration from the CBCP Pastoral Letter on the Exploitation of Filipino Children issued on 31 January 1998 which enjoins every parish and all church-mandated organizations and movements to take on the challenges of child abuse and exploitation as part of their family life programmes.

At the barangay level, parent educators will be trained from among the members of the BCPC, the PTCA and other community-based organizations. Trained parent educators will conduct parents' classes or assemblies towards strengthening families and community groups to address child abuse, exploitation and violence. Parent educators will be supported by LGU social workers, NGO workers and church/parish workers involved in responsible parenthood and family life programmes. Support network for CNSP families will be established by tapping the resources of DSWD, DepEd, CFM, CFC, CEFAM, CBCP and NCCP.

Supporting livelihood activities and facilitating access to credit and employment opportunities

Support for livelihood, credit and employment for parents as well as for CNSP ages 15-18 should be provided in the context of preventing child abuse and exploitation and not only for the sake of helping augment family income. With regular source of livelihood and increased family income, it is expected that children will no longer need to work but will instead be able to go back to school or remain in school; will have adequate food; health and nutritional care; and will not be forced into exploitative situations in order to survive. With assured income, the CNSP families will no longer depend on the work of their children for survival.

Community livelihood and credit groups (CLCG) can be organized among families of CNSP. CLCG clusters may have between six and eight families each which are in turn part of a bigger community organization. The CLCGs will serve as the mechanism for all livelihood, credit, and employment assistance for parents of CNSP and other children at risk. Technical assistance to CLCGs will be provided by DSWD through its SEA-K programme, TLRC, and NGOs with track record in livelihood and credit assistance programmes for the poor.

To generate seed fund for the CLCGs, the following government institutions and social development agencies can be tapped: National Livelihood Support Fund, DOLE, DSWD, the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), Save the Children Federation, World Vision, ERDA, CYFP and Consuelo Foundation, as well as ECOP, PCCI and the development foundations of banks such as Metrobank and UCPB, among others. Livelihood, credit and employment assistance to CNSP families should be prioritized under the poverty reduction programme of the national government.

Establishing effective, built-in screening and detection mechanism for children at risk within basic social services at barangay, city and municipal levels

Essential to prevention is the early detection of any sign of abuse and the identification of children who are at high risk and vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and violence at the household and community levels. The existing health and social services at the barangay level must be utilized for this purpose. The ECCD programme screening tools must include attention to children at risk and provide ways of detecting early signs of abuse. All ECCD workers and other service providers must be trained on the use of these tools.

A referral system for child development screening and early detection of disability and child abuse must be set up and made operational particularly at the barangay level. LGUs, NGOs and relevant national government agencies such as DOH, DSWD, DepEd, NCWDP, DILG and CWC must work together to ensure the functionality and effectiveness of the referral system. For this referral system to be sustained, all barangays must have actively functioning barangay councils for the protection of children.

Family-based and community-based actions are likewise critical in preventing involvement of children in armed conflict as well as in protecting children affected by armed conflict. Therefore, appropriate preventive strategies should be further developed in the context of the barangay council for the protection of children.

Organizing, activating and strengthening local councils for the protection of children

The first circle of defense for, or offence against, children is the family, the neighborhood and the barangay. It is therefore imperative to empower families and local communities to become the frontline advocates for child rights promotion and child protection. Empowering families and communities for child protection will include training on the CRC, as well as in social assessment, social analysis and action planning to protect their own children.

The local councils for the protection of children – barangay council for the protection of children (BCPC), city council for the protection of children (CCPC), municipal council for the protection of children (MCPC) – are the structures mandated by law for the care and protection of children. All these structures, particularly the BCPC, must therefore be organized, activated, strengthened and sustained. Tools such as the DSWD-CWC-DILG Manual on Organizing Local Councils for the Protection of Children must be reproduced for wide-scale distribution to all LGUs. If needed, in light of new legislation such as the ECCD Act and the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act as well as new developments in the country's situation, the manual should be reviewed, revised and then produced for wide-scale dissemination.

In addition, in order to ensure the functionality of the BCPC, a simple guide for barangay leaders in organizing, strengthening and sustaining the BCPC should be developed. The experiences and lessons learned from BCPCs that have been active and successful in child care and protection will serve as basis for developing the guide. The BCPC Guide for Barangay Leaders and Volunteers should become the “bible” for all child rights advocates and child defenders at the community level.

To call national attention to and interest in the imperative of organizing BCPC in the more than 42,000 barangays all over the country, the CWC and DILG should plan for the conduct of a National Summit on the BCPC either in 2007 or 2008. As part of the preparation for the National BCPC Summit, further documentation of good examples of BCPCs that work in various contexts – rural, urban, big and small barangays, etc. – should now be done.

Aside from the BCPCs, other equivalent structures that already exist at barangay level such as the barangay human rights action center (BHRAC) must be tapped for child protection. NGOs and POs that have long years of experience in community organizing efforts can be mobilized to address child abuse, exploitation and violence. Moreover, local faith communities and faith-based organizations, e.g., the basic ecclesial communities (BEC), should be harnessed towards child protection. The latter groups can now be mobilized more effectively through a religious network on children called the Philippine Inter-Faith Network for Children (PHILINC) organized during the First National Inter-Faith Leaders Dialogue on Children in November 2005.

Rescue, Psychosocial Recovery, Healing and Social Reintegration Services

All state parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of exploitation or abuse. Such rescue, recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child”. This is the mandate against which all rescue, recovery and reintegration strategies and activities should be measured.

What Have Been Done So Far

Existing models for monitoring, rescue, recovery and reintegration of child victims of abuse and exploitation such as Sagip Batang Manggagawa (SBM) coordinated by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) have shown some encouraging results. Inter-agency in composition including DOLE, DSWD, NBI, DOJ, PIA and NGOs like KDF, among others, Sagip Batang Manggagawa operations in all regions have rescued hundreds of children from the worst forms of child labour. But the SBM operations need to be localized particularly at the barangay, city, municipal and provincial levels.

A number of hotlines where one can report cases of child abuse, exploitation and violence have been set up. Bantay-Bata 163 of ABS-CBN and the 24-hour crisis intervention units in all DSWD Field Offices have served as mechanisms for detecting, monitoring and rescuing children who are abused and exploited. Radio and print media have also been successfully used to inform the public where to report child abuse cases. Some communities have a task force against child abuse that conducts surveillance and monitoring of children at risk and respond to or refer cases to appropriate agencies for interventions.

The DSWD has maintained 30 centers in 20 cities and eight provinces which provide residential care services for child victims of abuse, 11 Reception and Study Centers for children, 13 homes for girls, 10 Regional Rehabilitation Centers for Youth, two Lingap Centers, and the Ahon Bata sa Lansangan Center and Nasyon ng Kabataan. The Standards and Accreditation Bureau and Field Offices of DSWD provide technical assistance and monitor quality of programmes and services offered by these centers. Treatment, recovery and rehabilitation services are provided through multidisciplinary teams composed of social workers, psychologists, house-parents, and vocational instructors.

The family is involved as a partner in the healing and recovery of abused and exploited children since the aim of DSWD's recovery and reintegration programmes is to reunite the children with their families. Social workers have been trained on child-friendly procedures in handling children as they go through individual and group counseling, theater or play therapy, leadership training, socio-cultural activities and creative arts sessions.

Augmenting and complementing government efforts, a number of NGOs have established facilities and programmes for recovery, healing and reintegration. Among these are:

- ✍ The Child Protection Unit (CPU) of the Philippine General Hospital (PGH), which is a breakthrough in forensic medical examination for child victims of abuse. Here, children are dealt with professionally by a trained medical team with great sensitivity to the children's needs during the tedious process of medical examination. A protocol for reporting, examination, documentation and assistance in the form of social services has been developed and refined at the CPU-PGH;
- ✍ Laura Vicuna, CRIBS, Virlanie Foundation, Tahanan, and Serra's Center for Girls provide essential rehabilitation services through temporary shelters and residential care facilities;
- ✍ In addition, there are a number of allied professionals such as psychiatrists and psychologists who provide psychotherapy services.

What More Need To Be Done

Strengthening monitoring and rescue mechanisms

Building on the experiences of SBM, Bantay-Bata 163, the DSWD crisis intervention units and other monitoring and rescue mechanisms, the CSPC should facilitate the formulation, revision or improvement of guidelines and procedures for monitoring and rescue of children from abusive, violent and exploitative situations. The guidelines and procedures must take into consideration the provisions of CRC, RA 7610, 7658, 9208 and other child protection laws. As abuse, violence and exploitation happen at the family and community level, particular attention will be given to guidelines and procedures for community-based monitoring and rescue mechanisms which should be part of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC).

The rescue of children from situations of abuse and exploitation is also an integral part of the judicial involvement of children. The approaches and procedures in responding to child victims of abuse, exploitation and violence in the context of the justice system need to be systematized, standardized and made child-sensitive and child-friendly. More details on this aspect will be dealt with in the section on legal and judicial protection.

Improved psychosocial recovery and healing services and reintegration of children into their families and communities

To facilitate the process of recovery and healing, the essential services must be made available and accessible to all child victims without discrimination. Programmatic efforts should be geared toward achieving early recovery and eventual return of CNSP to their network of family and community relationships. To expand the coverage and improve the technical quality of psychosocial recovery and social reintegration programmes, the following actions must be undertaken:

- ✍ Develop specialized healing and recovery programmes for children and their families including a court-ordered multidisciplinary treatment programme. All members in the multidisciplinary treatment team, including prosecutors and judges, must be adequately equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills.
- ✍ Provide support services for children and their families to include educational, medical, legal, psychosocial and livelihood services. These services must be accessible to all without discrimination. An inventory of these existing support services – both government and non-government – must be done to determine whether or not these are adequate to respond to the rising number of children becoming victims of abuse, violence and exploitation.
- ✍ Organize and train support groups for children and their families both at the center and in the community. Organized support groups at the community level should form part of the BCPC structure.
- ✍ Establish child-sensitive and child-friendly interview rooms to appropriately address the unique needs and circumstances of the child in crisis. The current set-up at the CPU-PGH and other existing child-friendly investigation studios should be assessed and draw lessons to improve their operation and utilization. Likewise, the proper use of video-taped interviews as evidence in court should be integrated into the training of prosecutors.

- ✦ Conduct regular consultations and dialogue among service providers to improve management of cases. Such regular consultations and dialogue can be facilitated by the LCPCs at the local level and the RCWC at the regional level. The SCPC must facilitate and/or provide technical assistance at regional and local levels in the various stages of the psychosocial case management process.
- ✦ Develop a programme for the rehabilitation of the perpetrators in order to prevent further commission of abuse, violence and exploitation against children. Such a programme may include vocational skills training, psychosocial therapy, and legal assistance, among others, as already being piloted by DSWD. This action should be viewed as part of an overall strategy in breaking the cycle of abuse, violence and exploitation.

