



## PREFACE

On May 2002, representatives of the world's children formally addressed the United Nations (UN) General Assembly at the Special Session on Children, and presented their vision of a better world. Their statement was "*A World Fit for Us.*" They wanted an end to poverty, war, discrimination, and an education that is accessible to all children. It was the first time children addressed the UN General Assembly. The world leaders pledged to build this world according to the vision of the children. They also committed themselves to work with the children.

The Philippines is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In doing so, it promised to support the children's vision of a world that is fit for them and work with them to achieve their aspirations.

Children's participation is a challenge to adults. We acknowledge that children have rights - particularly the right to participate. However, it is easier said than done.

This document, *The National Framework for Children's Participation*, aims to guide those who work with children for a better society. It presents the laws that uphold children's participation in the family, the community, and in nation building.

It discusses the evolving definitions of children's participation, the guiding principles, and venues where children can participate meaningfully.

The adults who worked with the children also contributed valuable insights to children's participation.

More importantly, this framework presents the voices of the children – their experiences, opinions, and the lessons they have learned in upholding children's participation.

The spirit of this Framework is the children's voice.

## SYNOPSIS

### Introduction

Defines “children,” the link of the Framework to Child 21, and presents the processes by which children were involved in developing the National Framework for Children’s Participation.

### Chapter 1: Committing to understand and uphold: Defining children’s participation

Provides the reader a background on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which is the overarching framework of children’s participation. This reminds the reader that all the rights are *indivisible* and interconnected. This is followed by a discussion on the benefits of children’s participation, as stated by the children. The models of children’s participation such as Hart’s Ladder, children’s participation as an evolving process, and the Wheel of Participation, which are referred to in the global community are tackled.

### Chapter 2: Guiding our everyday lives: The framework for children’s participation

The chapter presents the “Guiding Principles in Children’s Participation,” shows the definition of children’s participation according to the children, and discusses the Framework. The definition is primarily from the experiences, thoughts and insights of children who participated in the workshops. The Framework tackles children’s participation in different arenas: the family, the community, the schools, religious institutions, venues for recovery and reintegration, and the society. Issues on children’s participation in each arena are also discussed.

### Chapter 3: Learning from the children: Good practices in children’s participation

Examples of good practices of children, local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and the media in upholding the children’s

right to participate are documented to illustrate that child participation is doable and most rewarding.

### Chapter 4: Culture, context, and challenges: Issues in children’s participation

Children’s participation is evolving and with it comes issues and challenges. The chapter presents issues raised by the children and adults during the workshops, which they encountered in upholding children’s participation.

### Chapter 5: Doing it right: The indicators of children’s participation

Quantitative and qualitative indicators are discussed in this chapter. These can be used by stakeholders who want to determine the extent and impact of their activities and programs on children’s participation.

### CHAPTER 6: Acting together: Recommendations in promoting children’s participation

Recommendations from the children and the stakeholders are presented in this chapter.

The appendices are the following:

- Leave No Child Out: Policy Framework on Child and Youth Participation
- *Ang Mga Deklarasyon ng mga Batang Dumalo sa* Island-Wide NaCCAP Consultations *ng* 2003
- Recommended Readings: Local and International Publications

***The Framework does not aim to present clear-cut steps in involving children and in making processes participatory, but rather present guide posts. We work in different contexts. We work with children from different social classes, cultures and beliefs. We have to adapt to all of these. It is hoped that given the different situations, the guide posts will help in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the programs, services and activities with the children.***

# INTRODUCTION



## Definitions of “Children”

Article 1 of the UN CRC defines children as human beings below the age of 18. On the other hand, Section 3 of Republic Act (RA) 7610, or Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act, states that “*Children* refers to persons below 18 years old or those over but are unable to take care of themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of physical or mental disability or condition.”

In the Philippines, 15 to 18 years olds do not want to be called “children” anymore. They prefer to be called “youth.” According to the children-participants in the National Children’s Forum on Children’s Participation,<sup>1</sup> children have to be distinct from the Youth and Students Sector. They argued that there are issues that strictly concern “children” as defined in the UN CRC. For one, the youth and students sectors carry the issue of unemployment. On the other hand, children do not have to work. “*May pagbanga o kontradiksyon ng mga isyu at concerns.*” (There are contradictions with the issues and concerns.) The children also said that although “youth” includes children who are 15 to 17 years old it does not represent those who are 14 years old and below. “*Paano naman mapakikitinggan ang mga ideas ng mga batang 14 years old and below?*” (How will the 14 year old children and those below be heard?)

For consistency, this document refers to the legal definitions of children as stated in Article 1 of the UN CRC and Section 3 of RA 7610.

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<sup>1</sup> Shared by panel speakers John Paul Claudio and Cristina Gino during the National Children’s Forum, 28-30 September 2001, Jonel Spring Resort, Calamba, Laguna, organized by the National Coalition of Children’s Participation, the Council for the Welfare of Children and UNICEF Manila.

## CHILD 21: Sharing a Vision

Child 21 or the Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children 2000 to 2025 is the Philippines’ road map for the implementation of the UN CRC. It provides a framework in all the life stages of Filipino children. It details the objectives and goals for each stage. These aim to give direction to policy development and program planning for the progressive implementation of the Philippine government’s commitment to the UN CRC.

It is envisioned that 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.*”<sup>2</sup>

The National Framework for Children’s Participation is anchored on the vision of Child 21. The development of this Framework is part of efforts to fulfill the vision that the inherent rights of the Filipino children to survival, development, protection, and participation are realized by 2025.

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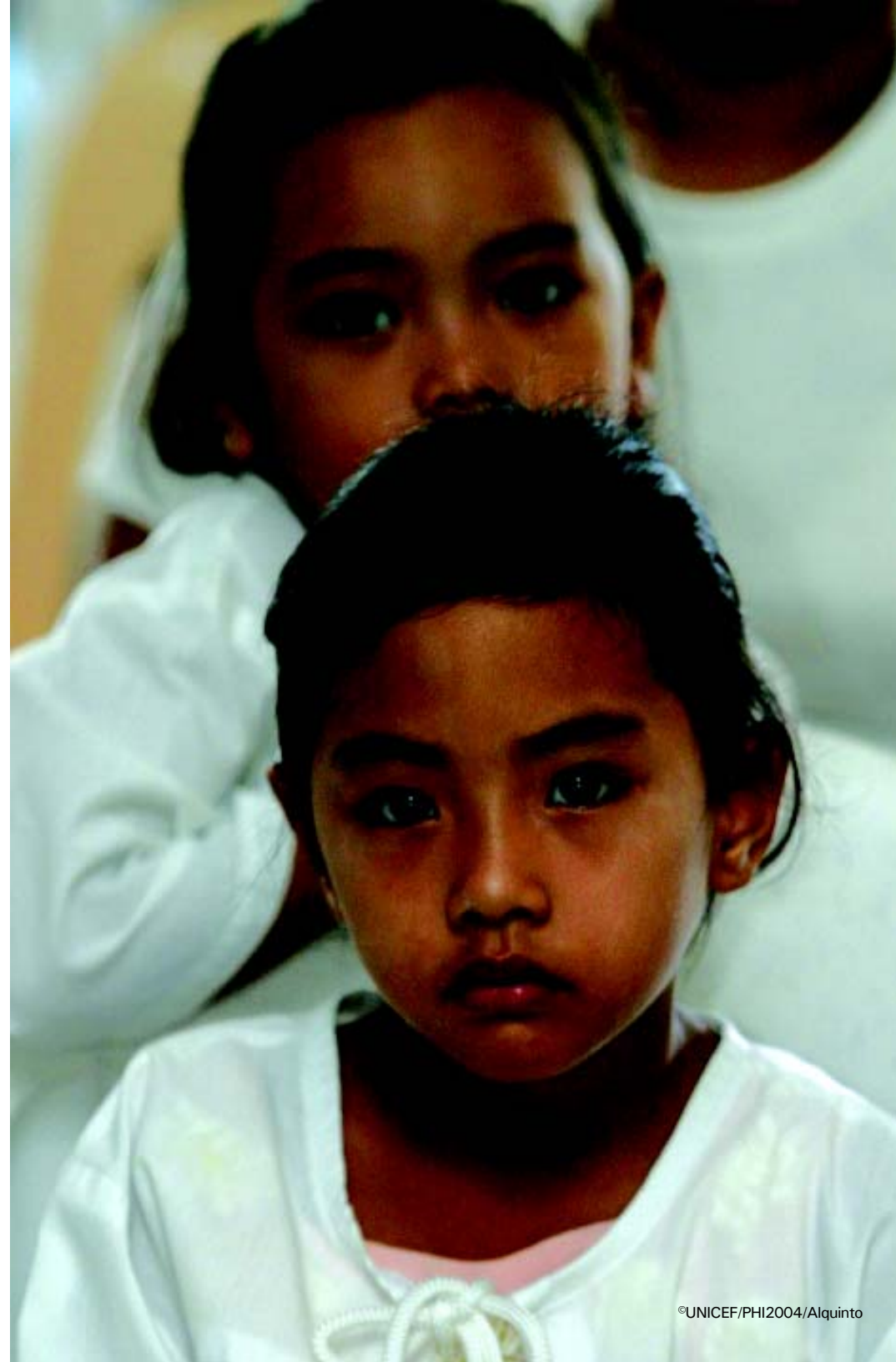
<sup>2</sup> *Child 21: Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children, 2000-2025, A legacy to the Filipino children of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2000).* Council for the Welfare of Children, Makati City.

## The Consultative Processes: Developing the National Framework for Children's Participation

In one of their meetings in 2002, several agencies that work with children discussed their rich and varied experiences in promoting children's participation. They noted the absence of a forum where agencies could regularly share experiences and document lessons. Even among the children, there were no venues to share their understanding and practices as children who participate in decision-making processes, governance, and as a sector that addresses their issues and concerns.

This realization led to the holding of workshops among stakeholders where they discussed their experiences and knowledge on children's participation. Three workshops were held. Adults who were involved in child and youth participation projects conducted the first workshop. The second was held by children with children-leaders as facilitators with the guidance of two adult facilitators. The third was attended by participants of the first and second workshops to validate and enrich the results of the previous meetings. A new topic in the third workshop was on indicators of child and youth participation.

Participatory and interactive methodologies were used in the workshops to evoke from the participants their views and experiences on children's participation. The workshops were documented, synthesized, and the results were distributed to various agencies for comments. An interdisciplinary and multi-institutional round table discussion was held to substantiate the results of the workshops.



# CHAPTER 1

A large, dense crowd of children, likely of South Asian descent, is shown from the chest up. They are all smiling and have their hands raised in the air, some with palms facing forward. The children are packed closely together, creating a sense of a large gathering or celebration. The lighting is bright, suggesting an outdoor setting during the day.

**Committing to understand and uphold:  
Defining children's participation**

## The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

In 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The CRC is a landmark UN instrument containing the non-negotiable standards and obligations of the signatories. At present the United States is the only country that has failed to ratify the UN CRC. All signatories to the Convention are obligated to uphold and protect the rights of all human beings under 18. These rights are clustered in the following categories:<sup>3</sup>

- 1. Survival rights.** All children have the inherent right to life. The State must meet the basic needs of children such as adequate and nutritious food, potable water, shelter, and access to health care. It includes reducing infant and child mortality, combating diseases, and rehabilitation. Under this right, the State is also obligated to prevent any measure that will end a child's life such as death penalty and arbitrary, or summary executions.
- 2. Development rights.** Children have to develop into productive adults of society and the world. The right to education, play, and opportunities to develop their capacities and fulfill their potentials must be met. To ensure that their development rights are upheld, States are required to "create an environment conducive to ensuring to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child, including physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development."
- 3. Protection rights.** Children have the right to a safe and positive environment where they are protected from discrimination and from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Article 36 of the CRC recognized

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF. (1998) *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. First ed. UNICEF House, NYC, USA.

the social, sexual, and economic exploitation of children. Thus, States are required to provide special protection, monitoring mechanisms, and to ensure recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration of abused and exploited children.

- 4. Participation rights.** All children have the right to actively participate in their families, communities, and nations. They have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, access appropriate information, express their opinions and be seriously considered. Children have the right to organize and make their collective voices be heard.

The 1959 Universal Declaration of Children's Rights acknowledged and upheld the survival, development, and protection rights of children. The CRC, on the other hand, recognized the children's right to participate.

## The Significance of Children's Participation

Children's participation is significant not only for the children but also for the society. Given the opportunity, children can contribute to the development of their communities and to programs, projects and policies that affect them. The participants to the workshops identified the importance of children's participation as follows:

### Children's participation promotes self-development

- *"Kung mabibigyan lang ng capability-building activities, kayang-kaya ng mga bata na mag-facilitate ng workshops at gumawa ng resolutions."* ("If children are provided with capability-building activities, they can easily facilitate workshops and formulate resolutions.")
- *"Lahat ng potential ng bata mailalabas nila."* ("Children will be able to demonstrate all their potentials.")

The right to participate enables the children to express what they think and feel on matters important to them. They become articulate and self-aware. It hones their ability to analyze issues and situations, make decisions based on analysis, and find the means and resources to act on these decisions. It develops their capacity to interact with people and react appropriately to different situations.

Participation is a fulfilling experience for children. It boosts their confidence. When children interact with people, their capacities are developed and they discover their strengths, limitations and potentials. They see beyond their situation, their points of view, and lead them to respect the opinions and feelings of other people.

#### Children's participation leads to social awareness and responsible acts

- *"We learn to broaden our perspectives as citizens. We are able to address the problem the way we see it."*
- *"Ang pakikilahok ng mga bata ay may malaking kontribusyon sa pag-unlad ng grupong kinabibilangan nila dahil nakikita ng mga nakatatanda na may kabuluhan ang kanilang mga sinasabi."*  
(*"Children's participation contributes to the advancement of the group where they belong because the adults will realize the relevance of what the children are saying."*)

Children who participate in various activities gain more exposure to social realities and they realize their important role in society. Children who are strongly motivated to resolve the issues that confront their sector can more easily become leaders in effecting social change.

In partnership with adults, children work in solving the problems of the country. This partnership leads to a more comprehensive analysis of the situation and the development of plans addressing social issues.

Policies and programs are often developed based on the adults' understanding of the situation. However, there are children's issues that adults may not completely understand. Programs and projects become more integrated and holistic if children participate in the phases of planning, implementation and evaluation.

#### Children's participation upholds democratic principles and processes

- *"We see different perspectives, too."*
- *"Kung lahat ng bata makikilahok, magiging well-developed ang bansa natin."*  
(*"If all children participate, our country would be better off."*)

The home, school and community provide opportunities where children can be heard and can understand the feelings of other children. The home, school and community provide opportunities to interact with adults. Children, in turn, learn to be articulate, to be tolerant and open to the views of others, to compromise and bargain, to engage in healthy debate, and to adapt to different situations. The children also learn to appreciate the people

#### The making of RA 7610

In 1990, the First National Congress of Street Children was held at De La Salle University, Manila. It was spearheaded by the National Coalition of Street Children's Associations, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), National Council of Social Development, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The Congress identified issues that were important to children. Foremost was the need for special protection, education and health. These issues were presented to the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives as a policy recommendation.

The National Congress became instrumental in the development of RA 7610 or the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act. On July 22, 1991, RA 7610 was signed into law and became the fundamental policy for the protection of children.

in their environment, the organizations in their communities, and the value of working together towards a common goal.

Children learn to respect the views of others if their views are respected. Children's participation prepares them to be fully engaged in democratic processes. Children learn to be responsible citizens when they exercise their rights and involve themselves in matters not only for their families but also their communities and society.

#### Children's participation strengthens resilience and protective systems

- *"Walang batang makararamdam ng diskriminasyon at inferiority complex."*  
(*"Not a single child will experience discrimination and inferiority complex."*)

Children who know their rights through participation are empowered to challenge those who abuse them. In psychosocial recovery and rehabilitation of children in need of special protection, children's participation in the helping process is important in strengthening existing capacities and resilience of children. Participation enables them to cooperate with adults in strengthening the protective systems in their communities. It also strengthens the resilience of the children because they learn life skills, form support networks and strengthen existing ones, and develop their self-esteem.

#### The benefits of children's participation to the community and society

The communities and the society benefit from children's participation. For one, local development plans will be focused on the problems that the children and their families face. The children are also effective in advocating for resources from the local government. This will help fulfill their rights such as nutrition, immunization, early childhood care and education in their communities.

The protective mechanisms for children in the communities are developed. In the process of organizing and promoting children's participation, adults and children form new social networks. With this network, awareness on children's rights increases, violations of children's rights are discussed, and systems of monitoring the children are established.

Child participation can help realize other rights such as survival, development, and protection. When children are involved in program development and policy formulation, these become more responsive to the actual situation and would yield better results.

#### Understanding Children's Participation: The Models

Children's participation has advanced since its inception with the UN CRC ratification. Working with children requires understanding and appreciation of children's participation. Since the 1990s, several theoretical frameworks have been introduced. What follows are discussions on three relevant theoretical frameworks on children's participation.

##### Adults play an important role in facilitating children's participation:

- They help develop methodologies that are culturally appropriate and child-friendly, which help children express their views and feelings;
- They seriously consider the children's opinions and recommendations;
- They help and work with children in evaluating their activities, formulating their recommendations and in developing their capacities; and
- They work with the children in making decisions. They help explain the available choices and possible consequences.

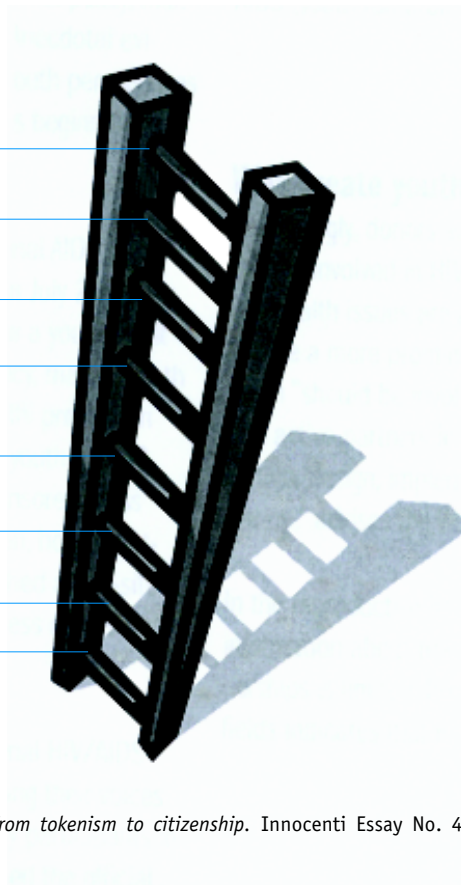
## Hart's Ladder of Children's Participation

Roger Hart's ladder of participation<sup>4</sup> pioneered the discussion on children's participation. In 1992, he came up with the "Ladder of Participation," which described the various levels of children's participation on activities and projects. He advanced the understanding that children's participation has different levels and, in some levels, children are in a situation of being used by adults to promote specific agenda.

### Ladder of Participation

8. Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults
7. Child-initiated and direct their own projects
6. Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children
5. Consulted and informed
4. Assigned-but-informed
3. Tokenism
2. Decoration
1. Manipulation

(Hart 1992, 1997)



<sup>4</sup> Hart, R. (1992) *Children's Participation: From tokenism to citizenship*. Innocenti Essay No. 4, Florence, UNICEF ICDC.

In Hart's Ladder, the level of participation is anchored on the children's involvement in decision-making. Hart used the following factors to define "genuine participation" and "non-participation:"

- Children's knowledge of activity's goals
- Children's understanding of their roles
- Children's own decision to participate

Hart's Ladder was a groundbreaking framework and made children's participation a primary concern of organizations that work with children. Moreover, it put children's participation at the forefront of discourse. In the process, however, same limitations of Hart's model were identified.

One of these is his assumption that "genuine participation" is anchored on "decision-making." While it is true that children's participation in decision-making is very important, Hart failed to acknowledge other forms of participation that are not involved in decision-making. Hart discussed children's participation only in the context of projects and programs. Participation also happens in homes, schools, places of worship and communities. Children's participation in these settings need not involve decision-making *all the time*. Children shared how they participated in places of worship and school activities. Children also said that doing chores at home is also a form of participation. Playing and having fun is a form of participation, they said. For the children, these experiences are meaningful and important. Hart's model, being hierarchical, does not value as "genuine participation" those shared by the children.

Hart did not also consider the capacities of children. All children are unique. They have their own skills, talents and abilities. Knowledge, skills and attitudes have to be developed so that children and adults can work together in larger and wider arenas – from the home to the society.

## The Evolving Process of Children's Participation

*"Even if you read hundreds of accounts of children's participation, have been involved in many participatory processes, you have to start at the beginning with each new group of children."*

- Ennew and Plateau

According to Ennew and Plateau<sup>5</sup> children's participation is a "gradual evolution in which children and adults learn and practice mutual respect, through trial and error." It is a "gradual evolution" where all actions are guided by rights-based principles. Processes in upholding children's participation vary because of the context and the capacities of the children and the adults.

Ennew and Plateau also emphasized that in children's participation children and adults have to work, learn, train, succeed and even fail together. It takes time and patience from everyone. The process involves learning not only from successful ventures but also from failures.

## The Wheel of Children's Participation<sup>6</sup>

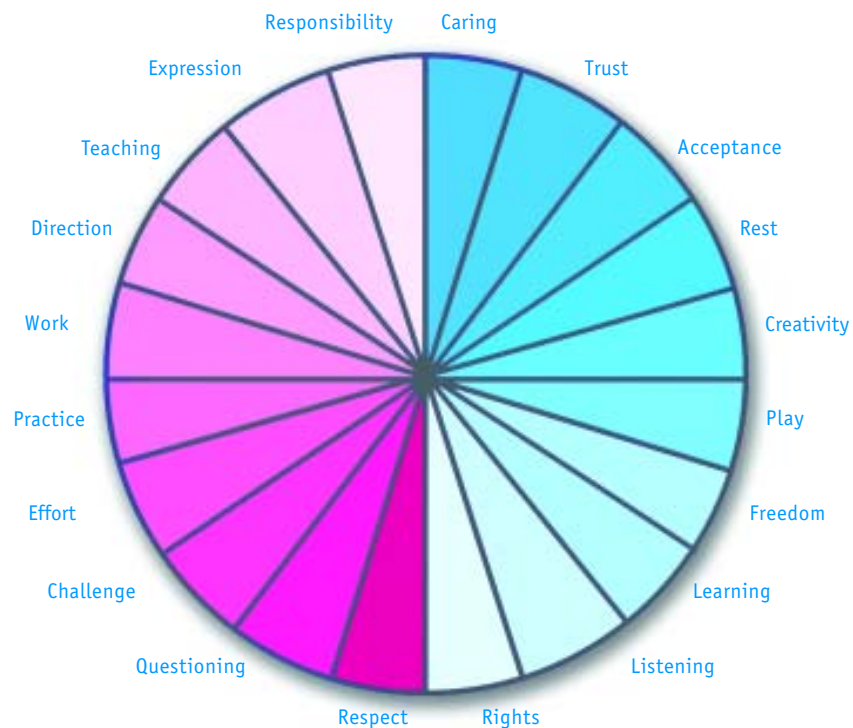
This model emphasizes that participation, and all other rights, entails responsibilities. There are common misconceptions about children's participation such as giving the children the freedom to do what they want or that it breeds disrespect for adults. The wheel of participation explains the concepts of participation and rights. For example, children have the right to voice out their opinions, but they have the responsibility to listen and respect what others say. Moreover, there is the corresponding right to play for every responsibility to do household chores.