Promoting alternative family care for children deprived of a family environment

Alternative family care arrangements such as foster care, adoption, and group homes, among others, will be further developed for children without families or who have been deprived of a family environment. Ongoing initiatives on alternative parental care by organizations like NORFIL, Kaisahang Buhay Foundation (KBF), DSWD, LGU social welfare offices, and Adoptive Families and Parenting Foundation, among others will be documented to draw lessons and insights that will guide the process of going to scale.

However, for children without families and who could not be placed in foster care, adoption or other family-like arrangements, technical support will be given to centers or institutions to ensure the best possible care for the children. As a matter of policy, the long-term institutionalization of children should be a measure of last resort in light of Article 20 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Family and community empowerment to facilitate psychosocial recovery, healing and social reintegration

The empowerment of families and communities is crucial to an early recovery and reintegration process. This implies that recovery does not necessarily happen in centers and institutions alone. Developing programmes on community-based psychosocial care to complement center-based psychosocial interventions will therefore contribute to wider coverage of psychosocial recovery and social reintegration efforts.

Current efforts focus more on developing community-based interventions to provide after care services to child victims to ensure their smooth reintegration into their families and communities. The challenge is to work with and prepare the families and communities simultaneously as the child victims are being provided psychosocial recovery services at the center. This emphasis on family and community empowerment to facilitate recovery and reintegration requires the following actions:

- ✦ Strengthen existing community structures such as the BCPC and BHRAC to identify cases of children and families at risk and to extend assistance as needed. Both BCPCs and BHRACs, while existing in a considerable number of barangays, remain largely weak and non-functional. CWC and the CSPC must advocate with DILG, CHR, DSWD and the LGUs to seriously invest in organizing, activating, strengthening and sustaining the BCPCs and BHRACs. (For more discussion on the BCPC, refer to the section on preventive actions and early interventions).

- ✎ Conduct responsible and effective parenting seminars to include emphasis on the special protection provisions of the CRC and existing child protection laws as well as the psychosocial effects on children of abuse, exploitation, and violence. Existing modules on parenting education should be reviewed and, if needed, revised to suit the realities and needs of families at the grassroots.
- ✎ Develop family enrichment programmes for families at the grassroots geared toward improving husband-wife relationships, parent-child relationships, and family-community relationships. The goal is to create nurturing, caring, protective, and socially responsible families. NGOs and FBOs should be tapped in developing and implementing family enrichment programmes.
- ✎ Organize and train community volunteers on basic counseling, protective behavior, conflict management and conflict resolution. Harness existing indigenous ways of conflict resolution, healing and recovery.
- ✎ Organize foster or adoption families to provide alternative forms of parental care for children who are deprived of a family environment. A community advocacy plan on foster care and adoption for older children, particularly those in need of special protection, must be prepared taking into consideration that Filipino families are more open to foster care or adoption of babies and small children.
- ✎ Organize a multi-disciplinary team composed of lawyers, police officers, doctors, social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists to provide technical assistance to psychosocial recovery, healing and reintegration programmes.

Upgrading technical competencies of programme managers, supervisors, social workers, and other service providers in helping children

There is a need for a continuing training and capacity building for all staff and service providers involved in the implementation of rescue, recovery, healing and reintegration programmes. Technical competencies and skills of service providers need to be regularly upgraded, particularly in areas like child-sensitive interview processes, non-punitive approaches to child victims, psychosocial orientation skills, understanding trauma, community-based diversion, and supervision. A joint training team, composed of DSWD, CPU-PGH, Plan and other NGOs involved in psychosocial interventions programmes, will be organized to facilitate the conduct of periodic training and capacity building activities. The following tasks must be done:

- ✎ Review existing training modules on psychosocial interventions to determine their appropriateness for CNSP service providers. If found necessary, training modules will be revised and new materials will be developed for the use of service providers, community volunteers, parents and children themselves. The review will be initiated by DSWD in partnership with relevant NGOs.
- ✎ Develop a programme manual on psychosocial care – both for center-based psychosocial interventions and community-based psychosocial services. The programme manual to be developed will build on already existing materials, although there may be less materials available on community-based psychosocial care.

Replication of innovative psychosocial intervention programmes at local level

Most of the existing good examples of psychosocial intervention programmes have been operating largely at the national and regional levels and mostly in the urban centers. The coverage of these programmes therefore remains limited, yet the number of child victims in need of psychosocial care has been increasing. The challenge is to make these programmes and services locally available and accessible to all CNSP.

To make this possible, the CWC-CNSP Committee and the SCPC must facilitate the documentation of good examples of existing center-based and community-based psychosocial care programmes for wider dissemination and replication particularly at the local level.

Legal and Judicial Protection Measures

Legal and judicial protection of children requires that all the five pillars of the justice system – community, law enforcement, prosecution, court, and correction – work together in order to prevent, respond to and rehabilitate the victims of neglect, abuse, violence, exploitation and discrimination. The five pillars constitute a protection process triggered at the onset by a report or discovery of a child abuse case, the response to the report, the investigation of the case, and the judicial involvement of children in the process. Current efforts to address cases of child abuse involving the five pillars show several gaps and weaknesses: (a) weak coordination among the pillars in handling cases; (b) judicial procedures, starting from the interview and investigation to trial of children as victim, witness or accused, are still largely insensitive and inappropriate to the unique situation and psychosocial make-up of children; (c) training of personnel and staff particularly of the Family Courts has proceeded at a slow pace; and (d) slow disposition of cases. The slow process in the disposition of cases is due to understaffing and huge workload. Therefore, increasing the human resource capacity in the justice system should be a priority action.

What Have Been Done So Far

The review, reform and enactment of laws making them consistent with the principles, provisions and standards of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other UN standards on juvenile justice have gained headway with the passage of Republic Act 9344 or the “Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act” in April 2006. With the passage of the juvenile justice law, the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility, decriminalize vagrancy, develop and implement alternative measures to deprivation of liberty, and the need for child-sensitive and child-friendly judicial rules and procedures, among others, have been seriously addressed, at least initially, since the law is yet to be implemented.

Specialized and integrated training programmes for the pillars of the justice system have been conducted under the auspices of the Philippine Judicial Academy (PJA) of the Supreme Court, the Institute of Judicial Administration (IJA) of the University of the Philippines (UP), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), and law schools such as the Ateneo and UP, with the support of NGOs such as the Child Protection Unit (CPU) of the Philippine General Hospital (PGH), among others. Through these training activities, police officers, prosecutors, public attorneys, judges, social workers and correction officials have gained greater knowledge and understanding of the CRC

provisions on child protection, the UN standards on juvenile justice, the more recent national child protection laws, the new judicial rules and procedures for children issued by the Supreme Court, and on child-friendly investigation technologies and procedures. Such training activities, however, must be intensified and sustained to reach all major actors in the justice system.

The use of new technologies in handling cases involving children, particularly through the establishment of child-friendly investigation studios and the installation of video-conferencing equipment (live-link TV) in Family Courts, the designation of Regional Trial Courts as Family Courts, and the establishment of community-based and court-based diversion programmes for children in conflict with the law have demonstrated the seriousness among the pillars of justice to make the justice system truly child-sensitive and child-friendly. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, however, is still concerned about the lack of child-sensitive and adequately trained family and juvenile courts. Merely designating certain regional trial courts as family courts may not be sufficient.

There have also been notable efforts to sensitize and train BCPC officers and members, barangay tanods, members of the *Lupong Tagapamayapa* and *Pangkat Tagapagkasundo* on the CRC protection provisions, the UN standards on juvenile justice (e.g. Beijing Rules, Riyadh Guidelines, JDL Rules), and the national laws on child protection (RA 7610, 7658, 9208, 9231, etc.) towards improving child protection mechanisms at the local level. However, given the large numbers of barangays nationwide (over 42,000), these efforts are not yet sufficient to make a difference in the lives of children becoming victims of abuse, exploitation and violence particularly in the remote barangays.

While some agencies involved in the justice system such as DOJ, NBI, PNP, BJMP, and DSWD, among others, have started to establish child protection database, the monitoring and reporting system on children involved in the justice system needs improvement.

What More Need To Be Done

The imperative of making the justice system truly child-sensitive and child-friendly remains as the major challenge in the provision of legal and judicial protection measures to children. As said earlier, the passage of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006 has created a great opportunity to ensure that juvenile justice will eventually be in full compliance with the provisions of the CRC, in particular articles 37 and 40, as well as other relevant standards in this area, such as the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules), the UN Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Riyadh Guidelines), the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (JDL Rules), the Vienna Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System, and the UN Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has strongly emphasized this challenge to the Philippines in its June 2005 Concluding Observations on our second CRC implementation report. Moreover, the Committee on the Rights of the Child also highlighted the need to address other legal gaps with regards to other child protection issues such as the passage of laws on foster care and child pornography, among others.

Dissemination of and orientation on Republic Act 9344 and other child protection laws, including training on gender sensitivity in legal and judicial processes

Public information and education campaign must be undertaken to ensure correct understanding and appreciation of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006 or Republic Act 9344. The rules and regulations implementing the law issued by the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) on 15 August 2006 must be widely disseminated among key actors and stakeholders particularly in cities, provinces, municipalities and barangays. User-friendly booklets on the new law and its implementing rules and regulations should be produced and widely distributed and disseminated.

More fundamentally, public education on the philosophy and principle of restorative justice must be undertaken with the active involvement of mass media, the church, and civil society. This could be done alongside the continuing awareness-raising and education campaigns on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Child 21, NPAC and the CPCP. In sum, this should contribute to the promotion of a caring and protective environment for children and a child-friendly Philippine society.

The same process of dissemination and orientation should likewise be done with regards to other child protection laws including RA 7610, 7658, 9208, 9231, and 9262, among others. Moreover, gender sensitivity in legal and judicial processes should become an integral element in the administration of child and juvenile justice. Therefore, the training programme for the pillars of justice – law enforcers, prosecutors, public attorneys, judges, correction officials, and social workers – should always include the gender and psychosocial dimensions of administering the child and juvenile justice system.

Formulating a comprehensive juvenile intervention programme

The Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC), with the support and cooperation of CWC, CSPC and other relevant agencies and inter-agency coordinating councils, must spearhead, coordinate and oversee efforts to implement the law.