<sup>5</sup> Ennew, J and Plateau, D.P. (2001) *Child Labour: Getting the Message Across*, Bangkok, Regional Working Group on Child Labour.

<sup>6</sup> As stated in ECPAT Phil, *Standing Up for Ourselves: A Study on the Concepts and Practices of Young People's Right to Participation*, 2001.

## For every right there is a responsibility:

- Expression - Listening
- Teaching - Learning
- Direction - Freedom
- Work - Play
- Practice - Creativity
- Effort - Rest
- Challenge - Acceptance
- Questioning - Trust
- Respect - Caring
- Responsibility - Right



# CHAPTER 2



Guiding our everyday lives:  
The framework for children's participation

## Guiding Principles in Children's Participation

- **All children have inherent worth and dignity**

The Declaration of Human Rights and the UN CRC are anchored on the principle of non-discrimination. They are applicable to every child in any socio-economic, political and cultural context. It states that all human beings have inherent worth and dignity. Thus, children and adults should be treated equally. Adults have to overcome the cultural beliefs and practices that children are "incomplete" human beings and, therefore, are not worthy of the same respect given to adults.

- **Children and adults are partners**

Children and adults are partners in the promotion of children's participation. Neither works separately from each other. Children should be aware that adults provide support and advice in all their activities. Children and adults can have activities together. However, there must be a venue where they can discuss all matters that concerns the activity.

The following are very important guidelines for effective children-adult partnership:<sup>7</sup>

- *The children must understand the activity, their roles, and roles of the adults.*

This is crucial in planning and in the decision-making process where children act based on informed decisions, meaning, they have access to information. Children and adults need to level-off on the objectives and methodologies of the project. Adults and children have different levels of responsibility, thus, it is important at the onset what decisions can be made and by whom. Rules have to be discussed by both the children and adults.

- *Children should be involved at the start of the project.*

This ensures that the children have the opportunity to participate in the processes and contribute meaningfully to the outcome of the project or activity.

- **A holistic perspective**

Children exist in various environments and social networks. These affect the child's physical and cognitive development, behavior, values and decisions. In encouraging children to participate, adults must consider that the children have chores at home, homework and friends to spend time with. Some children work to support their families or personal needs. These considerations have to be kept in mind when developing activities, services or programs.

- **Openness**

Adults who are open to new ideas and concepts learn and acquire good attitudes that promote children's participation. On the other hand, when children participate, they learn to be open to new ideas. This helps in their development – fully appreciative of democratic processes.

- **Protection**

When children participate, they must not be abused, neglected or exploited. Adults must not overwork the children. Their safety must be ensured. There should be non-discrimination. It is the responsibility of the adults to supervise and guide the children.

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<sup>7</sup> Lansdown, G. (2000) *Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision – Making*. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, Italy.

## Defining Children's Participation

- *"Isang proseso kung saan aktibo ang bata sa kinikilalang kapaligiran."*  
(A process where children actively participate in their environment.)
- *"Pagbibigay ng kani-kaniyang opinion at kaalaman tungkol sa mahahalagang bagay."*  
(Sharing one's opinion and knowledge on important matters.)
- *"Maihayag ang nararamdaman."*  
(To share one's feelings.)
- *"Mailabas ang gusto at mapakinggan ng lahat, at maisakatuparan at mabigyan ng nararapat na aksyon."*  
(To share one's wishes, to be listened to, and that these be considered and acted upon.)

Children's participation, as defined by the children in the workshops mean:

- The right to express one's thoughts, opinions and feelings.
- Adults seriously listening and considering what the children share, especially on matters that affect children and their immediate environment.
- Children involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities and programs with adults.
- Children organizing themselves and;
- Holding dialogues with adults on matters that concern children.

## The Arenas of Children's Participation

Children's participation occurs in various places and settings. The participants to the workshops identified these as the home, community, school, religious institutions, children's associations, venues for recovery and reintegration, and society. Children's participation varies in each setting. They interact with adults and other children in various ways. The children participate in formal and informal

### Children's Participation

**Facilitating and hindering factors in the different arenas: the people who work with children, children's capacities, and predispositions**

Children's Participation

Child

Society

Community

Family

Schools

Children's Association

Religious Institutions

settings. Formal settings are activities in organizations, projects and programs. Informal settings, on the other hand, are activities at home and school. We refer to these settings as *arenas*.<sup>8</sup>

There are internal and external factors that affect the arenas. Internal factors include the children's personalities, preferences and capacities which affect the children's interactions. External factors are the socio-economic, political, cultural and spiritual environment.

Discussions between the children and adults should be conducted to deepen the understanding on the arenas and the essence of children's participation. This will increase awareness on the hindering and facilitating factors in the arenas. As discussed earlier, the definition of children's participation is evolving.

It is important that children, families, communities, religious institutions, organizations working with children and the society are aware of children's participation. Adults need to understand children's rights, "redefine" parenting in the context of children's rights, prepare spaces for children, make their organizations child-friendly, train staff with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitude and develop innovative methodologies to ensure children's participation.

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<sup>8</sup> De-Castro, E. P., Camacho, A.Z., Balanon, F.G., Yacat, J.A., Ong, M.G. (Unpublished 2003) *Building Blocks: A Handbook for Programme Managers on Facilitating Children's Participation in Programmes Addressing Child Labour in Asia*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines.

## The Family and the Home

### *The Filipino Family*

The family, in whatever form, as the basic unit of our society, is the first arena. It is responsible in the care and development of the children. It shapes the children's physical, social and psychological state. It imparts basic values that influences an individual.

The Filipino family is characterized as "child-centered." Culturally, a *mag-asawa* (married couple) only become a *mag-anak* (family) when a child is born.<sup>9</sup> It is noted that "child-rearing among Filipinos is nurturing, affectionate, indulgent and supportive."<sup>10</sup>

Child-rearing is culturally anchored on the belief that "parents know what is best."<sup>11</sup> To illustrate this: one of the primary concerns of Filipino parents is to raise their children to become good persons, or "*mabuting tao*." To achieve this, they give importance on discipline and education. Although a well-meaning objective, Filipino parents, however, tend to be very strict with their children not only because they believe they are always right but also because they believe that by being strict their children will become good persons. It is a common belief that adults "know more than the children" because they are older and they have had more experiences. Thus, children are "ignorant" because they are young. Parents tend to say: "*Bata ka pa. Wala ka pang alam*" (*You're still young. You know nothing yet*). This belief does not give importance to the thoughts and opinions of children.

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<sup>9</sup> From a paper presented by Michelle G. Ong "The Role of the Family in the Philippine Society and in the Protection of Children's Rights" at the Philippine-China Development Resource Center - Amity Foundation on 17-26 October 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Medina, B. (1995). *The Filipino Family: A Text with Selected Readings*. Quezon City, U.P. Press.

<sup>11</sup> From a paper presented by Michelle G. Ong "The Role of the Family in the Philippine Society and in the Protection of Children's Rights" at the Philippine-China Development Resource Center - Amity Foundation on 17-26 October 2000.

It is common among Filipino families to give weight to what the father says, especially in decision-making. Children are not often given the chance to share their thoughts. They are not consulted on decisions that would affect them. Parents also fear that that by allowing their children to participate in decision-making they will become spoiled.

Parents became aware of children's right to participate when government and non-government organizations started the advocacy to raise awareness on the UN CRC. In a discussion in Davao City, the parents expressed their reservations on children's participation. They believe the "right to participation" is a "right to contradict the parents" (*sumasagot sa magulang*). According to them, they never considered contradicting their parents when they were children because they would be scolded and disciplined with a "heavy hand." They said they respected their parents or simply accepted what their parents said.

The discussions on the rights of the child made the parents listen to their children, **but** only "when it makes sense". They will listen "*depende sa sinasabi ng bata*" (It depends on what the children are saying). According to the parents, children sometimes say irrelevant things. It can be inferred that parents have negative judgment on the opinion of their children. In circumstances where the children are saying "nonsense," they do not deserve the right to be heard ("*Hindi sila dapat pakinggan.*").<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> This is according to parents in Davao City in an focus group discussions (FGDs) on defining the best interest of the child. The authors worked with *Kaugmaon*, an NGO primarily working with child laborers in the communities. From Balanon, F. & Yacat, J. (2003) *Dignity, Potentials, and Rights: Cultural Definitions of the Best Interest of the Child, Documenting the Good Practices of Kaugmaon and Tambayan in Davao City in Upholding the Best Interest Principle*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines and Save the Children UK Philippines: Philippines.

### *Upholding Children's Participation in the Filipino Family*

All apprehensions and misconceptions on children's participation stem from the parents' fear that their authority will be challenged by their children. Children's right to participate does not aim to challenge parents or give their children uncontrolled power. It is about considering the children's thoughts, opinions and feelings in all matters that directly or indirectly affect them. It is about fulfilling their rights and responsibilities in their homes, schools, communities and their country. It is about partnership with adults who provide supervision, support, love and care. It is about mutual respect between children and adults.

It must be stressed that the **family is the first arena of children's participation**. Children as young as infants and toddlers participate in everyday life. They will let the adults know they are hungry, what their favorite food is, the color they like, or the programs they would like to watch on TV. These expressions and choices have an impact on their development. Their innate capacities are developed and they discover new ones. As children grow, they participate in decision-making and in solving family problems as well as doing household chores.

The role of adults – whether as parents or caregivers – is crucial to children's participation in the family. They must have an appreciation and understanding of children's rights and participation. They need to be equipped with appropriate parenting skills to encourage children's participation. If these are in place then children's participation will flourish.

Parents are beginning to accept children's rights and the right to participate because of extensive awareness-raising activities. Parents are taking pride of their children's participation in their communities and in their schools. Parents are listening to their children. They have observed that their children have become articulate and confident. Parents also felt the closeness of the family due to the dialogues between them and their children.<sup>13</sup>

A further challenge to parents is to continually adjust the level of responsibility for a growing young person. Because children by nature are constantly developing in mind and body, parents must consider what the CRC states as the "evolving capacity of children."

Organizations that work with children in upholding the right to participate should continue working in raising the awareness and appreciation of parents of children's rights. Discussions on rights-based parenting are venues that will prepare parents on children's participation.

## In the Communities

The community provides more opportunities for children's participation. The level of children's participation in the community is determined by the awareness of its residents on children's rights. Children are often involved in activities in their communities such as sports festivals, dances and volunteering to clean the *barangay*. If *barangay* officials have little appreciation of children's rights, children will find it hard to participate in the planning and decision-making processes in their communities even if the children are organized. Thus, there is a need to prepare the communities for children's participation.

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<sup>13</sup> From interviews with parents working with PLAN International from Ilagan, Isabela, about the project with UP CIDS PST on "Developing a Children's Participation for PLAN Philippines" with PLAN Philippines.

## Children's Associations

Children are better heard when they are organized into associations that are guided by adults. Moreover, the right to organize is a fundamental right. The children in the workshops said that there is increased potential of children being involved in community planning and decision-making when they are organized. They can also advocate for representation in the *Barangay* Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC).

Philippine law upholds children's participation in community or *barangay* decision-making. The *Sangguniang Kabataan* (SK or the Youth Council) and the *Katipunan ng Kabataan* (Youth Federation) were created when the Local Government Code was enacted in 1996. The elected chairperson of the SK is a member of the *Barangay* Council. The SK is mandated to initiate programs and projects for the physical, social, cultural, spiritual and political development of the children and the youth in their *barangays*.

In the associations and in the SK, children learn important skills such as situation analysis, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of projects and group activities. The children are given the opportunity to work with adults in organizing children, governance, and act as advocates of child rights.

Organizing and sustaining children's associations are difficult. At present, non-government organizations (NGOs), government organizations (GOs), and people's organizations (POs) initiate the organizing and activities of most children's associations in communities. The NGOs bring in their resources to build and sustain the children's associations. But when they pull out, most children's associations become inactive because of lack of funding for their activities. The children's interest wane and the children's associations eventually dissolve.

The challenge for the adults and children is for the children's associations to achieve sustainability and self-reliance. There are children's associations that are achieving sustainability while some are in the process of working with organizations towards sustainability. Some of the crucial factors for this is the capacity to build and maintain networks and sustaining the interests of the children. These experiences need to be documented and shared.

## In the Schools

The school is a very important arena for children. They spend a lot of their time learning and interacting with their teachers and fellow children. The school is an extension of the home because as children socialize, they learn cultural and societal norms, proper behavior, *pakikipagkapwa*, and the concept of justice or what is right and wrong. Teachers are referred to as "second parents" because when the children are in school, the teachers are responsible for the children's education, moral development and discipline.<sup>14</sup>

In this arena, children's participation can flourish or be stunted. In the school, children are provided the opportunity to develop leadership skills as members and officers of organizations. In these organizations, they plan, implement, assess activities or influence school policies. School publications are venues for students to express their views. Classrooms are venues of learning and appreciating democratic principles.

One of the laws enacted to uphold participation rights in the schools is RA 7079, or the "Campus Journalism Act of 1991." It states: "*It is the declared policy*

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<sup>14</sup> Yacat, J.A. & Ong, M. *Beyond the Home: Child Abuse in the Church and School: Childhood and Child Rights Study Series*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, Save the Children-UK Phil.

*of the State to uphold and protect the freedom of the press even at the campus level and to promote the development and growth of campus journalism as a means of strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline of the Filipino youth.*" This will be implemented in all "schools," which is defined as "*an institution for learning in the elementary, secondary, or tertiary levels comprised of the studentry, administration, faculty and non-faculty personnel.*"

The children in the workshops shared their experiences in their schools. Some of them were tackling issues related to environmental protection, child abuse, and adolescent sexuality. These activities were conducted with NGOs such as SACMI, *Higala*, Eco-Scouts, and Foundation for Adolescent Development. These organizations prepared and trained the students in order to enable them to assume various roles. The students were trained in leadership, facilitation of meetings, handling disclosures of abuse, basics of journalism, public speaking, counseling, mediation and service provision skills. The Department of Education (DepEd) endorsed these projects and these were integrated in relevant school associations.

In schools, the children managed their own organizations. They planned their activities, designed and implemented these in consultation with adults, trained their recruits, conducted advocacy fora using student-to-student approach, and attended public hearings on proposed legislations. The school served as safe and supportive environment for children's participation.

The children in the workshops said students performed certain functions in decision-making, particularly in school rules and regulations, as campus journalists and members of clubs and organizations. It helped that there were laws and policies that mandated schools to involve students in decision-making and that they were aware of their rights, and were willing to participate in managing school affairs.

### *The Realities in the Schools*

Children's participation in schools is not easy. There exists an authoritative and hierarchical relationship between adults and children in the Philippine educational system. For one, elementary and high schools are very active in publishing school papers. However, teacher-advisers dominate the decision-making processes to the extent of dictating the editorial policy of the campus publication.

The children are often not represented in governing or decision-making boards of schools. This is especially true in public elementary and high schools where the principal dominates the decision-making. In the FGDs with children about child abuse in schools and children's participation, one participant said:

*"Tungkol sa participation, oo, may student government pero token. Kasi wala naman silang powers kahit sabihin nila, magmiting kayo. Ano naman ang i-oorganize nila? Siguro pasasalitain sa program yung president o magpre-prepare ng song o dance number. Yun lang ang participation na kinukuha sa bata."*

(When it comes to participation in schools, yes, there is a student government but it is a token structure because it does not have any power. Moreover if it were told to hold meetings, what would it organize? The president of the student government might be asked to speak in the program, or the students might be asked to prepare a song or dance number, but that is the only participation that they get from children.)<sup>14</sup>

When interviewed, elementary, high school students and teachers revealed the common practice of teachers who took full responsibility in planning school activities for children.<sup>15</sup> These activities were contests, celebrations of events and sports festivals. The children were often excluded in the conceptualization and planning. They were merely given tasks in the implementation of the plans.

The economic situation of the family also hinders the participation of children in school activities. For example, the opportunity to join the school band or sports teams is more available to those who can afford to buy musical instruments or uniforms. Children who work have less or no time at all for extra curricular activities, thus, limiting their opportunities to participate.

In the classroom, the children have lesser chance to express their thoughts and opinion. They are told to sit quietly and listen.<sup>16</sup> In public schools, each class is composed of 70 to 80 children and this limits the chances of students to participate in discussions. There are teachers who are not equipped with the knowledge and skills in encouraging children to participate.

### *Upholding Children's Participation in the School*

The children who were interviewed believed that their participation in school activities, such as listening to the teacher and doing their homework were all forms of participation. While this is true, children's participation in the school must be further developed. There are many initiatives on how to uphold and

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Based on the transcriptions of the interviews and focus group discussions with teachers and students in Quezon City, North Cotabato, Ilagan, Isabela, Borongan, Samar, and Camotes, Cebu from several projects of the Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines (UP CIDS PST):

- *"Teaching Peace and Human Rights: Integrating Peace Modules in the Curriculum for the Children of Mindanao" in partnership with the British Embassy and Notre Dame University.*(Cotabato City, Pagangan, Aleosan, North Cotabato, 2002)
- *"Integrating personal safety in the school curricula: The Center for the Prevention of Trafficking and Child Sexual Abuse (CPTCSA) experience in child sexual abuse prevention" with Save the Children UK Philippines.* (Quezon City, 2002)
- *"Developing a Children's Participation for PLAN Philippines" with PLAN Philippines.* (PLAN partner-schools in Ilagan, Isabela, Borongan, Samar and Camotes, Cebu 2004)

encourage children's participation in the schools and these must be discussed with school administrators.

The awareness of school administrators on children's rights is the primary facilitating factor in this arena. It is important that administrators and teachers innovate, conduct research, and work with children to develop appropriate methods in the classrooms and other school settings for children's participation.<sup>17</sup>

## Religious Institutions

In many religious institutions, children serve as catechists, lectors, counselors, and community outreach workers, among others. Muslim boys are trained for their participation in the regular call to worship, assist in religious rituals, and read text from the Koran. Tausug children participate in the "pangadji" an informal and traditional means of studying the Koran, by attending the sessions, listening attentively, and practicing to read Arabic.

It is also a venue in the community where children participate in planning, implementation and assessment. Children's participation in religious activities is important not only for their spiritual development but as a service to their communities. However, just like in schools, children's participation in religious

institutions are mainly limited to activities that are planned and initiated by adults. Their participation is also based on what is assigned to them by the adult-organizers. Children must be given opportunities to plan their own activities and implement them with the support of the religious leaders.

## Venues for Recovery and Rehabilitation

Venues for the recovery and rehabilitation of children in need of special protection are found in the communities. There are centers in the communities that house, protect and help abused children. There are street- and community-based efforts to help children recover from their traumatic experiences. The participation of children in the recovery and reintegration processes is important in building and strengthening resiliency. Resiliency will ensure that the child would be able to handle most of the stresses and problems he or she will encounter in the future.

There are many experiences of children's participation in recovery and reintegration with children in need of special protection. *(See next page on the Juvenile Justice System: The Role of Children's Participation in Recovery and Reintegration and in the Implementation of Laws)*

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<sup>16</sup> Yacat, J.A. & Ong, M. *Beyond the Home: Child Abuse in the Church and School: Childhood and Child Rights Study Series*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, Save the Children-UK Philippines.

<sup>17</sup> *Teaching Peace and Human Rights: Integrating Peace Modules in the Curriculum for the Children of Mindanao*. (2003) Unpublished reports.

### **Juvenile Justice System:**

#### **The Role of Children's Participation in Recovery and Reintegration and in the Implementation of Laws**

The efforts to make the Philippine Juvenile Justice System child-sensitive have been extensive. The laws on judicial processes concerning children were amended to adhere to the UN CRC, PD 603, and RA 7610. The following is an example of a law that upholds the CRC:

*The Supreme Court Rule on Juveniles in Conflict with the Law (15 April 2002) states that arresting officers should: "(1) refrain from using vulgar or profane words and from sexually harassing or abusing, or making sexual advances on the juvenile, (2) refrain from subjecting the juvenile to greater restraint than is necessary for his apprehension, (3) avoid violence or unnecessary force, and (4) hold the juvenile in secure quarters separate from that of the opposite sex and adult offenders."*

Numerous trainings were conducted for the Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), lawyers, and judges on child-sensitive means of investigation and judicial processes. In particular, children's right to participation should be upheld as enacted by the following laws:

- 1. Rules on Apprehension, Section 5-6, Article 209 of P. D. 603:**  
(1) the child has the right to be informed of the nature of his/her offence, (2) to competent legal counsel of his/her choice;
- 2. Memorandum Circular 92-010 Police Handbook on the Management of Cases of Children in Especially Difficult**

**Circumstances (22 Oct 1992):** "In interviewing the child, the officers must .... (5) talk his language, (6) encourage the child to do most of the talking.... (10) allow the child to write his/her story.

In judicial processes, children have the right to information. They need to understand what is happening around them, what they are accused of, and the options available to them. They have the right to tell their side of the story. Adults should facilitate the expression of children's thoughts, opinions and feelings. Children should also participate in rehabilitation and reintegration particularly in planning their future and actively implementing the plans that were drawn up.

#### **Are these laws enforced?**

In 2002, the Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Center for Integrative Studies and Development - University of the Philippines and the Consortium for Street Children (UK) conducted regional and national workshops and consultations with children, NGOs, GOs, judges, lawyers, and law enforcers who were involved in the country's juvenile justice system. It was part of the multi-country production of a Handbook on Street Children and the Juvenile Justice System by the Consortium.<sup>17</sup>

Street children and those in detention and rehabilitation participated in the regional and national consultations. The children stated that most of the time the law was usually ignored by the apprehending officers, lawyers,

<sup>17</sup> *Painted Grey Faces, Behind Bars and in the Streets: Philippine Report, Street Children and the Juvenile Justice System.* (2003) Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Center for Integrative Studies and Development, University of the Philippines and the Consortium for Street Children.

and judges. Children were often verbally and physically abused during apprehension and were placed in cells together with adults. There were cases of sexual abuses, torture and violence to children while in detention. NGOs such as People's Recovery, Empowerment, and Development Assistance Foundation (PREDA) documented these cases and stated that "there is a complete absence of any attempt to enforce the law."<sup>19</sup> Philippine Action for Youth offenders (PAYO) supported this statement when it conducted a nationwide research on the situation of children in conflict with the law (CICL). It stated that 50.9% of the respondents were in cells together with adults, 44% had to sleep on the floor, 39.7% had no sleeping paraphernalia, and 30% had only blankets.

<sup>20</sup>

The workshops pointed out the gaps in the implementation of the laws during apprehension, detention and rehabilitation of the children. The children also pointed out that the juvenile justice system is punitive instead of promoting rehabilitation. Unless the children were surrendered to the DSWD's Regional Centers for Youth Offenders, the children were jailed.

The workshops revealed the significance of children's participation in ensuring the implementation of the laws. Their experiences are crucial in identifying the gaps and recommendations on implementing laws that uphold and protect the rights of children.

<sup>19</sup> Preda, *Minors in Jail: Case Studies, The Philippines* (September 2002), 2003.

<sup>20</sup> PAYO, *Youth in Detention: Issues and Challenges, A Nationwide Survey* (1996), p.30.