A 3-5 year comprehensive national juvenile intervention programme must be prepared within six months from the effectivity of the law. In turn, LGUs will prepare their respective comprehensive local juvenile intervention programmes. To facilitate the process of programme formulation and implementation, the JJWC must take the following actions:

- ✍ Conduct massive information and education campaign to popularize the provisions of RA 9344 and its implementing rules and regulations;
- ✍ Undertake integrated and multi-sectoral training among the pillars of the justice system on the proper appreciation and application of the law and its implementing rules and regulations;
- ✍ Facilitate establishment of family and juvenile courts staffed with sufficient and appropriately trained professional personnel (mere designation of regional trial courts as family courts may not be sufficient);

- ✍ Facilitate and coordinate advocacy and fund-raising campaigns to ensure continuity of available and adequate funds for the implementation of the comprehensive juvenile intervention programmes at national and LGU levels;
- ✍ Seek technical assistance from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF and other relevant bodies, if needed.

Building models of community-based juvenile delinquency prevention programme

Establishing community-based juvenile delinquency prevention programmes serves the best interests of children, in that they are provided with the opportunities and essential services geared towards their wholesome growth and development. Some of these preventive interventions include health and nutrition services, basic education, life skills education, values formation, leadership development and vocational training. (Refer to the section on preventive actions and early interventions for more details).

The following agencies and institutions have critical roles to play in juvenile delinquency prevention: (a) the family, (b) the educational system, (c) the mass media, (d) the NGOs, FBOs and other CSOs, and (e) the local government units and the local councils for the protection of children. The Sangguniang Kabataan and other youth associations such as the Pag-asa Youth Association have strategic roles in the formulation and implementation of programmes preventing juvenile delinquency.

Models of juvenile delinquency prevention programmes must be properly monitored, documented and shared for wider replication.

Building models of community-based diversion programme

Pursuant to Sections 30 and 31 of RA 9344, children in conflict with the law who are diverted from becoming involved with the formal justice system must go through a diversion programme appropriate to their unique needs and circumstances and the nature of their offence. While the law has enumerated several possible diversion programmes, most of these have yet to be tried in the Philippine context, although some initiatives have already been successful such as the Free Lava pilot project in Cebu City. There is therefore a need to replicate already existing successful initiatives as well as build models that will work considering the culture and psychosocial make-up of Filipino children.

As in the juvenile delinquency prevention programmes, these models of diversion programme must be properly monitored and documented. Experiences and lessons learned from the best models could then be widely disseminated for replication.

Continuing training and capacity building for the five pillars

As recommended by the International Committee on the Rights of the Child as well as by the Special Committee for the Protection of Children, training and capacity building for the five pillars must be intensified and sustained. The training activities (beyond the requirements of RA 9344) could be pillar-specific or integrated depending on the critical training needs. The JJWC and SCPC, in cooperation with CWC, PHILJA, IJA, DOJ and DSWD, among others, should facilitate a training needs

assessment among the pillars particularly in light of the CRC and its Optional Protocols, the UN standards on juvenile justice, as well as new child protection laws and issuances from the Supreme Court.

Based on the training needs assessment, a 3-5 year training and capacity building programme could then be designed, implemented and evaluated. Complementary training and operational manuals for the pillars – either integrated or pillar-specific – could also be developed. This could mean revising and enriching the earlier manuals prepared by PHILJA. The training and operational manuals must address the concern for unified and uniform procedures to be adopted by the five pillars in the different stages of the judicial process – from the interview and investigation process to the trial and disposition by the court. Effective coordination among the pillars could likewise be facilitated through the training and operational manuals, in addition to the conduct of regular dialogues.

Developing a research agenda for enactment, reform, and effective enforcement of child protection laws

The passage of RA 9344 and its implementation will require studies on children and juveniles in conflict with the law, the trends and causes of juvenile delinquency and crimes, and the impact of juvenile interventions programmes on children, among others.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has urged the Philippines to review its domestic laws on the protection of children against sexual exploitation, including the use of children for pornography, in order to provide all children victims of such exploitation with equal protection.

In light of the above, the SCPC and the JJWC must work together and develop a research agenda for the next five years to guide continuing research on the identified priority child protection issues and concerns. The research results will be used for (a) improving law enforcement, (b) review and amendment of existing laws, and (c) enactment of new laws, particularly at the LGU level.

CHAPTER - 5

CHILD PARTICIPATION IN CHILD PROTECTION

Defining Children's Participation

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that “States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law”.



The above provision recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of children and young people and their right to be heard and to participate in decisions that affect their lives. It implies that children can become powerful advocates and actors for their own protection and development. When children are asked to identify their priority concerns, they place abuse, exploitation and violence at the top of their agenda, along with health, nutrition, education, and normal family life. In short, children know what really matters in their lives.

The participation of children, even those in especially difficult circumstances, in their own development and protection is critical for the following reasons:

- ✍ children have a right to express their views on decisions affecting them;
- ✍ children know their own situation;
- ✍ children can ensure that work gets carried out and followed through;
- ✍ children know how well development and protection efforts are serving them;
- ✍ involving children empowers them contributing to their own development and protection.

In a series of workshops facilitated by the National Committee on Children and Youth Participation (NCCYP), the children defined participation in terms of the following elements:

- ✍ the right to express one's thoughts, opinions and feelings;
- ✍ adults seriously listen to and consider what the children share, specially on matters that affect children and their immediate environment;

- ✍ children are involved in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities and programmes with adults;
- ✍ children organize themselves; and
- ✍ children hold dialogues with adults on matters that concern children.

The children also identified the following arenas for their participation: the home, school, churches and religious organizations, community, children's associations, local councils for children, the justice system and the larger society.

Significance of Children's Participation

As laid out in the CRC as well as in Child 21, it is envisioned that Filipino children from 6 to 17 years old should “participate in quality and relevant education that is appropriate to the child's development stage and evolving capacity and to participate in the development process. For children to participate, they will be provided with basic life skills to function and survive in the community and society and to overcome threats to well-being and develop as a happy, competent, and responsible adult”.

Child participation must therefore be a major strategy in the Child-Friendly Movement (CFM) in general and in the Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP) in particular. Child participation is significant not only for the children but also for the whole society. Through active and meaningful participation, the children become responsible not only for their own development and protection but they can also contribute their share in the betterment of their communities and the larger society.

Viewed from the perspectives of the children, child participation is significant in terms of the following aspects:

- ✍ Children's participation promotes self-development;
- ✍ Children's participation leads to social awareness and responsible actions;
- ✍ Children's participation upholds democratic principles and processes;
- ✍ Children's participation strengthens resilience and protective systems.

As can be gleaned from the foregoing, effective advocacy and programming efforts for children's rights can benefit from children's participation. Adults must view the children as resources and partners in the implementation of the CRC, the World Fit For Children (WFFC), Child 21, the NPAC, the CPCP and all other programmes and activities that affect their everyday life.

Building Resiliency, Self-Esteem and Psychosocial Competence

Equipping children and young people with appropriate information, knowledge and skills for critical thinking, analyzing issues, solving problems, and making choices and decisions will enhance their existing capacities and resiliency even in the midst of adversities and stressful situations. With an

enabling and supportive environment in their respective families, in schools, in churches, in their communities and the larger society, the children will develop self-esteem and psychosocial competence necessary for them to become active, responsible and productive members of society.

Providing opportunities for life skills education, building self-esteem, and promoting effective and meaningful participation among children and young people must take into consideration the cultural contexts of Filipino family and society. It must be emphasized that children's participation is a gradual process in which children and adults learn and practice mutual respect and understanding. As a gradual process, it must be guided by rights-based principles and the recognition that each person, including the child, has inherent dignity and worth. Adults have to transcend cultural beliefs and practices that treat children as “incomplete” human beings and therefore not worthy of the same regard and respect given to adults. In short, children and adults must be viewed as partners in the promotion of genuine children's participation. Children should be made aware that adults provide support and advice in all their activities. Adults who are open to new ideas and perspectives demonstrate attitudes and behavior that promote genuine children's participation. The challenge, therefore, is to achieve meaningful and effective children-adult partnership.

The fear of most adults and parents that with the CRC there is an over-emphasis on rights and less regard for responsibilities must be allayed by proper appreciation of the nature of human rights including children's rights. Community-based child rights education must convey the understanding that children's rights, including the right to participation, entail corresponding responsibilities. For instance, children have the right to express their views on matters affecting them, but they also have the responsibility to listen and respect what others say. They have the right to education, but they have the responsibility to study. They have the right to health and nutrition, but they have the responsibility to take care of their own health and nutritional status by adopting healthy behaviors and lifestyle.

It is therefore important that modules on life skills education towards building self-esteem and psychosocial competence and promoting meaningful and effective participation among children and young people be developed in the context of Filipino values and culture. Examples of such modules may already be available at DSWD, Consuelo Foundation, CHILDHOPE Asia-Philippines, World Vision, Plan International, ERDA, Christian Children's Fund, Save the Children, and other NGOs under the National Network on Street Children and the National Child Labor Programme.

Organizing Children for Participation, Empowerment and Protection

The Philippines has gone ahead of other countries in the East Asia-Pacific Region in promoting the organization of children for participation and empowerment as well as for their own protection. For instance, a National Coalition of Children's Associations in the Philippines (NaCCAP) has been in existence since 1997. The CPCP should build on these existing experiences and support further efforts in developing models and approaches to meaningful and effective children's participation. Below are some good examples on child participation:

- ✦ Holding children's local assemblies and national conferences as demonstrated by the National Network on Street Children (NNSC) and the National Child Labor Programme (NCLP). In these local assemblies and national conferences, the children discuss and analyze issues affecting them and make recommendations for action which they submit to proper authorities

and officials in government, the school system, churches and faith-based organizations, and the NGO community. A case in point was the first street children's congress in 1991 where the children submitted major recommendations leading to the enactment of RA 7610 in 1992. This was followed by two other national conferences by and of street children in 1995 and 1998. The 1998 congress was participated in by the then Secretary of Social Welfare and Development and now Executive Director of the Council for the Welfare of Children, Lina B. Laigo, who was impressed by the children's capacities for discussion, analysis and decision-making. Another was the Global March for Child Laborers participated in by Filipino working children which led to the ratification of ILO Convention 182.