## The Society

Yes, the children can participate in the arena of the society. As a signatory to the UN CRC the Philippines has made room for children to participate in governance. The Social Reform Council was organized when Executive Order No. 421 was enacted in 1996. The Council recognized children as one of the sectors in society that play an important role in the national poverty reduction program. In 1998, RA 8425, or the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), included a child representative chosen from the Children's Basic Sector in the *en banc* meetings presided by the President. The Children's Basic Sector identifies priority agenda and issues. Their representative, who is a member of the NAPC, presents these to the President and the department secretaries for action.<sup>21</sup>

### Conferences and Consultations

Conferences and consultations that involve children are venues where they can voice out their views on issues, concerns, and recommendations on national and local programs and policies. These are also venues where meaningful dialogues between children and adults are held, especially with government officials and policy makers.

The Office of the President has directed concerned national and local government units to review their policies, programs, and services to ensure that issues of children are addressed. Children's views on various issues have been raised to the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) Board and to the President. Children have participated in the formulation of policies, country reports, and the development of Child 21 and the Agenda for Action to the UN Special Session on Children.

<sup>21</sup> From Dir. Lina B. Laigo's paper "The Role of Children and Youth in the Family and Community Development: The Philippine Experience" presented at the APFAM International Conference on the Family 2003, 23-26 June 2003.

It is the responsibility of the organizers to make these conferences and consultations meaningful for the children. For children who were chosen and invited to represent the Filipino children in international conferences, it is the responsibility of the host organization to guide them throughout the conference. Aside from ensuring that the guiding principles for children's participation are upheld, organizers, and adult companions have to keep in mind the following:

- ***Prepare the children before the conference or workshop***

Preparation starts in the selection of the representative/s for the conferences and workshops. Adult partners must explain to the group or association the objectives of the activity. Afterwards, it is strongly recommended that the children choose their representative/s themselves. Adults can assist in formulating the criteria for the representative/s.

The chosen representative has to be oriented by the adults. The objectives of the conference must be reviewed and discussed with child participants again in detail. The roles of children and adults in the conference must be clear. It is also important to know if members of the media are present to prepare the children for interviews. The children must also know the consequences of appearing in the media, particularly children in need of special protection. It may have an impact on their security if, for example, they are child soldiers or CICL. The media needs to be oriented on the ethics of interviewing or taking pictures of children.

Whenever possible, talk to the parents of the children and explain what the conference is all about. It is also important that parents understand and appreciate children's participation in conferences. If they see their child participating meaningfully in different arenas, they will provide valuable support to the child at home.

- ***Involve the children in planning, implementation, and evaluation of the conference or workshop***

The input of children in the process is important to ensure that the methodologies used in the conference or workshop are culturally appropriate, child-friendly, and would make the participation of the children-participants meaningful.

- ***Process the experience of the children-participants***

The children's experiences in the conference must be processed by the trained facilitators. Discuss how the children participated, what they learned, who they met, and if they had fun. Process their thoughts and feelings on the relevance of the issues discussed, what they

### **Children's Participation in Policy Development**

To facilitate children's participation in social transformation through governance, the World Vision Foundation, Christian Children's Fund, Plan International, and Education, Research, and Development Assistance (ERDA) Foundation have coalesced to implement the nationwide project Expanding Children's Participation in Social Reform (ECPSR) in the Philippines.

ECPSR involves organising children, awareness-raising, capacity-building, policy advocacy and establishment of support coalitions at the barangay, municipal, provincial and national levels. The project spearheaded regional children's consultations in 10 provinces and cities. The consultations came up with children's demands, which were presented to the Anti-Poverty Summit of President Fidel V. Ramos.

ECPSR was a pioneering initiative in the empowerment of children. It laid the groundwork for children's participation in policy determination, development and social reforms that are needed in building a Child-Friendly Nation.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *Building a Child-Friendly Nation, National Coalition for Children's Participation (NCCP)*. July 2002.



learned, what they liked or disliked in the conference, and their insights on their experience. It is also important to plan on how to share with other children back home their experiences and what they learned.

- *The organizers, adults, and children-participants should ensure that the children's outputs or statements reach those concerned*

Children who have participated in the consultations and workshops often fear their statements and recommendations will not be acted upon by government officials. All stakeholders must ensure that the recommendations are acted upon by those concerned.

# CHAPTER 3

**Learning from children:  
Good practices in children's participation**

## The Children's Experiences

During the May 2002 workshop with representatives of children's organizations and child-focused NGOs, the group identified good practices in their respective areas.

- In many church-related settings, it is important to sustain adult guidance in all children's activities. Often, there is a strong partnership between adults and children. The adults provide a sense of security that enables the children to develop their capabilities. They facilitate formal and non-formal ways of developing skills. The formation of youth groups where children exercise different roles depending on their interests also helps in the development of the children's capacities.
- The existence of student councils in schools proves that children's participation is institutionalized. Campus journalism helps promote and sustain participation among students. Freedom of expression in the campus is also upheld. Students organize and manage various organizations. These are effective avenues in building social responsibility and citizenship among the students. There are schools that have established mechanisms in reporting violations of children's rights and child abuse.
- Family meetings and informal discussions during meals become venues for the children to express their opinions and thoughts. It helps when parents encourage their children to speak up in a caring atmosphere. On these occasions, family problems are discussed and decisions are made on finances, schooling, career, recreation, health needs and other matters. These are also venues to share significant events and stories about friends and school activities. Meaningful family discussions occur when the bond among family members is strong and if parents are aware of children's rights. Allowing children to perform chores consistent with their capacities helps in their

development. The children also said that when they do their chores, they feel they are important members of the family. A child said being able to contribute to his family's savings is also a very rewarding experience.

- Children's advocacy aims to promote the legislative agenda of children, develop positive attitudes on children among adults, establish and maintain financial and material support for children, increase adults' involvement, and craft appropriate responses to children's concerns. The more effective advocacy strategies reported are as follows:
  - Developing information, education, and communication materials
  - Producing tri-media outputs (e.g., theater-based presentations, community radio program, mural making, photo-exhibit, community billboard)
  - Writing resolutions
  - Attending educational fora
  - Doing child-to-child community visits
  - Participating in significant events
  - Participating in children-related government programs and services.
- Coalition building is a significant approach that strengthens children's negotiating power at various levels – among children's associations, NGOs, government units and children's associations. Coalition building is continuing and has laid the foundation for more long-term support mechanism to pursue higher levels of action, particularly in advocacy and children's representation. This highlights the key concepts and practice of children participation. According to the children and other stakeholders, coalition-building contributed to their development as individuals. It made an impact on their families, communities, and the society.

Other documented case studies, notably by the Institute of Philippine Culture in 2000 highlighted practices of children's participation in various contexts. First, the subscription of youth-to-youth strategy to raise awareness on children's rights, child abuse, adolescent sexuality and health, and environmental protection. Second, to deliver services as peer counselors or health youth volunteers, and as leaders in social mobilization activities. The second observation pertains to the investments of adult-run organizations in the training of the children who will participate in an organization, program or activity. The training focused on the knowledge and skills needed by the children for specific activities and defining roles and responsibilities. The children also showed openness on who will lead them, and considered the capacities of their potential leaders as the foremost concern. Choosing leaders was not based on gender.

Other practices on children's participation are the following:

- a. The hiring of former youth volunteers to serve as adult staff in youth-oriented programs. This approach facilitated the improvement of networking with parents and children who were new to the program. It is also an affirmation of the organization's commitment of nurturing leadership skills and social responsibility among its former child participants;
- b. Providing benefits to children who are involved in organizational activities. In most cases, the children who act as peer counselors, leaders, and outreach workers in school and community settings are provided health, education, and other services by NGO partners. The children's personal and social skills as well as technical expertise in important aspects of relevant programs are also developed;
- c. Connecting the children with other groups. It broadened the children's social contacts and strengthened their resolve to bring their issues to the public; and

- d. Supporting youth to assume more autonomy. Projects and activities started to evolve from adult-initiated and student-managed programs to youth-directed community-based initiatives. For instance, the Baguio Center for Young Adults evolved into a structure where young people now manage the program in partnership with young people's organizations (YPOs). They evaluate proposals, approve and manage funds. The YPOs design, implement and monitor their projects.

## Representation in the National Agencies

### *The Council for the Welfare of Children*

The Council for the Welfare of Children under the Office of the President is the national agency responsible for affairs concerning children. Along with the Department Secretaries and NGOs, the children have been instrumental in lobbying for the passage of laws such as the National Council for Children's Television and the Family Court Act.<sup>23</sup> There are two child representatives in the Council Board.

### *The Children's Basic Sector in the National Anti-Poverty Commission*

A child-friendly society is anchored on the principle that children have the capacities to be involved in decision-making processes and governance. The Philippines' commitment to uphold children's participation is stated in the National Planning Framework for Children or CHILD 21.

<sup>23</sup> From Dir. Lina B. Laigo's paper "The Role of Children and Youth in the Family and Community Development: The Philippine Experience" presented at the APFAM International Conference on the Family 2003, 23-26 June 2003.

In 1997, Executive Order (EO) No. 421 institutionalized children's participation as a national policy. EO 421 created a children's sector in the Social Reform Council. It also encouraged the representation of children in all political, social and cultural structures of the government.

The Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act, or Republic Act 8425, provided further recognition and institutionalization of children's participation in Philippine society. RA 8425 mandated the representation of the Children's Basic Sector in the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC-CBS), which is under the Office of the President. The NAPC is the agency that implements the anti-poverty programs of the President.

In 2000, members of the NAPC-CBS, aged 10 to 15, were elected for a term of three years. One was appointed child commissioner. Currently, there are 25 children who composed the Children's Sectoral Council. One of them was appointed sectoral representative. The NAPC-CBS formed a technical working group (TWG) that provides technical support. The TWG is composed of the DSWD, CWC, NAPC, and NGOs.

In 2002, the NAPC-CBS facilitated the passage of a resolution on the Child's Right to A Name and Nationality during the First Children's Congress on Child's Right to A Name and Nationality (Birth Registration). The resolution was presented to House Speaker Jose de Venecia and to other government agencies. The NAPC-CBS also identifies the current issues that concern children through island-wide consultation-workshops with the National Coalition of Children's Associations in the Philippines (NaCCAP). The commissioner calls the NAPC's attention to these issues so the concerned agencies can act on them. For example, in 2002, the NAPC-CBS raised the issue of the poor quality of education with NAPC. This resulted to upgrades in school and health facilities and services, provision of competent, free education and child-friendly teachers and school administrators.

This was done through dialogues with officials in the DepEd and LGUs who accomplished pending commitments on the issues, e.g., the implementation of the DepEd circular memo that ensured free education.

## Children's Participation in National Programs and Projects for Children

In the past, experiences in children's participation were not systematically documented. Children's participation was considered less important than the glaring problems affecting children such as poverty, child abuse and exploitation, displacement, and problems caused by natural calamities and armed conflict. Now, children's participation is regarded as equally important. This is reflected in the provisions for children's participation in national programs that address needs of children in need of special protection. In these national programs, GOs and NGOs work together with the children in planning and implementing the programs and activities. The following are two examples from many national programs and projects:

- The National Project on Street Children, which started in the mid-80's, abounds with initiatives of street children involved in defining their situation and collaborating with other stakeholders in bringing these to the legislative and executive agenda of the national government. Many activities were organized with street children taking the lead in dramatizing their plight and laying down their needs before national and local leaders. Street children also lobbied actively for reforms and the passage of laws that respond to their concerns;
- The National Child Labor Program explored the situation of rural and urban working children. It exposed the phenomenon of children who are engaged

in exploitative work. This initiative also aimed to involve the working children in promoting their right to be protected from abuse, exploitation, and to secure their education and health rights.

Many activities involved the working children in gathering information on their living and working conditions. The purpose was to call the attention of civil society to advocate for the elimination of hazardous work that involve children. Through local and national consultations, the working children organized themselves and advocated the issues. They spoke before assemblies of educators, employers, legislators, non-government organizations and media. They proposed actions that address their right to special protection. The working children rallied together in the Global March for Child Laborers and in the ratification of landmark legislations such as Convention 182, which defines and protects working children specifically from worst forms of child labor.