- ✦ Expanding children's participation in social reform. Through the initiative of the Christian Children's Fund (CCF), World Vision Development Foundation (WVDF), Plan International and ERDA Foundation, a coalition was formed in 1995 to promote and lobby for children's right to participation in policy development and social reforms. Their joint efforts resulted to the establishment in 1997 through Executive Order No. 421 of the Children's Sector in the Social Reform Council which is primarily responsible for policy directions under the National Programme on Poverty Alleviation. Republic Act 8425 or the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act provided further recognition and institutionalization of children's participation. To date, there are children commissioners within the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) who represent children and young people in setting policies and directions in the national poverty reduction programme.
- ✦ Representation of children in national agencies. In addition to the Children's Basic Sector (CBS) in the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), children and young people have also gained representation in the Council for the Welfare of Children. There are two child representatives in the CWC Board. Along with the government and NGO officials in the CWC Board, the children have been instrumental in lobbying for the passage of laws such as the National Council for Children's Television Act, the Family Courts Act of 1997, and the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, among other laws concerning children.
- ✦ Participation in the local councils for the protection of children. There are existing barangay councils for the protection of children (BCPC) where children and young people actively participate in situation analysis, prioritizing issues, setting goals and objectives, formulating action plans, and implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects and activities at the community level. Considering that acts of abuse, violence and exploitation against children take place at the family and community levels, the representation and participation of children and young people in the BCPC and other local protection councils (city, municipality, provincial) is a critical strategic response. This will be further highlighted in the latter part of this chapter.
- ✦ Children's participation and the mass media. Children have expressed their views freely and creatively through the mass media such as radio, TV and print. Concrete examples of these creative forms of children's participation include:
 1. Talakayang Musmos, a programme for and by children aired every week which consists of an hour of news and features to raise awareness on children's rights.
 2. Batibot, a TV programme for children involving children as discussants also aimed at creating awareness on the CRC.

3. Another TV show, “5 and Up” was also anchored by children advocating for their rights to participate and to express themselves.
4. The Kabataan News Network (KNN) is a tele-magazine produced by nine regional bureaus of 13-18 year old reporters. The children plan, shoot, report, conduct interviews, write the scripts, and narrate video stories. The young people are fully in-charge of the image acquisition process of a nationally broadcasted TV show aired on ABC 5 and NBN. Segments of KNN are also aired in the Nickelodeon channel. The young reporters work with adults who train them for news reporting, offer suggestions in planning the features, and produce the segments. The adult producers do not direct or manipulate the children, which is a major advance in young people's participation in the media.

More information on experiences and lessons learned in child participation among Filipino children can be found in a 2005 CWC-UNICEF publication entitled, “The National Framework for Children's Participation”. The publication serves as a guide in promoting and upholding children's participation in the Philippines.

Children and the BCPC

Acts of abuse, exploitation and violence against children are taking place at the level of their own families and communities. The best place, therefore, to initiate actions protecting them is right where they are. Thus, there is a crucial need to organize, strengthen, activate, and sustain the BCPC. In places where the BCPC does not exist or where it is dysfunctional, alternative community structures need to be found such as people's organizations or faith-based organizations.

Children are their own best advocates and actors for their own protection. The best venue to translate this into action is at the level of the BCPC or any equivalent community level mechanism including the basic ecclesial communities (BEC) under the Catholic Church or other local community structures of the other faith communities and faith-based organizations under the umbrella of the NCCP, PCEC, Muslim, Buddhist, and other faith groups. There must be conscious and deliberate efforts to enlist the representation and participation of children in the BCPC, BEC or whatever community structures that serve them and claim to advance their rights and best interests.

In the context of the BCPC or the BEC, the children can get involved in the following: (a) data gathering on and master-listing of children, with data disaggregated by age, gender, socio-economic status, educational status, and other important socio-demographic characteristics; (b) community action planning on children starting from issue analysis and prioritization, setting goals and objectives, determining strategies and interventions, and identifying resources and budget; (c) implementation, monitoring and evaluation of core activities; (d) promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence in their respective communities; and (e) documentation of the BCPC or BEC efforts in addressing child rights promotion and child protection initiatives. The children's involvement in these core actions will contribute to their own capacity building and empowerment as young citizens in their respective barangays.

For this process and approach to happen, the role and commitment of the LGU social worker, an NGO community organizer, a local church animator, or FBO community development worker are critical. They must play the role of catalysts and community organizers for child rights promotion and child protection. They must be convinced that making the BCPC or the BEC work is a challenge to community organizing. In the absence of professionally-trained social workers, committed local community leaders can be trained as community organization volunteers (COV) who will serve as guides and facilitators of the BCPC or BEC.

For the continuity and long-term sustainability of actions at the BCPC or BEC level, a champion for children in the barangay must be identified. Exposed to the realities and needs of children in the barangay and adequately oriented on the CRC and other laws protecting children, the champion can best accompany the children in their own efforts to protect themselves. The champion may then be aptly called “defender or protector of children” at the grassroots level.

CHAPTER - 6

MECHANISMS FOR ACTION, COORDINATION, & NETWORKING

A key factor in the effective implementation of the CPCP is the existence of institutional mechanisms for action, coordination and networking at local, regional and national levels. Where structures and institutions already exist but are still weak or inadequate, these will be strengthened and activated through a



continuing capability building programme to be initiated by CWC, in partnership with relevant national government agencies such as DILG, DOH, DepEd, DSWD, DOLE, and DOJ, among others, as well as with relevant NGOs. New structures will only be set up if and when there are no existing ones. The following section describes the essential roles of each agency or institution in the care and protection of children starting from the family and the local community where children live and grow up and on to national level institutions and the larger society. Because the children belong to these various agencies and institutions, it is expected that there will be overlapping roles.

Role of the Family

As a primary group, the family is the first circle of care and protection for children. The presence or absence of family ties and the quality of family relationships are key factors in the protection and care of children as well as in the prevention of abuse, exploitation, violence, neglect and abandonment. The challenge, therefore, is to build and strengthen family stability, particularly among the poor and disadvantaged families. A key strategy is to promote responsible and effective parenting, with emphasis on the role of men and fathers. Many Filipino men need to reclaim their fatherhood and be as responsible as the women in protecting and caring for children.

As primary caregivers, parents have the responsibility to meet their children's needs and rights to food, health, nutrition, education, and special protection. When parents are able to provide for their children's health, nutrition and education needs, their exposure to risks and vulnerability to drugs, early sex, teenage and oftentimes unwanted pregnancies, child labor, trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, among others, are greatly reduced. Thus, parental interventions on health, nutrition, and education can prevent the possibility of their children becoming victims of abuse, exploitation and violence. Moreover, a loving and caring parent-child relationship will most likely bring about children who are capable of living responsible, positive, and healthy lifestyle.

Therefore, parents must continue to learn more – about the CRC; the psychosocial dynamics of children; the social, economic, and political conditions affecting the lives of children; the effects of abuse, violence and exploitation on children; and the different local ordinances and national laws protecting children, among others – in order to equip themselves with more responsive and effective parenting skills. As the above family interventions require resources, and since most families where CNSP come from are poor and disadvantaged, the parents must also seek ways and means to avail of

support for livelihood and employment opportunities. Securing livelihood and facilitating access to credit and employment opportunities for CNSP and their parents will address the current economic context of child abuse, violence and exploitation.

Role of the School System

Education is a major preventive intervention against the various forms of abuse and exploitation such as child labor, trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, children going to the streets, children's involvement in armed conflict, substance abuse and other risky behaviors. In this light, the DepEd must review its educational policies and procedures and see whether or not these are relevant and responsive to the unique needs and circumstances of CNSP. For instance, are policies on admission, school fees, and classroom schedule, among others, biased and discriminatory against street children, working children, IP children, and children with disability? Are CNSP data being integrated into DepEd's management information system (MIS) and student tracking system (STS) as basis for understanding CNSP and for monitoring children at risk and potential drop-outs? In short, as part of its Child-Friendly School System (CFSS) initiative, DepEd should aim to get all children to school and have them stay in school until they complete at least high school education. Alternatively, for children who are out of school, DepEd, in partnership with NGOs, FBOs and the barangays should maximize the ALS modules to reach a greater number of CNSP and other children at risk.

More specifically, schools should continue to integrate child rights education and life skills education into the basic education curriculum. Child rights and life skills education will help equip children and young people with the appropriate information, knowledge and skills so that they can guard themselves against forces of abuse, exploitation and violence; say no to drugs and other risky behavior; and say yes to a positive and healthy lifestyle. Life skills education can contribute to building self-esteem and psychosocial competence among children and young people and at the same time enhance their capacities for participation and their own protection. Moreover, schools must strengthen their guidance and counseling programmes and services particularly for intermediate and high school students.

Role of the Health System

The health system must have an updated and clear national policy on early detection and intervention on childhood disabilities as well as youth health and development promotion oriented towards the provision of youth-friendly health services for young people including CNSP. Such a national youth health policy should promote, among other things, the active participation of young people in their own health and development; development of youth-friendly health services, particularly at the barangay and district levels; outreach programmes and services for young people in crisis; and the positive role of mass media in influencing young people's values and behavior that affect their health and development (e.g., smoking, drug abuse, alcohol use, risky and unsafe sexual behavior, gender stereotypes, and violence).

Youth-friendly health services imply that health workers have basic respect for young people, are specially trained to work with young people, have adequate time for interaction and counseling, and honor privacy and confidentiality. The health facilities must have separate space or special time

set aside for young people, adequate space and sufficient privacy, and convenient location and consultation hours. Moreover, the young people themselves are involved in the design, service outreach and delivery, and continuing feedback. Wide range of services and necessary referrals are likewise available at the health facilities.

The harmful effects of drugs, tobacco, alcohol as well as the consequences of risky and early sexual practices such as sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS should be part of youth health and development (YHD) education activities. The DOH and the devolved health system at the LGU level as well as the health-focused NGOs should work together in pushing further YHD promotion and HIV/AIDS prevention activities in both rural and urban areas and target those children and young people who are most at risk (e.g., street children, sexually abused and exploited children, children in drugs, etc.) Health workers should maximize the use of peer education and community-based approaches to YHD promotion and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Role of the Legislative System and Policy-Making Bodies

The legislative system must continue to review and assess existing legislation in order to (a) determine whether these are congruent or in harmony with the CRC provisions and other UN standards on child protection; (b) identify the remaining gaps in child protection laws and their enforcement such as on substance abuse, child trafficking, child pornography, and juvenile justice, among others; and (c) enact new laws if necessary.

At the LGU level, the local sanggunian must pass local ordinances to reinforce effective enforcement of already existing national laws on child protection. Also at the local level, information dissemination among various audiences on existing child protection laws will be crucial for their effective implementation.

All legislators and policy makers at national and local levels must likewise recognize their strategic roles in effective advocacy against various forms of child abuse, violence, and exploitation.

Role of the Justice System

The pillars of the justice system – police and other law enforcers, prosecutors and public attorneys, judges, social workers, and the community – must see to it that all children who are victims of abuse, violence and exploitation as well as children in conflict with the law are provided speedy legal and judicial protection measures in accordance with the CRC provisions and standards and the existing national laws on child protection.

In handling children, all pillars of the justice system must strictly observe child-sensitive and child-friendly rules and procedures and must consider the psychosocial make-up and the best interests of the children at all times. Police officers, judges, prosecutors, public attorneys, and court social workers must take it as part of their responsibility to have continuing education and professional upgrading on the CRC and other UN standards, new child protection laws and their implementing rules and regulations, and new technologies available to make the administration of the child and juvenile justice system more child-sensitive and child-friendly. All the pillars of the justice system must coordinate among each other in the disposition of cases involving children and young people. They must have in place an operational monitoring system on all legal and judicial cases involving children.

Role of Local Government Units

The primary role of local government units (LGU) is to ensure adequate provision for all children of basic social services in health, nutrition, education and development, special protection, and participation. To do this, each LGU must have updated and disaggregated database on children, local development plan for children, investment plan for children, local code for children, and monitoring and reporting system. Annually, the LGU must render a report on the situation and progress of all children within its jurisdiction.

Each city, municipality and province must aim at having a “child-friendly budget” by increasing budgetary allocation for basic social services and for children's programmes. They must establish local benchmarks for the major goals and targets of Child 21, NPAC, and CPCP and integrate these in their local development plans for children. LGUs are in a strategic position to test innovative approaches to child rights promotion and child protection, replicate good models and practices, and maintain database and information system on children for policy development, planning and programming, and monitoring and evaluation.

More specifically for child protection, the LGUs must organize, activate, strengthen and sustain local councils for the protection of children (LCPC) which will be responsible for advocacy and programming efforts for and on behalf of CNSP. To make sure that all LCPCs are active and functional, local government units must have enough professional social workers or community organizers who will be responsible for training and organizing the LCPCs. The LCPCs will serve as the local watchdogs in child protection and in the overall implementation of child rights.

To provide strong mandate for the LCPCs to implement programmes and activities for CNSP, LGUs must pass local ordinances on child protection – specifically on child labor, substance abuse, child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, child pornography, and children involved in armed conflict.

Role of National Government Agencies

Even while direct services or interventions for child protection are devolved to the LGUs, the national government agencies (NGA), under the coordination of the CWC, the SCPC, the JJWC, and other national inter-agency bodies on child protection have major roles to play in building, strengthening and sustaining a caring and protective environment for children. Appropriate to their respective mandates, the NGAs will perform the following roles:

- ✍ advocacy and resource mobilization,
- ✍ capacity building and technical assistance,
- ✍ law review, law reform and law enforcement monitoring,
- ✍ establish a national research agenda and a national databank on child protection,
- ✍ set policies and standards of care and protection,
- ✍ forge cross-border and international alliances particularly against child trafficking, prostitution and pornography,
- ✍ monitor progress, assess impact of interventions, and prepare relevant national reports.

Working together under the coordination of the CWC Board and in partnership with the NGOs, FBOs, and CSOs, the NGAs must spearhead a unified drive to build a caring and protective environment for children as part of the national and global movement for the advancement of children's rights. Indeed, protecting the Filipino child from all forms of abuse, violence and exploitation today is both a political and moral imperative if we want to ensure our future as a nation.

Role of NGOs, FBOs and other CSOs

Non-government organizations (NGO), faith-based organizations (FBO), and other civil society organizations (CSO) are strategic partners in child protection. Compared to the government, NGOs, FBOs, and CSOs have the following strengths: (a) presence and credibility at the grassroots level; (b) skills in SAPIME, resource mobilization, advocacy and lobbying, research and documentation, and community organizing; (c) flexibility and openness to innovative approaches to child rights advocacy and programming, (d) broad-based networks and alliances for children and other social concerns.

Lessons learned from the National Programme on Street Children, for instance, have shown that at the barangay and city levels, at least eighty percent (80%) of programmes and interventions for street children with experiences of sexual abuse, substance abuse, and in conflict with the law are in the hands of NGOs and a number of FBOs.

The FBOs, particularly those under the umbrella of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), and the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) and other faith communities, had come together and formally organized in 2005 their own national network called the Philippine Inter-Faith Network for Children (PHILINC). PHILINC, and the regional and local networks which are in varying stages of formation, have committed to build a protective and caring environment for children as integral to their vision of creating child-friendly local faith communities around the country.

Internet Service Providers (ISP), internet cafes and other ICT outlets have unique roles to play in child protection particularly in terms of child pornography on the internet.

Role of Media

The role of media is very critical in terms of responsible reporting and open discussion on issues of abuse, violence and exploitation against children. Through consistent and child-friendly reporting and discussion, the media can become a powerful ally for generating broad public awareness on child protection issues. Such broad public awareness will, sooner or later, have consequences in terms of prompt and appropriate actions from the relevant agencies, groups and institutions intended to protect and care for children.

The media, however, must be guided by the principles and provisions of the CRC and the guidelines issued by the Committee for the Special Protection of Children and the CWC.

Role of the Children

The children themselves play a critical role in their own protection. They are their own best advocates because they know best their own situation. They have the capacity to participate in the different phases of the development process – from situation analysis to problem prioritization, goals

and objectives setting, strategy formulation, planning and programming, to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, projects and activities that serve them. They can do this by becoming part of the local councils for the protection of children (LCPC), the local faith communities, relevant national bodies such as CWC, NAPC and other relevant agencies.

To further develop the children's capacity to protect themselves, they should be given opportunities for continuing child rights education, life skills education, values formation and clarification, leadership development, and protective behavior training. Their efforts to organize themselves at local, regional and national levels must also be facilitated and supported. The existing NaCCAP should be expanded, strengthened and sustained with support from CWC, NAPC and other relevant national government agencies and interagency councils.

Operationalizing a Multi-Level Child Protection System

Unlike in health where we can speak of the health system or in education where we can speak of the school system to address the health and education rights respectively of Filipino children, we have yet to put in place an operational multi-level child protection system which will address various cases of abuse, exploitation and violence committed against children. But we are not starting from scratch since there are already existing structures at various levels which when linked together can operationally function as a multi-level child protection system.

An operational multi-level child protection system – from barangay to city, municipal, provincial, regional and national level – coordinated by the CWC and the RCWCs will be primarily responsible for (a) establishing an improved database, monitoring and reporting system on child protection; (b) initiating collective awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns among various publics on various forms of abuse, violence and exploitation; (c) coordinating technical support networks to support the work of implementing agencies at various levels; and (d) developing policies and standards on the care and protection of children particularly those in circumstances of abuse, exploitation and violence.

Barangay Council for the Protection of Children

The Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) is the primary body at the grassroots level that can effectively address issues of abuse, violence and exploitation against children – provided that these are properly trained, organized, funded, provided with technical support, and continuously monitored. The critical actions and milestones that must be done at the BCPC level include the following (refer also to the DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2005-07 dated 01 February 2005):

- ✍ master-list and database on children
- ✍ situation assessment and analysis on children
- ✍ action plan for children with corresponding budget
- ✍ local ordinances on children
- ✍ monitoring and reporting system on children
- ✍ annual state of the barangay children report
- ✍ children's organizations actively involved in BCPC activities

Constituting the base of and the first layer in the multi-level child protection system, active and functional BCPCs in the more than 42,000 barangays nationwide will spell a difference in all child rights promotion and child protection efforts. Based on previous case studies done, the following elements contribute to the making of BCPCs that work: (a) presence of committed champions for children, (b) sustained community organizing strategy and process, (c) proactive local government units, and (d) organized, effective and meaningful participation of children.

City, Municipal and Provincial Councils for the Protection of Children

The city, municipal, and provincial councils for the protection of children (C/M/PCPC) constitute the second layer in the multi-level child protection system. They are the main sources of support – financial, material, human, and technical – to the BCPCs. They will spearhead advocacy and social mobilization, situation analysis, programme development, modeling of innovative approaches, partnership and alliance building, monitoring and impact assessment of interventions, and annual reporting on the situation and progress of children at the city, municipal and provincial levels.

Under the leadership of the local chief executives and/or local NGO officials, and with the technical management and coordination of the LGU social welfare officers, the C/M/PCPC will push for a faster process of organizing, strengthening, activating and sustaining BCPCs in all barangays under their jurisdiction. They may consider launching a search for the most child-friendly barangays based on CWC-developed criteria.

Regional Committee for the Welfare of Children

The third layer in the multi-level child protection system, the Regional Committee for the Welfare of Children (RCWC) will assist the city, municipal, and provincial councils for the protection of children in all advocacy and programming efforts on child protection in particular and on child rights promotion in general. The existing functions of the RCWC, which go beyond child protection concerns, make them strategically critical in regional advocacy, resource mobilization, capacity building and technical support, networking and alliance building, and coordination and monitoring of child protection initiatives.

National Council for the Welfare of Children

The apex of the multi-level child protection system, the National Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) is the government body mandated by law to coordinate and monitor implementation of the CRC, Child 21, NPAC, and the CPCP. The current CWC Board is composed of seven government line agencies, three coordinating bodies, three private individuals (one of whom is a child representative), and two ECCD experts. The Board provides the policy guidelines and directions on all children's concerns including child protection. Next to the Board is the Technical Management Group (TMG) composed of bureau and service heads of concerned government agencies and heads of identified NGOs. The TMG assesses, prioritizes and recommends plans, policies, programmes, approaches and strategies for children for approval of the Board.

Sectoral Committees and Sub-Committees assist the TMG in studying more specific areas of children's concerns, formulate and recommend policies and strategies, and monitor and evaluate programmes and projects as needed. One of these sectoral committees is the Children in Need of Special Protection (CNSP) Committee which has direct bearing on the proposed CPCP, revised and updated under the auspices of the Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC).

The SCPC, the CWC-CNSP Committee and Other Inter-Agency Bodies on Child Protection

In the management, implementation, coordination and monitoring of the CPCP, there is a need to define and clearly delineate the roles and functions of CWC-CNSP Committee, SCPC and other existing national inter-agency councils relevant to child protection such as the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT), the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) and the Inter-Agency Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (IAC-VAWC). To initiate the process of role clarification and delineation, the Executive Director of the CWC will convene a meeting between and among the chairs of the CWC-CNSP Committee, the SCPC, the IACAT, the JJWC and the IAC-VAWC). The discussions should lead to recommendations on streamlining the functions and operations of the said bodies. The recommendations could be acted upon by the CWC Board.