### Expanding Children's Participation in Social Reform

There are children in rural and urban communities whose rights to education, health, and special protection are not realized. These children experience harsh life in the streets. They are engaged in exploitative labor. They are affected or are involved in armed conflicts. They are subjected to various forms of abuse. Children have inadequate participation in the public policy arena and in the development blueprints of local and national government.

In 1995, four child-focused non-government organizations in the country "departed from tradition and began to enhance interventions in their common mission to advance the interests of children."<sup>24</sup> The Christian Children's Fund (CCF), World Vision Development Foundation (WVDF), Plan International (PI), and the ERDA Foundation formed a coalition and lobbied for children's right to participation in policy development and social reforms. Together with other sectors, they presented the children's demands for participation in governance

in the 1995 National Anti-Poverty Summit. The children asserted the need for their involvement in the public policy arena in several regional consultations held in various parts of the country from 1996 to 1997. These efforts resulted to the establishment of the Children's Sector in the Social Reform Council and the launching of several projects, which enabled the children to be heard in various policy-making bodies at the national level.

Within this context, the ECPSR was formed in 1997 to respond to the need to institutionalize the children's sector at the *barangay*, municipal, and provincial levels and mobilize broad support for children's participation and other rights.

### How do children participate in decision-making?

The regional consultations for the ECPSR project showed that 10 to 14 years old are not represented in the legislative and policy-making bodies of the local and national governments. The children are not organized as a sector, hence, they have no venue to voice out their concerns and to influence public policy. A few positions in local governance are held by young people below 30.

The consultations also revealed the state of children's participation in decision-making structures, which govern many aspects of their lives:

- Only 15.6% children respondents all over the country are members of organizations;
- Majority of children's programs are in infrastructure, environment, and socio-cultural initiatives, which includes sports. Only 16.9% are in advocacy for the protection of children;
- Children and youth are often given minor roles in government programs. In education and health, where most of the local government programs are concentrated, children are just beneficiaries;
- Only 41% of respondent local government units have children-representatives in local government bodies. Only 2.2% of LGUs have children representatives in the BCPCs; and
- There are few local ordinances that promote the development and welfare of children.

The project has the following aims:

- a. Organize the children as a sector and increase their participation in the public policy arena;
- b. Create and establish national and local coalitions of NGOs and people's organizations that address issues and concerns of children; and
- c. Intensify advocacy efforts for and on behalf of the children in the legislative branch of government.

The Coalition has identified the following strategies in pursuit of its objectives:

- Organize children's coalitions;
- Undertake capability-building and value transformation;
- Hold children's assemblies;
- Build coalitions of organizations and groups supporting children;
- Organize and strengthen BCPCs and related structures;
- Conduct research and documentation;
- Implement awareness-raising activities; and
- lobby for and monitoring existing bills, ordinances, and laws on children.

The ECPSR showed that the Coalition opened opportunities and provided tools to enable children to exercise their right to participate in crafting public policy. Community organizing became a venue in locating the children and formation of children's associations.

Children's associations served as the mechanism for cooperation, democratic consultation and consensual decision-making, and advocacy of children's issues. The formation of children's associations marked a significant shift in the way children are viewed. From mere beneficiaries of sponsorship programs, children

became active partners in development efforts. Children's work, in fact, expanded to capacity-building, organization and mobilization, advocacy, and coalition building among children themselves. The children's associations linked with other children's groups to form a federation where they unify their agenda and have stronger representation at the *barangay* and municipal levels. These children's structures were eventually integrated into formal institutions such as the BCPCs and other local councils for the protection of children. This gives the children formal representation in policy making bodies in the communities.

Advocates of children's rights provided opportunities for children's participation. Children were heard in meetings with local and national leaders. They served as a pressure group in public gatherings where they assert their rights and the passage of legislative bills in fulfillment of their rights. The children were also involved in networking and coalition building in pursuit of their aspirations.

Children were trained by partner agencies. The children's preparation involved developing their capabilities in the visioning process, leadership and value formation, life goals and skills, research and documentation, advocacy and media work, first aid training, and facilitation.

### Children's Participation and the Media

Varied and creative forms of children's participation that express their views have been demonstrated through the media. There are television and radio programs hosted by children. Children's issues are discussed and interpreted along the children's perspective. Among these experiences are the following:

- **Talakayang Musmos** (Children's Forum), a program for and by the children, which was aired every week. Simulcasted on a magazine format, it provided an hour of news and features. The following were the seven regular segments for each episode that featured a particular theme every week:

1. *"Balitang Paslit"* delivered news updates;
2. *"Kesong Bilog"* were interviews conducted by children on different topics that concerned children;
3. *"Sa Aming Palagay"* were commentaries of children on issues concerning them;
4. *"O Di Ba?"* was about trivia;
5. *"Galing Tsikiting"* recognized child-achievers;
6. *"Munting Tinig"* was on children reading poetry and short stories; and
7. *"Musikong Pambata"* featured music about and for children.

*Talakayang Musmos* was adjudged effective in increasing public awareness on children's rights. The children who were involved in *Talakayang Musmos* also began to produce their own radio programs.

- The **"Anak-TV Seal"** was launched to recognize and promote child-friendly TV programs. It aimed to guide parents in the choice of appropriate programs for their children to watch. It encouraged producers to improve their productions for children. Children have been members of the board of judges since 1998.
- The **Kabataan News Network (KNN)** is a tele-magazine produced by nine regional bureaus of 13 to 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.

- **"Batibot"** also involved children in awareness and advocacy campaigns on the CRC, among others, through a daily television program for children. The program aimed to educate children about their rights with children serving as informants.
- **"5 and Up"** was a TV show anchored by children focusing on the rights of children to participate and to express themselves.

A group of Filipino children submitted a seven-point "Wish List" for the media during the *1997 Asian Summit on Child Rights and the Media*, held in the Philippines. These are the following:

1. We want high quality programs made just for us – programs that will not use us as subjects to sell products or ideas. We want to learn as well as to have fun.
2. We want to express our ideas on these programs. We want to talk about our families, friends, and communities. We want to share what we know about others and ourselves.
3. We want to know what other children are going through, what games they play, what songs they sing, what problems they have to solve in their own countries.
4. We want programs that will make us confident so we can handle the process of growing up. No sex scenes or violence, please.!
5. We want programs considerate of our need, which we can watch during regular time slots.
6. We want support from everyone to allow these programs to be the best that they can be.
7. Listen to us. Take us seriously. Support these programs and protect our rights!

The Wish List also reflects the sentiments of their peers in other parts of the country, which were echoed and documented in various projects nationwide.

## Good Practices in Children's Participation from All Over the Nation

Most organizations and agencies that work with children in the Philippines have upheld the children's right to participate. The Foundation for Adolescent Development, *Kabalaka, Higala*, Baguio Center for Young Adults, Inc., and Eco-Scouts initiated projects with the children in communities to address issues such as drug abuse, prostitution, livelihood, environmental protection, and reproductive health. The NGOs trained the children and developed their knowledge and skills in counseling, leadership, media work and theater, community organizing and networking, life planning, integration with the masses, and mobilization. Skills in preparation of project proposals, project implementation, and grant-making guidelines were taught to those interested.

Through partner NGOs and local government units, children and youth aged 15 to 24 participated in assessing their situation. They also acted as health volunteers and clients, health promoters and advocates, and peer educators. They were active in referring children and youth to appropriate health services. As organizers, they managed the projects they initiated. One organization eventually managed grant funds for its child and youth constituency.

The *Sangguniang Kabataan* (SK) provided opportunities for participation for children and the youth since their membership in the SK is mandated by law. There are also children who shared that they organized protests that tackled issues and politics.

The Scouting Movement in the Philippines is one of the pioneers in children's participation. The Girl Scout of the Philippines (GSP) has 276,496 members all over the country. They are pioneers in upholding the children's right to participate. The GSP activities aim to develop the "girl-adult relationship, offer adult-like responsibilities, introduce girls to community organization, and to provide fun."<sup>24</sup> The GSP's Senior Planning Board is composed of 2,580 girl scouts who meet quarterly to plan activities and programs. Girls are also represented in the Central Board, which is the highest policy-making and governing body of the GSP.

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<sup>24</sup> Christian Children's Fund. (2002) *Building Children and Youth Leaders: The Philippine Experience*. Philippines, Christian Children's Fund, Inc. - Philippine Office.

# CHAPTER 4

**Culture, context, and challenges:  
Issues in children's participation**

In upholding children's participation, issues and hindrances come up. For one, according to the children, their teachers still question their active involvement in non-academic campus and community activities. In barangay sessions, adults would say: "Farmers are not even represented (in the BCPC), why should children be?"

During consultations between children and adults, numerous issues were raised such as the following:

#### **A. The cultural bias against children**

Culture does not only affect one's behavior, but also defines it.

Various cultures in the world, including the Filipino culture, often do not recognize children as part of the society that must be heard. Yes, children are valued and loved but they are not given a venue to voice their thoughts because "they are young, they lack knowledge, are immature, and very impressionable". They are not "men" and "women" who have rightful places in the community and society.

Well-meaning organizations working with children also have this culture, which affect their programs and activities for children. According to the children during the consultations, there were adults who dictated the activities for children. There were activities where the children were not included.

The children also face cultural bias from family members and schools. Parents and teachers often think that children should only be concerned with their studies. Extracurricular activities are discouraged. Many school administrators and educators do not support children's involvement in community activities because they believe these are irrelevant and are hindrances to children's studies.

Children and adults experience pressure when they are together in activities. This may stem from the question: "Where should child participation begin and end?" The children find themselves waiting for adults to give them the resources they need to implement their plans. They feel that in the end, the adults still control their decisions. This issue reflects the "growing pains of children's participation."

The process of upholding genuine and relevant participation is never easy. One of the major challenges is overcoming the tensions between adults and children through healthy dialogues. Both sides need to be open and willing to change. Both must realize that children's participation is anchored on democratic principles and partnership. Only then can deeper appreciation of children's participation be realized.

Despite this bias, however, Filipino culture values children and consider them a blessing. Much caring is given to children, especially when they are young. The positive cultural values that uphold children's rights need to be identified and developed such as using passages from the Bible and the Koran to encourage adults to promote children's rights. Indigenous practices that protect children can be strengthened. The current pop culture of children could also be employed. Children (working with *Bidlisiw*, an NGO in Cebu) used the "slumbook" to reach and organize more children. A "slum book" is a booklet that children love to pass around in order to meet new friends. It includes writing the person's name, address, phone numbers, his/her favorites, definitions of love, and mottos.<sup>25</sup> The challenge is to identify and develop the strengths of a significant culture that advances children's participation.

<sup>25</sup> From Josefina M. Parentala, Ed. D.'s letter to CWC on March 18, 2004. It outlined the activities of the GSP that upheld children's participation.

## **B. Misconceptions about children's participation**

There are misconceptions about children's participation. One of these is the adults' fear of "losing power" over the children. This misconception prevents children from participating in various venues.

*There is a common belief that children's participation will lead to lack of respect to parents.* This concerns the children because they need their parents' permission to participate in activities in their communities and schools. They need their parents to be open to them so they can effectively voice out their opinions in their homes and families.

Some teachers and church people also believe that children's participation results in children losing respect for their elders. They perceive children's participation as giving children the "license" to argue and contradict adults.

*Children's participation is only for disadvantaged children.* In the workshops, it was revealed there is bias for disadvantaged children. They are the typical focus of activities and less concern is given to children who are economically privileged.

It is usual for an organization to put most of their resources to disadvantaged children because of their immediate needs. Priority is also given to them because the resources of disadvantaged children and their support system are very limited.

But, children's participation is universal to all children. This issue serves as a reminder to all that no child must be left out; that we must create venues for all children to participate regardless of class situation, and gender.

## **C. Adult-oriented methodologies and structures for children's participation**

There are many local and national laws that uphold children's participation. However, children still find it hard to participate in their families, communities, schools, religious institutions, the society, and even with NGOs and GOs. This is because appropriate methodologies and structures for children's participation are still being developed. Children's activities still employ adult methodologies. Children are also made to "fit" into adult structures. Children's participation in existing government structures, e.g., the Barangay and Municipal Development Councils, is necessary and important. These structures, however, should ensure that the children are heard and seriously considered. There are efforts to make the methodologies, structures, and the processes within the structures appropriate to the children's capacities, culture and context. The challenge is for these to be properly documented, shared and further developed.

## **D. Over participation**

There are situations where children "over participate." This happens when children are expected to do the work of adults. When children are given many responsibilities, other rights are not fulfilled like the right to play, relax and rest. This results to the children's failure to attend to their classes. They also fail to do their responsibilities at home when they are given many tasks in their organizations. Furthermore, since the children are doing adult tasks, they may be evaluated using adult standards, which may leave the children frustrated and angry if they do not live up to such standards.

Another form of over participation is choosing the same children to participate in conferences and workshops in their hometowns, cities and abroad. NGOs that work with children have noted the following effects of over participation:

- If the experiences are not properly handled or processed, the children may become arrogant. They become patronizing and condescending towards children who have not attended the workshops and conferences;
- The children may feel they do not belong with the children who do not share the same experience in their communities ;
- There are children from poor families who demand that they be provided with good food, air-conditioned rooms, and good art and writing materials just as they have experienced in the workshops and conferences.<sup>25</sup>

Adults should be responsible in processing the activities and experiences of the children. This should be the main role of the adult companions or the *chaperons* of the children-participants in the workshops and conferences. Expectations in terms of commitment, time, and resources should be discussed with the children after attending the conference. There should be feedback mechanisms to monitor the children's activities to ensure that their responsibilities have not become too much for them.



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<sup>27</sup> *Building Blocks: A handbook for Programme Managers on Facilitating Children's Participation in Programmes Addressing Child Labour in Asia*. From the FGDs with adults from NGOs and the children, in the project. De-Castro, E. P., Camacho, A.Z., Balanon, F.G., Yacat, J.A., Ong, M.G. (Unpublished 2003) Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines.

# CHAPTER 5



**Doing it right:  
The indicators of children's participation**

Below are indicators that aim to help in monitoring children’s participation. Existing structures and organizations – government organizations, barangay councils, NGOs, people’s organizations, schools, children’s associations - in the communities and society may use these indicators. Those who plan to use the indicators must review and revise them, if needed, to adapt to their respective context.

## Quantative Indicators

Listed below are indicators in various settings of youth and children;

Participation Setting	Indicators
1. Family and Home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel comfortable speaking in the presence of adults;</li> <li>• Are actually involved in the family’s decision-making on matters that concern them;</li> <li>• Play an active and willing role in household functions including cleaning, caring for younger children, decorating, showing hospitality, and engaging in non-hazardous or non-exploitative income generation;</li> <li>• Able to report abuses in their family; and</li> <li>• Are members of organizations in schools, religious institutions and the communities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Number of parents who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for children to express their views;</li> <li>• Actively listen to and take into account the views and opinions expressed by children, especially when making decisions that affect the family; and</li> <li>• Attend seminars on child rights, and the like.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
2. School	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of schools with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school publication managed by students;</li> <li>• mechanisms so students can express their views;</li> <li>• mechanisms for consultation in situation analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (SAPIME);</li> <li>• student organizations or associations initiated/managed by students;</li> <li>• student councils;</li> <li>• girls who are members of the student council.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Number of student-initiated or managed activities.</li> <li>3. Number of teachers and school administrators trained in children’s rights and children’s participation.</li> </ol>

Participation Setting	Indicators
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Number of teachers and school administrators who consider the children’s views, ideas, opinions, and suggestions in planning and decision-making in the school. <sup>28</sup></li> <li>5. Number of training programs on children and youth participation that were conducted.</li> <li>6. Number of student council members who became members of the Board of Regents.</li> <li>7. Ratio of student participation in proportion to total student population.</li> </ol>
3. Religious Institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of religious institutions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• officials/leaders who have been trained on children’s rights and children’s participation;</li> <li>• mechanisms where children are represented in the decision-making process;</li> <li>• programs where children participate; and</li> <li>• children’s organizations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Number of religious officials/leaders who pay attention to children’s views, opinions and needs and follow up on children’s ideas, information and suggestions.</li> <li>3. Number of members who have been trained/or participated in trainings or workshops on children’s rights.</li> <li>4. Number of organizations and activities initiated/led by children.</li> <li>5. Number of children involved in the preparation of activities of the religious organizations.</li> </ol>
4. Community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of children-initiated programs for community development.</li> <li>2. Number of children-initiated policies/laws/ordinances passed and implemented.</li> <li>3. Number of functional children’s organizations.</li> <li>4. Number and percentage of children according to age and sex who participate in socio-cultural and environmental developmental activities.</li> <li>5. Number of marginalized children (girls, disabled, indigenous, etc.) included in children’s organizations, community discussion on children’s concerns, and activities initiated by the community and children’s organizations.</li> <li>6. Number of child- focused plans developed at the barangay, provincial, regional, and national levels.</li> <li>7. Number of child-focused development plans that address identified children’s rights.</li> <li>8. Percentage of children’s participation in socio-cultural and environmental developmental activities.</li> <li>9. Number of children represented in different socio-cultural activities of the community.</li> <li>10. Number of congresses/assemblies conducted by the children at the barangay, municipality, city and national levels.</li> <li>11. Number of children’s congresses and assemblies that discuss children’s situation in reference to their rights and with clear action plans to address critical issues that were identified.</li> <li>12. Representation in local and national governance.</li> </ol> <p><sup>28</sup> Van Beers, Henk (2002). <i>Children’s Participation: Experiences in Capacity Building and Training</i>. Save the Children Sweden.</p>

Participation Setting	Indicators
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Number of resolutions prepared by the children and their associations.</li> <li>14. Number of consultative activities in different levels that involved children.</li> <li>15. Percentage of children voting in <i>Sangguniang Kabataan</i> elections.</li> <li>16. Number of joint projects/initiatives between local children's associations and <i>Sangguniang Kabataan</i>.</li> <li>17. Number of policies passed/lobbied by children.</li> <li>18. Number of <i>Sangguniang Barangay</i> with child representative.</li> <li>19. Number of BCPCs and other special bodies with children representatives.</li> <li>20. Number of resolutions/ordinances and bills advocated by children's organizations.</li> <li>21. Number of <i>barangays</i> and municipalities with programs and budget for children.</li> <li>22. Number of <i>barangays</i> and municipalities that comply with the 20/20 initiative.</li> <li>23. Number of children and children's organizations with access to funds for SK programs/projects in the community.</li> <li>24. Number of children and youth who participate in project management in the community.</li> <li>25. Percentage ratio of children to total children's population who are aware of the following in their respective <i>barangays</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local State of the Children Report;</li> <li>• Local Development Plan for Children;</li> <li>• Local Investment Plan for Children.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## Qualitative Indicators

In evaluation, numbers and quantity only present a part of the whole picture. It is in qualitative evaluation that gains and mistakes are identified and the lessons learned; where successful ventures are recognized; and strengths are further improved. In conducting assessments and evaluation, adults must take the thoughts, opinions and feelings of the children seriously.

There are various methods in evaluation. The method to be used must help and encourage the children to recall their experiences, analyze what happened, and pose recommendations. Methodologies must be creative, activity-based, and experiential. They must help identify the changes (or the lack of it) themselves, the people around them, and the processes they underwent.

*Adults and children must discuss the appropriate indicators in assessing their activities.*

The following are examples of indicators from various literature:

### *For the children*

- Improvement in:
  - Self-esteem
  - Articulating thoughts, opinions, and feelings
  - Adapting to different situations and context
  - Analysis of situations and posing recommendations or come to a decision
  - Sensitivity and openness to the opinion of others (children and adults)

- New knowledge and skills are acquired and learned
- A deeper appreciation and understanding of:
  - Children's participation
  - Democratic process
- New friendships
- Enjoying the experience

#### *For the organizations*

- There are child-friendly spaces
- The staff and the organizations are prepared for children's participation
- Organizational processes for children's participation are in place
  - The children are involved in planning, implementation, problem identification, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation.
  - Regular meetings are held with children
  - Rules are set with children
- Methodologies that promote participation are developed and documented
- Staff who:
  - Have deeper understanding and appreciation of children's participation and other rights
  - Use a rights-based framework and uphold children's participation in all tasks and roles in the organization
  - Consistently promote children's rights in their actions such as:
- Actions that promote children's participation include:
  - Taking time to build trust with the children
  - Paying attention to children's views, opinions, feelings, and needs, and taking all of these seriously
  - Finding time to interact with children and deal with their problems
  - Investigating problems in a systematic way
  - Counsel children in a respectful way, providing space for children's own views and inputs

- Actively solicit children's views
- Following up on children's ideas, information, and suggestions
- Reflecting critically on one's own attitudes in dealing with children

#### *For the parents and communities*

- Awareness of children's rights
- Improved attitude and behavior in relationship with children
- Openness to the thoughts, opinions, and feelings of children and taking these into serious consideration
- Active promotion of children's participation in planning, implementation, and decision-making in the communities

# CHAPTER 6



**Acting together:  
Recommendations in promoting  
children's participation**

Reflecting on their current experiences in children's participation, the children posed the following suggestions.

- In the family, make child rights real by:
  1. Sharing among family members should be a regular characteristic of every home.
  2. Parents should be aware of children's rights and encourage their children to express themselves freely at home.
  3. Training on responsible parenting should be conducted.
  4. The children should be good to their parents.
- To participate in local governance, **the children support the strengthening of barangay councils, where they can be represented.** Children must be trained to advocate for the enactment of local ordinances and setting up of programs for child participation. They must also be involved in monitoring programs for children. *Barangay* officials should involve the children in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the barangay's programs for children.
- **The school is an important arena for children's participation.** Teachers need to be trained in methodologies that encourage children's participation in their classes. Values education classes can also promote the discussion on children's rights. The children in the workshops said they wish to apply what they learned in the seminars. There should be educational activities where they can participate. School administrators should provide a venue where students can freely express their views, feelings and talents. It will also benefit the students if they have a representative in the school board.
- **Peer counseling in schools encourages child participation.** It is a venue where children can deal with their anxieties. Student leaders can be models in motivating the studentry to participate in school activities.

Children, as students, need assistance in their efforts to disseminate information on issues of children. Children's issues can be subjects of term papers, projects, and other activities.

- **NGOs should continue their advocacy on child and youth participation.** They said the establishment of a broad network of NGOs supporting children's rights can strengthen initiatives on child participation.
- **Religious leaders should be aware of children's participation and should be encouraged among children.** The children, in turn, should motivate other children to participate in church-related activities.
- **National leaders should seek the opinion of children on issues that affect them.** National leaders should support the children when they lobby for bills on children's participation, monitor and evaluate programs for children, and identify all institutions where child participation can occur. The children said the leaders can form a network of organizations that promotes child participation.
- **Children should own the responsibility to strive to develop themselves and to continually promote children's participation.** They should be aware of children's issues and participate in discussions and advocacy efforts. They should serve as good models to other children.

The views of the participants in the workshops highlighted the need to realize children's participation. The following pages contain the are recommendations on children's participation in the various arenas that were mentioned, which can be adapted to the needs and context of any organization and agency that want to use them.