For instance, based on the major child protection interventions, the CWC-CNSP Committee may take a more active role in coordination and monitoring of initiatives under preventive actions and early interventions as well as activities pertaining to rescue, psychosocial recovery, healing and social reintegration. The SCPC may focus more on the legal and judicial protection measures. The JJWC will work very closely with the SCPC regarding legal and judicial actions for and on behalf of children and juveniles in conflict with the law. Likewise, IACT needs to liaise closely with the CWC-CNSP Committee for preventive actions and recovery and reintegration services and with the SCPC for legal and judicial interventions.

CHAPTER - 7

FINANCING THE CPCP

Given continuing budgetary constraints, there is a big challenge in terms of mobilizing and generating resources for the CPCP implementation. Yet, as a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Philippine Government is obliged to implement its provisions and standards. Implementing the CRC provisions has financial implications. Achieving the goals of the World Fit for Children and the Millennium Development Goals also calls for resources. The Government is therefore obliged to set aside budget for Child 21, the NPAC and the CPCP.

Child-Friendly Budgets

The CPCP is a great opportunity to advocate for child-friendly budgets at national and local levels. Doing this is a concrete step towards fulfilling the Government's commitment to CRC implementation. It is a concrete indicator of the country's political commitment and capacity to honor its obligation. As part of the general reporting guidelines issued by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, each State Party is required to indicate as part of its periodic report budgetary allocations devoted to social expenditures for children including health, education and protection at national and local levels. In the mid-1990s, the Leagues of Municipalities, Provinces and Cities of the Philippines already committed to a gradual increase up to 20% of their budgets to be allocated for social development and children's programmes. CWC and the Special Committee for the Protection of Children (SCPC) can follow up on this laudable initiative and make it as a major criterion in the search and selection for the child-friendly LGUs award.

CWC and the SCPC can use the concept of a child-friendly budget as a tool for advocacy for child rights promotion and child protection. The idea of a child-friendly budget aims to identify and influence the impact of budgetary resources and allocations, public institutions and policy processes in order to realize the rights of children. This requires an understanding of the budgeting process and cycle so that entry points for advocacy for children's rights can be properly identified from the drafting stage to legislative approval and enactment, implementation, and audit and evaluation. At these various stages of the budget cycle, popular advocacy for children can be done by involving NGOs, faith-based organizations or FBOs, civil society organizations (CSO), the NaCCAP, as well as the general population of children and their families.

Examples of approaches and technical tools that can be used to influence child-friendly budgets include:

- ✦ Measure effectiveness: Evaluate how the budget funds social services for children and how it achieves the realization of children's rights. This helps to measure the effectiveness (with respect to costs, time, etc.) of the strategies employed to achieve the policy goals.
- ✦ Analysis by sector or group. Analyze the impact of the budget on specific sectors or socio-economic groups, e.g., children's sector. Compare allocations of these sectors with other sectors, the entire economy or past levels of support.

- ✍ Beneficiary assessments. Assess public perception of how far public spending is meeting their needs. Use opinion polls, attitude surveys, group discussions, organized debates with citizens and a discussion of proposals for the coming year. Through these exercises, development concerns such as social inclusion, poverty reduction and social equity promotion, which have impact on the realization of children's rights, can be integrated into budget management.
- ✍ Monitor social spending. CWC and the SCPC can agree on core social indicators on the situation of children and young people and arrive at a “child protection index” which can be used to measure government's (both national and local) commitment to fulfilling children's rights.

Based on the experiences of other countries (Brazil, Ecuador, South Africa, India) on child-friendly budget, the following are factors of success: (a) budget analysis skills are key, (b) empowerment begins with quality of information, (c) transparency and participation are interdependent, (d) realizing children's rights requires rethinking of institutional processes and policy-making, and (e) effective advocacy requires clear understanding of the politics of budgeting.

Tapping Non-Traditional Sources of Funding

Other potential sources of funds for child rights promotion and child protection are the private sector; foreign governments that are not yet contributing to children's programmes; international non-government organizations particularly those under the umbrella of CRIN (Child Rights Information Network); and the global networks of religious organizations such as the World Council of Churches (WCC), Viva Network, and the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), among others. CRIN, in particular, has 1,667 registered member organizations worldwide. Establishing contact with these organizations will open up possibilities for additional resources for the CPCP implementation. In order to facilitate this linkage for resource mobilization, there must be a dedicated website for the CPCP. A web-based fund-raising strategy could be developed.

The various associations of Filipinos living in the US, Canada and other foreign countries can also be tapped. Advocacy and fund-raising efforts among overseas Filipinos will offer them opportunities to contribute to child protection initiatives in the Philippines even while they are away from home. In the United States, for example, there are over 3,000 Filipino organizations. Close to 1,000 of these Filipino associations have organized themselves into a national federation, (NaFFAA), which is in a strategic position to launch coordinated advocacy and fund-raising activities for children in the Philippines. A partnership for resource mobilization for Filipino children can be established between CWC or the SCPC and the NaFFAA through Philippine embassy or consulate offices across the United States. Philanthropy for children among Filipinos living abroad is a potential resource which is not yet fully tapped.

Establishing Barangay Fund for Child Protection

Generating resources locally can be explored with the idea of establishing a barangay fund for child protection. Aside from the barangay IRA share which can be allotted to children's programmes, community level advocacy can be directed to raising funds for child protection interventions such as education and vocational training, life skills education, psychosocial services, parenting education, livelihood and income-generating activities, among others. This can be done with an actively functioning BCPC which has the necessary data base on children, a barangay action plan for children, and the appropriate mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities, and the skills for resource mobilization.

An annual state of the barangay children's report (SBCR) must be prepared and presented in a barangay assembly so that all the citizens in the barangay will be informed and updated on the outcomes and impact on children of the various interventions and activities which they have supported. Such a yearly undertaking will create a sense of ownership and participation among the local citizenry in the CPCP implementation. With a sense of ownership, the people in the barangay will continue to be involved and will contribute more resources for the child protection programme.

Budget Allocation for the CPCP for the period 2006-2010

Notwithstanding the above suggested funding strategies, the Special Committee for the Protection of Children will allocate adequate resources as part of the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) for the following core activities:

- ✍ Local level dissemination and translation of CPCP into local action plans
- ✍ Capacity building and technical support for LGU and NGO service providers
- ✍ Popularization of CRC special protection provisions, other UN standards on care and protection, and relevant national child protection laws
- ✍ Training of trainers on the LCPC/BCPC
- ✍ Piloting innovative approaches and building models of preventive, community-based child protection programmes
- ✍ Research and documentation of best practices or good examples
- ✍ Policy studies and conferences
- ✍ Coordination and monitoring

CHAPTER 8:

MONITORING PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES

A major factor in successful advocacy and fund-raising for the CPCP is the availability of well-prepared and timely reports on the progress and outcomes of key interventions. To ensure timely periodic reports, a well designed monitoring, evaluation, and reporting system must therefore be in place. The CRC, Child 21, and NPAC and the CPCP goals and targets for the period 2006-2010 provide the framework and parameters for monitoring progress and outcomes. As much as possible, monitoring the CPCP progress and outcomes will be integrated into the overall CWC Child 21 Subaybay Bata and NPAC monitoring framework and system. The CPCP monitoring system should be viewed as a sub-system of the CWC Child 21 Subaybay Bata Monitoring System.

The indicators for monitoring and evaluation have already been presented in Chapter 3 and categorized as follows: (a) protection environment indicators including risk factors, (b) protection situation indicators, and (c) protection response and results indicators. The child protection indicators will form part of the Child 21 Subaybay Bata Monitoring Indicators developed by CWC. The Subaybay Bata Monitoring System has two vital components: Macro Monitoring System and Micro Monitoring System. As can be gleaned from the list of suggested core indicators on child protection, these can be integrated into either the macro or the micro system of the Subaybay Bata Monitoring System, although the micro component of the system is still under development.

The flow in the provision of guidelines, feedback and reporting is described below:

1. The major goals, strategies and interventions of the CPCP should be localized at barangay, city, municipal and provincial levels in the contexts of the concrete realities in their areas. Guidelines for localization will be developed by the SCPC and the CWC-CNSP Committee. The guidelines will be disseminated to the LGUs and the Local Councils for the Protection of Children through the RCWC. The LGUs and the Local Councils for the Protection of Children will then formulate their own action plan for child protection for the period 2006-2010. The localization process for the CPCP should dovetail with that of the NPAC.
2. There will be quarterly reviews of implementation at the local levels to be conducted by the local councils for the protection of children (LCPCs). The quarterly reviews will (a) assess progress of implementation, (2) resolve implementation issues and constraints, (3) make appropriate adjustments in programmes and projects, and (4) track changes in the lives of children. Quarterly reports will be prepared and submitted by the LCPCs to the RCWC.
3. The RCWC will analyze reports from the LCPCs and will submit a consolidated and analytical report to the National CWC and the SCPC. The RCWC will address implementation issues and constraints that can be resolved at the regional level. Policy issues that have national implications will be elevated to the SCPC and the CWC Board for proper deliberation and decision.

4. The National CWC and the SCPC shall draw lessons learned from field level implementation to inform policy-making and standard-setting on critical and sensitive child protection issues. The National CWC and the SCPC, through their technical and communication staff, will regularly share policy and technical updates to the RCWCs and the LCPCs.

As the CPCP gives emphasis on the critical importance of family-based, community-based, and LGU-based interventions, there should be greater investments in local level monitoring (as in the Subaybay Bata micro monitoring system). The CPCP implementation for the period 2006-2010 should aim at empowering BCPCs to (a) do master-listing of children in the barangay, (b) conduct continuing surveillance and monitoring of their situation, and (c) track progress and impact of interventions on children. To make the CPCP monitoring system operational, the SCPC must work closely with the CWC-CNSP Committee and the CWC Technical Team.

ACRONYMS

ALS	-	Alternative Learning System
BCPC	-	Barangay Council for the Protection of Children
BEC	-	Basic Ecclesial Community
BHRAC	-	Barangay Human Rights Action Center
BJMP	-	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology
CBCP	-	Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CCF	-	Christian Children's Fund
CEDC	-	Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances
CEF	-	Community Education Fund
CEFAM	-	Center for Family Ministries
CFC	-	Couples for Christ
CFM	-	Child Friendly Movement
CFM	-	Christian Family Movement
CFSS	-	Child-Friendly School System
CHR	-	Commission on Human Rights
CICL	-	Children in Conflict with the Law
CIDS	-	Center for Integrative Development Studies
CLCG	-	Community Livelihood and Credit Group
CNSP	-	Children in Need of Special Protection
COV	-	Community Organization Volunteer
CPI	-	Child Protection Index
CPCP	-	Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection
CPTCSA	-	Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse
CPU	-	Child Protection Unit
CRA	-	Child Rights Advocate
CRIBS	-	Creating Responsible Infants by Sharing
CRIN	-	Child Rights Information Network
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
CWC	-	Council for the Welfare of Children
DAP	-	Development Academy of the Philippines

DepEd	-	Department of Education
DILG	-	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOH	-	Department of Health
DOJ	-	Department of Justice
DOLE	-	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	-	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ECCD	-	Early Child Care and Development
ECOP	-	Employers Confederation of the Philippines
ECPAT	-	End Child Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking
ERDA	-	Educational Research and Development Assistance
FAMNET	-	Family Network
FBO	-	Faith-Based Organization
FLI	-	Family Life Institute
GOP/GRP	-	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
IACAT	-	Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking
ICRC	-	International Committee of the Red Cross
IJA	-	Institute of Judicial Administration
ILO	-	International Labor Organization
IP	-	Indigenous Peoples
IRA	-	Internal Revenue Allotment
JDL	-	Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty
JJWC	-	Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council
KDF	-	Kamalayan Development Foundation
LGU	-	Local Government Unit
LCPC	-	Local Council for the Protection of Children
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goals
MIS	-	Management Information System
NaCCAP	-	National Coalition of Children's Associations of the Philippines
NAPC	-	National Anti-Poverty Commission
NASSA	-	National Secretariat for Social Action
NBI	-	National Bureau of Investigation
NCCP	-	National Council of Churches in the Philippines
NCIP	-	National Commission for Indigenous Peoples
NCCYP	-	National Committee on Children and Youth Participation

NCLP	-	National Child Labour Programme
NCSD	-	National Council of Social Development
NCWDP	-	National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons
NDF	-	National Democratic Front
NEDA	-	National Economic and Development Authority
NGA	-	National Government Agency
NGO	-	Non-Government Organization
NNSC	-	National Network on Street Children
NPA	-	New People's Army
NPAC	-	National Plan of Action for Children
NYC	-	National Youth Commission
OFW	-	Overseas Filipino Worker
PBSP	-	Philippine Business for Social Progress
PCCI	-	Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry
PCEC	-	Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches
PCTVF	-	Philippine Children's Television Foundation
PES	-	Parent Effectiveness Service
PGH	-	Philippine General Hospital
PHILINC	-	Philippine Inter-Faith Network for Children
PHILJA	-	Philippine Judicial Academy
PIA	-	Philippine Information Agency
PNP	-	Philippine National Police
PRSP	-	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PTCA	-	Parents-Teachers-Community Association
PYA	-	Pag-asa Youth Association
RA	-	Republic Act
RCWC	-	Regional Committee for the Welfare of Children
RSCWC	-	Regional Sub-Committee for the Welfare of Children
SAPIME	-	Situation Analysis, Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation
SBCR	-	State of Barangay Children Report
SBM	-	Sagip-Batang Manggagawa (Rescue the Child Worker)

SCPC	-	Special Committee for the Protection of Children
SK	-	Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council)
STS	-	Student Tracking System
SWS	-	Social Weather Station
TESDA	-	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TMG	-	Technical Management Group
UN	-	United Nations
UNGASS	-	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	-	University of the Philippines
WCC	-	World Council of Churches
WCCD	-	Women and Children's Concerns Division
WCRP	-	World Conference on Religion and Peace
WFFC	-	World Fit For Children
WVDF	-	World Vision Development Foundation

ANNEX A: Voices of Children in Need of Special Protection

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the right of children to express freely their own views in all matters affecting them and, in particular, the right to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them. Children's voices are also important considerations in all stages of the development cycle from situation analysis to planning and programming to implementation, monitoring and evaluation (SAPIME). Here are the voices of some these children in need of special protection (literal translations from the children's own words in Pilipino):

“I feel left alone, abandoned, unloved, and used and thrown away. I was hurt, it hurts, it hurts deep inside of me. My womanhood was destroyed, it is as if I lost something, my life was ruined by this experience”. A 15-year old sexually abused girl.

“Life is like a blank, nothing to see, like a house with no light, because my father left us. I don't know what my brothers and sisters do. No place to stay, I sleep on the streets, no food, so I sniff solvent”. A 13-year old street boy who is a substance-abuser.

“I am not bad, but they (the police) force me to be bad because they treat us badly”. A 14-year old boy in conflict with the law.

“Run. Am I stupid? It's frightening to be salvaged. Frequent offenders are salvaged. If they know you and no one visits you in jail, they will execute you”. A 12-year old street boy in conflict with the law forced to join an organized criminal group.

“I really hate my father because every time I commit mistakes, he hits me. He is always like that ...especially when he is drunk”. A 15-year old boy from Payatas, Quezon City.

“We are poor. We know that because we are not able to eat three times a day, we don't go to school and we don't have clothes. We can't buy things like a TV or radio, and we live in a squatter area. Children like us work to add to our parents' income, but sometimes we work because our parents don't have an income”. Urban poor children in Leon Garcia, Davao City.

“Our meager earnings are not enough to buy food. So we just sniff rugby to stave off hunger. Our parents, who are also working, often neglect us. They are out of the house most of the day and have no time left for us when they come home at night. Thus, we are lured toward gangs and dangerous activities”. Urban poor children from Sasa, Davao City.

“I joined to serve the people in the mountains. We protected them from violence and harm, from the government soldiers. These soldiers, they were abusive; that's why we kept watch. That was how we helped the people in the mountains”. A young boy who joined the NPA when he was 14 years old.

“I joined the army four years ago when I was 12 years old. I was recruited by the Ustadz (the one who leads prayer at the mosque) in my community. I was told the military/government was the enemy of the Muslims. I got to know Ustadz Yusuf when he attended prayers in the mosque. I knew the Ustadz for almost a month or more. I was recruited in my municipality. The Ustadz asked me to join the jihad. I became a soldier voluntarily”. A Muslim boy who joined the MILF when he was 12 years old.

“I won't ever neglect or abandon my sisters. Their welfare is foremost in my mind. I have learned many things here at the center: gardening, construction work. And I am studying here. I now want to finish school, to have a job. I want to be a teacher. These are things that I hope for. I realize that I can change my life. I want to lead a peaceful life”. A girl who joined the insurgent group when she was 13 years old, now availing psychosocial recovery and social reintegration assistance.

Particularly the BCPC/LCPC levels, there is a need to institutionalize and systematize listening to children's voices in order to ensure effective and meaningful children and youth participation in the entire process of BCPC planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, training and advocacy. The concept of “listening posts” or “listening focal points” can be tried at the barangay level and in all relevant agencies, groups and institutions operating at the grassroots level, e.g., the school, the local church, the health center, and organizations of children and young people themselves.

ANNEX B: The Barangay Council for the Protection of Children

The following are excerpts from a report, BCPCs That Work, prepared by Victoria V. Rialp for UNICEF Manila, January 2005.

In light of the Child-Friendly Movement's strategy of multi-sectoral and integrated programming, the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) – which began as a community level child protection mechanism – has become an overall child rights promotion mechanism. More and more BCPCs are promoting policies and programmes conforming to the norms around survival, development, protection and participation rights of children which have been established for a child-friendly barangay.

The BCPCs generally took their cues from the DILG guidelines, and in some cases, from the criteria to win as child-friendly barangay. They generally took to heart the following guidelines:

- ✍ Foster education of every child – e.g., identifying all school-age children; identifying those not in school and persuading them and supporting them to enter and stay in school; improving school facilities; improving teaching methods and materials; aspiring to designation as child-friendly schools.
- ✍ Take steps to prevent juvenile delinquency and assist parents of children with behavioral problems so that they can get expert advice – e.g., enforcing curfews for minors; enacting ordinances against drinking and gambling by minors; community rounds by tanods; joint work between the BCPC and NGOs or churches with children in conflict with the law for values education, rehabilitation, and drug prevention education.
- ✍ Adopt measures for the health of children – e.g., immunization, weighing and growth monitoring, water and environmental sanitation, supplementary feeding, primary health care, prenatal and postnatal care.
- ✍ Encourage the proper performance of the duties and responsibilities of parents and provide learning opportunities on the adequate rearing of children and positive parent-child relationship – e.g., parent effectiveness training, ERPAT (fatherhood training), family enrichment seminars, child rights advocacy in community and PTCA meetings.
- ✍ Advocate for the establishment and maintenance of playgrounds, day care centers and other facilities necessary for child and youth development – e.g., construction and improvement of

day care centers, support for day care workers, supplementary feeding, youth leadership seminars, and sports activities.

- ✘ Advocate for the passage of barangay resolutions and ordinances responsive to child-related issues and concerns and ensure the inclusion of children's programme in the executive-legislative agenda (ELA) – e.g., resolutions for LGU funding support, ordinances on curfew and other public security concerns, resolutions declaring Children's Day or Children's Month and other events, adopting plans of action for children and allocating budget.
- ✘ Protect and assist children in need of special protection and refer cases filed against child abusers to proper agencies and institutions – e.g., identifying at-risk children, creating Quick Response Teams (QRT), passing resolutions to dismiss erring local police, partnering with NGOs and church groups in working with children victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

Elements of a Functional BCPC

Based on the experiences of selected successful BCPCs, the report outlines the elements of a functional BCPC – or the “secrets of success” of BCPCs that work. These are grouped into considerations around (a) barangay context and culture; (b) community organization; (c) policy environment and good governance; (d) local leadership; (e) community and children's participation; (f) local planning, monitoring and evaluation; (g) funding; and (h) sustaining factors.

Effective BCPCs can be found in urban centers as well as in remote mountain villages, in crowded cities as well as in small farm communities, in barangays with sizeable funding base as well as those with very little. However, these BCPCs recognized which factors in their particular geographical, administrative and cultural contexts could be used to advantage to foster their work (facilitating factors) and which factors they need to overcome (restraining factors). They identified the pressing child and youth-related concerns in their communities that they want to address – again oftentimes arising out of their locally-specific situation – rather than just automatically adopting those suggested by higher-level authorities.

The review confirms the findings of other earlier assessments that BCPCs that work are those that have a strong community organization in place. In some cases, the community was already well-organized before the BCPC was introduced while in other cases, the community organizing accompanied the setting up of the BCPC. Community organization provides the solid foundation for setting up the BCPCs and more importantly, for ensuring its sustainability, because it firmly established community ownership of the agenda for child care and protection.

The BCPCs selected for this review are noteworthy for their reputation for good governance, honesty, and transparency, as pointed out by provincial or municipal coordinators, or asserted with pride by community residents, including children and youth themselves. The youth are particularly candid in expressing their willingness to work because of the honest, committed, and selfless work of the barangay chairmen. Successful BCPCs also deliberately linked their work with broader development programmes, e.g., poverty-reduction programmes. As a rule, they enjoyed support from municipal and city leadership, particularly in terms of orientation and training; budget support for day care, health services, community infrastructure; monitoring; and occasionally, close liaison (hotline) to the Mayor.

In terms of BCPC leadership, the more important elements were: leadership of barangay chairman; political alliances; women in leadership roles; participation of children, youth, and women's groups in the BCPC; active BCPC members among day care worker, health worker, principal or teacher, and NGO or church representative.

The case examples also demonstrated broad community participation and social inclusion by e.g., child-friendly tanods, lupon, police desk; community watchdog groups, Quick Response Teams, referral systems, Bantay-Bata; Barangay-NGO linkages; Barangay-Church/Mosque linkages; Barangay-School-PTCA linkages. More important was children and youth involvement in BCPC planning and deliberations – problem identification, action planning, regular BCPC meetings, SK and Pag-asa Youth Association involvement.

It is in the area of local planning and project management that BCPCs faced initial serious limitations – given the many other demands on the barangay council and their broader mandates. Barangay planning was enhanced if the municipal or city planning and development office could give competent and adequate support. Some BCPCs benefited from training and technical support from people's organizations and NGOs.

BCPC case examples in this review mobilized a range of fund sources: barangay funds; municipal, city or provincial support funds; UNICEF CPC inputs; other external funding; community contributions in cash and in kind and in volunteer services.

What keep these BCPCs going against all odds? Some cite their strong spiritual foundation and social commitment. Others are goaded by what children and youth in the community say and do. Some are encouraged to do more and better when they are recognized for their good work.

Implications for Activating and Strengthening BCPCs

The report enumerates the implications for action suggested by the focus group discussions and interviews and by the roundtable discussion to review the case examples. These points for consideration for national, provincial, city, municipal and barangay authorities and bodies can be addressed in consultative workshops convened by CWC, DILG and DSWD with, for example, the Liga ng Barangay and with the League of Mayors, which would then lead to national-level policy deliberations and decisions.

1. Ensure community organizing (CO) as an essential and sustained process for establishing BCPCs
 - ✍ Use community organizing (CO) framework in the LCPC Organizing Manual
 - ✍ Strengthen community organizing components in training or trainers for BCPC organizing
 - ✍ Require the LGU social worker to do CO work; or contract NGO or recruit CO volunteer to do CO work with the BCPC
2. Frame child-friendly executive and legislative agenda at all levels
 - ✍ Provide clear guidelines – national, regional, provincial, municipal, city, barangay – but allow for flexibility and adaptations according to local realities and concerns

- ✍ For BCPC composition and functions, harmonize DILG guidelines with ECCD implementing guidelines for maximum flexibility
 - ✍ Strengthen vertical and horizontal linkages among LCPCs – provincial-municipal, municipal-barangay, city-barangay, inter-barangay, inter-municipality, inter-city.
 - ✍ Ensure coherence and consistency among provincial, municipal, city and barangay plans of action, annual investment plans, BCPC work plans and budgets, children's code and other legislation
 - ✍ Articulate agenda for metropolitan contexts, e.g., Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, Metro Davao
 - ✍ Enhance DILG circulars and instructions regarding BCPC functionality, monitoring and reporting lines
 - ✍ Issue instructions on monitoring by local composite team
 - ✍ Specify necessary executive orders from Mayor, city or municipal ordinances, including appropriations for BCPC functioning
 - ✍ Support cross-barangay visits and inter-municipality visits to promote BCPC good practices
3. Promote plans of action for children and investment plans for children
- ✍ Expand and use Child-Friendly Movement indicators and checklists to encourage dynamic understanding of children's situation within changing contexts and emerging new problems
 - ✍ Include persons with planning competence and CO expertise in BCPCs
 - ✍ Incorporate community-based monitoring and evaluation as part of local plans of action for children
 - ✍ Establish oversight and support mechanisms from municipal or city and provincial support groups, reporting and feedback loops
 - ✍ Strengthen planning, monitoring, and evaluation capacities of local councils for the protection of children
4. Increase and guarantee funding for BCPC
- ✍ Lobby for increased IRA for poorer barangays
 - ✍ Recommend bigger share of barangay budget, SK budget, GAD budget for BCPC initiatives
 - ✍ Study specific provisions in ECCD implementing guidelines – e.g., line items from related national department budgets
 - ✍ Seek external support, including corporate sector support, for BCPC initiatives
 - ✍ Train BCPCs for resource generation
 - ✍ Promote social enterprises (IGPs) that support BCPC activities

5. Strengthen child protection networks

- ✍ Upgrade community education on child protection issues for NGO partners, people's organizations, faith communities and faith-based organizations, youth groups
- ✍ Maximize use of IT in dissemination of information and knowledge about child protection issues
- ✍ Strengthen community helplines and related response services
- ✍ Strengthen legal enforcement mechanisms and support children's and women's desk in police stations
- ✍ Engage other child-related institutions toward more caring and protective environment for children
- ✍ Accelerate ECCD barangay level training for BCPCs

6. Organize and mobilize BCPC training corps

- ✍ Create regional training teams (composite: DSWD-DILG-NGO such as ERDA, CCF, PLAN, CHILDHOPE, local NGO)
- ✍ Partner with CO Multiversity and Local Government Academy (LGA)
- ✍ Share good practices in training, e.g., with different LIGA

7. Enhance BCPC initiatives

- ✍ Link BCPC to Barangay Development Council toward Child-Friendly LGU and enhance local planning capacity
- ✍ Contextualize BCPC/BDC agenda with purok to barangay to municipality/city to province and harmonize with annual investment plans at all levels
- ✍ Increase involvement of civil society partners
- ✍ Map and leverage resources – know-how, technical support, training, funding, pork barrel, human resources, other material support
- ✍ Emphasize that child-friendly governance is good governance; in the LIGA, explore peer review among barangays for good governance = child-friendly governance
- ✍ Promote voter education in lead-up to barangay and local elections toward child-friendly local officials
- ✍ Maintain focus on most needy and most vulnerable and those in need of special protection

8. Institutionalize and systematize listening to children at all levels – to ensure child and youth participation in entire process and cycles of BCPC planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, training advocacy

- ✍ Recast SK youth leadership formation and training of Pag-asa Youth Associations and networks toward supporting BCPCs

- ✍ Establish consortia of children and youth groups in particular cities, municipalities and provinces to support BCPC
 - ✍ Create specialized training teams for ensuring child and youth participation in BCPC planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, community training, and advocacy
9. Finally, through a consultative, multi-sectoral, multilevel process, review and streamline national structure and reporting lines across all levels

National level:

- ✍ Redefine policymaking and coordinating role of CWC
- ✍ Redefine executive and oversight role of DILG – with specific guidelines for monitoring and reporting and performance evaluation
- ✍ Locate national training capacity within DILG, e.g., in collaboration with CO Multiversity, Local Government Academy, or NGOs through standardized training courses on child protection for government officials involved with BCPCs
- ✍ Develop specialized training of trainers for specific content areas, e.g., participatory community planning, implementation, and monitoring by BCPCs; legislative actions by LCPCs; resource mobilization; children and youth participation; protection and rescue operations; law enforcement and judicial processes for child protection
- ✍ Establish fund for national level training of trainers
- ✍ Recommend funding mechanisms for local councils for the protection of children

Provincial/Municipal/City levels:

- ✍ Redefine policymaking and coordinating role of provincial and municipal coordinating bodies
- ✍ Locate provincial and municipal/city training team within LGU structure
- ✍ Allocate funds for sustained training activities – generic as well as specialized courses as mentioned above
- ✍ Recommend funding mechanisms for BCPCs, including increase in required percentage allocations from provincial, municipal, city and barangay funds
- ✍ Promote inter-municipality and inter-barangay consortia – e.g., joint protection and rescue actions; joint resource mobilization; joint children and youth consultations
- ✍ Clarify and streamline reporting and accountability lines between province and municipalities, and between city/municipality and barangays

To stimulate this continuing review process, CWC and DILG may consider convening separate consultative meetings and workshops with the Liga ng Barangay and with the League of Mayors toward mapping out a strategic plan for strengthening LCPCs and BCPCs nationwide, based on their own experiences and insights.

Annex C: Millennium Development Goals and Child Protection

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL	CHILD PROTECTION CONSIDERATION
MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child labor squanders a nation's capital. ▪ Armed conflict depletes a nation's physical, economic and human resources and leads to the displacement of populations. ▪ Accurate and complete birth registration information is a prerequisite for economic planning to address poverty and hunger. ▪ Poverty and exclusion contribute to child abandonment and to overuse of formal and informal fostering arrangements or institutional care, leading to poor child development. ▪ Legal systems that do not take into account the child's age and fail to promote reintegration into the community of children in conflict with the law increases the likelihood of their poverty and marginalization.
MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Armed conflict disrupts education. ▪ Child labor prevents children from attending school. ▪ Violence is an obstruction to a safe and protective learning environment. ▪ Child marriage leads to the removal of girls from school. ▪ Children without parental care must be placed in an appropriate family environment to increase the likelihood that they will receive an education.
MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Girls are disproportionately engaged in domestic work which compromises their school participation. ▪ Child marriage leads to the removal of girls from school and may limit their opportunities to participate in the public life of their communities. ▪ Sexual violence, exploitation and abuse undermine efforts to empower women and girls.
MDG 4: Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violence against children can lead to child mortality. ▪ Child marriage and early childbearing lead to higher risks of maternal mortality and morbidity. ▪ Children separated from their mothers at an early age, especially those who remain in institutional settings for long periods of time, are at greater risk of early death.
MDG 5: Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child marriage jeopardizes both maternal and infant health. ▪ Sexual violence can lead to unwanted pregnancies and puts women and girls at risk of HIV/AIDS infection.
MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many of the worst forms of child labor are a cause and consequence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. ▪ Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence can lead to the infection of boys and girls. ▪ Children in HIV/AIDS-affected families are particularly at risk of losing the care and protection of their families. ▪ Children in detention are vulnerable to HIV infection, given the high rates of transmission in prisons.
MDG 7: Ensure environmental protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Armed conflict leads to population displacement and potential overuse of environmental resources. ▪ Environmental disasters increase household vulnerability and the potential for child labor, as well as sexual exploitation and child marriage.
MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child protection requires inter-sectoral cooperation at the national and international level to create a protective environment for children.

Source: State of the World's Children Report (SOWCR), 2006

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