Arena	Recommendations
<p><b>THE FAMILY</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Target parents and barangay officials in awareness-raising activities on the CRC, the rights-based concept of children and responsible parenting. One of the primary objectives should be to change the attitude of parents/adults to make them trust the capacity of their children in making decisions.</li> <li>2. Conduct more community-based inter-generational dialogue between adults and children. This is a venue to discuss issues and come up with recommendations.</li> <li>3. There should be continuing education of parents on the following issues:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Children’s rights;</li> <li>b. Rights-based child rearing or parenting;</li> <li>c. Practical steps in upholding children’s participation in the home and teaching life skills (communication, decision-making, self-awareness, etc.) to their children;</li> <li>d. The benefits of assigning developmentally appropriate responsibilities to their children; and</li> <li>e. The relevant laws and legislations that concern children and the family such as RA 7610 and PD 603.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>THE COMMUNITY</b></p> <p>Children’s Associations and other children’s groups</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen the children’s associations by linking them with GOs, NGOs, POs, schools, and other CAs.</li> <li>2. Plan for the sustainability of the children’s associations.</li> <li>3. There should be regular assessment and planning with children and adults (from partner NGOs, GOs, and the <i>barangay</i> council) on:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The activities that would continue developing the capacities of the children and of the adults that work with them; and</li> <li>b. How to maintain the interest of the children in the children’s associations and in recruiting new members.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Children and adults should evaluate their activities and experiences regularly.</li> </ol>
<p>The <i>Barangay</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support children’s initiatives to be heard and be part of the community’s decision-making. Develop strategies to ensure that children participate meaningfully in <i>barangay</i> consultations and planning. The processes and methods of involving children in consultations should be child-friendly and appropriate to their capacities.</li> <li>2. Children and their associations must have access to information on <i>barangay</i> programs and services including the budget. This will facilitate the planning of children’s associations because their activities will complement the program of the <i>barangay</i> council.</li> <li>3. Strengthen the partnership between the <i>barangay</i> council and the representatives of the children.</li> <li>4. Develop strategies for a smooth transition in the event the leadership of the <i>barangay</i> changes to maintain the partnership between the children and <i>barangay</i> leaders.</li> <li>5. Mobilize the BCPC to educate the indigenous peoples in their <i>barangays</i> on children’s rights and the right to participate.</li> </ol>

Arena	Recommendations
<b>THE SCHOOL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GOs and NGOs working with children should strengthen ties with the Department of Education to promote the Child-Friendly School System strategies and methodologies.</li> <li>2. Child-friendly methodologies that are culturally appropriate to encourage children’s participation in the classroom should be continually disseminated and employed among the schools.</li> <li>3. Train school administrators and teachers in child-friendly approaches. This should start at teacher-training institutions.</li> <li>4. Develop programs for peer counseling.</li> <li>5. Strengthen the pupil governments/student councils with training courses that would increase their capacities to participate.</li> <li>6. Develop means and strategies to include the pupil governments/student councils in the school’s decision-making board.</li> <li>7. Build and strengthen initiatives on the prevention and early detection of child abuse in the schools. The child-to-child approach could be employed. This implies training of teachers and peer counselors in detecting signs of abuse and proper action when a child discloses.</li> <li>8. Strengthen the relationship of the school administration and the Parent-Teacher-Community Association (PTCA). This would lead to dialogues between the administration, PTCA, and the students on children’s rights and on how children could better participate in the context of their school.</li> <li>9. Establish “suggestion boxes” in schools. This will encourage students who are afraid or too shy to speak about their thoughts, suggestions, and feelings about the school’s administration and policies.</li> </ol>
<b>RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intensify the conduct of orientation-workshops on children’s rights and children’s participation with religious leaders such as <i>ulamas</i>, priests, pastors, and the like.</li> <li>2. Encourage children to have roles in religious education of their peers or younger children. This is an activity where they can plan together with adult religious leaders. Children teaching other children is also an effective approach.</li> <li>3. Encourage religious leaders to actively initiate activities that uphold the participation of children in their communities.</li> </ol>
<b>VENUES FOR REINTEGRATION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Train service providers and child caregivers among GOs and NGOs on the concepts and methods of children’s participation in the helping process.</li> <li>2. Seek the children’s perspectives in the recovery process. Involve the children in the planning of activities. Regularly communicate with them on the progress of their recovery.</li> <li>3. Organizations that help in the recovery and reintegration of children should regularly assess their “strengths” and “weaknesses” in the processes that involve the children.</li> </ol>

Arena	Recommendations
<b>THE SOCIETY</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustain awareness-raising and consciousness-raising of the members of the media to uphold and protect children’s rights in news, interviews, soap operas, variety shows, among others.</li> <li>2. Strategies to monitor national consultations that involve children must be developed. The consultations should employ child-friendly methodologies so children can participate meaningfully.</li> <li>3. The children’s basic sector should continue being vocal in encouraging other children in advocating the issues that concern them such as the enforcement of the laws that guide the media in upholding children’s rights.</li> </ol>

## Other Recommendations:

### Advocacy

1. Tap the media in advancing the rights of children and in promoting children’s participation. Start with TV shows that target children.
2. Advocate the inclusion of orientation on children’s rights and children’s participation in premarital counseling.
3. Continue to target adults through the following:
  - mass media;
  - special advocacy efforts and education materials for adults;
  - more opportunities for children to prove themselves; and
  - venues for dialogue.
4. Call the attention of adults who take advantage of children for their interests.
5. There should be opportunities where children themselves advocate issues and concerns with the guidance of adults.
6. Sustain advocacy on children’s rights.

### Research

1. Prepare a handbook on how to encourage and uphold children’s participation by age groups.
2. Conduct research that involve children on the following:
  - a. Identify Filipino cultural traits that promote children’s rights and to enhance these;
  - b. Participatory methodologies in the helping process that are appropriate for children;
  - c. How to better integrate children’s participation in adult structures;
  - d. Developing mechanisms to ensure that children’s participation is considered in all aspects;
  - e. Review the implementation of the laws that uphold and protect children’s rights and identify those that repress or limit children’s participation; and
  - f. Methodologies in upholding children’s participation in the various contexts of the indigenous peoples.

3. Continue documenting and disseminating good models of children's participation in the family, BCPCs, school, religious institutions, children's associations, *Sangguniang Kabataan*, and the like.
4. Children should conduct research with adults to assess their own participation in different arenas.

## Afterword

### *A Commitment to Jose and Maria*

During the consultations, the children chose Jose and Maria to represent children who are deprived of many rights. They promised to do things for and with them. The following are the children's voices, which they articulated with sincerity and with the hope that adults work hand in hand with them in fulfilling these promises:

- "I will do my best to help Jose and Maria by sharing the knowledge that I gained here."
- "I will give love and attention."
- "Action not words... Jose and Maria, you're not alone in this fight."
- "*Bilang kabataan, tutulong ako sa pagpapatupad ng mga dapat taglayin ng mga bata.*" (As a child, I will help in enforcing what children ought to have.)
- "I commit that *ipagpapatuloy ko ang pag-aadvocate ng children's rights issues.*" ( I will continue to advocate for children's rights.)
- "Being a youth, I will do my duty to stop the bad things in this world."
- "I promise to pray for the children of the world and I will preach the meaning of child participation and to know all our rights."
- "*Pagbibigay ng edukasyon sa kanya at hihimuking sumali sa child participation.*" (Provision of education and encouragement to exercise child participation)
- "*Jose at Maria, magkakasama tayo! Just believe in yourselves.*" (Jose and Maria! We are together in this.)

# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX 1

### LEAVE NO CHILD OUT:

#### POLICY FRAMEWORK ON CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

##### *Laws and policies that uphold and promote children's participation*

The last decade saw a global movement for the recognition of children's social and economic rights, to special protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child acknowledged these rights. It gave children a new dimension by recognizing them as subjects of rights rather than recipient of adult protection. As such, they should be heard on matters affecting their lives. Young people, after all, are the majority in the world's population: more than half are below 25 years old and over 20% are adolescents between 10 to 19 years old.

Children are entitled to be heard. The Convention on the Rights of the Child have the following "cluster of participation articles" that clearly calls on child participation. <sup>1</sup>

- **Article 5.** States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.
- **Article 9.** (2) In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 (which speaks of the separation of a child from parents) of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.

- **Article 12** (1) States Parties shall ensure 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.
- (2) 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.
- **Article 13.** (1) The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
- **Article 14.** (1) States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- (2) States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
- **Article 15.** (1) States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

- **Article 16.** (1) No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.
- (2) The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.
- **Article 17.** States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.
- **Article 21.** States Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:
  - (a) ensure that the adoption of a child is authorized only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counseling as may be necessary.
- **Article 22.** (1) States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and

humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.

- **Article 23.** (1) State Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.
- **Article 29.** (1) States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
  - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
  - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
  - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
  - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
  - (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

In the Philippines, the following laws serve as the policy framework for children and youth participation:

- a. **Republic Act 8425 or Social Reform And Poverty Alleviation Act:** It recognizes the right of children to participate by including them as one of the fourteen (14) basic sectors of the National Anti-Poverty Commission and providing for the appointment of a child commissioner;
- b. **Republic Act 8296 or The National Children’s Broadcasting Day:** It declares the second Sunday of December as National Children’s Day of Broadcasting in recognition of the right of children to freedom of thought and expression. Under this law, television, and radio stations nationwide shall allocate a minimum of three hours airtime to children.
- c. **Republic Act 8370, or Children’s Television Act of 1997:** It addresses the right of children to access appropriate information. It creates the National Council for Children’s Television (NCCT) to develop a comprehensive media plan for children and promote high quality local programs.
- d. **The Child and Youth Welfare Code:** The Code provides that children be allowed to participate in the discussion of family affairs, especially their concern. It states that children have the right to choose their own careers, friends, and future spouses. Parents should not impose their own choices nor unduly influence their children in these matters.

Working children also have the right to self-organization. They shall have the same freedom as adults to join unions of their own choosing, in accordance with existing laws.

- e. **The Family Code:** It respects the views of the children in cases of adoption. The Code gives children the opportunity to participate in decision-making activities since they are also members of the family.
- f. **The Rules of Court and Republic Act 7610, or Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act, as amended by Republic Act 7658, or An Act Prohibiting the Employment of Children Below 15 Years of Age in Public and Private Undertaking:** The child-victim may file a case of child abuse and exploitation under RA 7610. The law tasks the prosecutor in a child abuse case to take necessary steps to uphold the right of the child to be heard in judicial proceedings. Among these is to hold closed-door hearings when the child-victim gives his/her testimony by taking into consideration his/her age, psychological maturity, nature of the violation, and the interests of the child and his/her family.
- g. **Presidential Decree 2003, or the Children and Youth Participation in Nation Building Law, enacted in December 1985:** It encourages the participation of the children and youth in nation building.
- h. **The 1987 Constitution, Article VI, Section 5 (1):** Provides for the appointment of sectoral representatives to the House of Representatives. A representative from the youth sector was appointed at the House of Representatives.
- i. **The creation of the *Katipunan ng Kabataan* or the youth federation, under the Local Government Code:** Allows the youth to participate in civic and political affairs and gives them opportunities to express their views and opinions. The *Sangguniang Kabataan* is the active organization of the *Katipunan ng Kabataan*. It has the mandate to promulgate

resolutions to carry out the objectives of the youth from the barangay to the national levels, i.e., initiate programs designed to enhance the social, political, economic, cultural, intellectual, moral, spiritual, and physical development of the youth.

- j. Republic Act 8044, or Youth in Nation Building Act.** It recognizes youth participation through the National Youth Parliament (NYP). The NYP enables the youth to formulate policies for their development.

The following are laws that aim to protect and uphold the children’s rights:

- a. Republic Act No. 9208 or Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003:** An Act to institute policies to eliminate trafficking in persons especially women and children, establishing the necessary institutional mechanisms for the protection and support of trafficked persons, providing penalties for its violations, and for other purposes.
- b. Republic Act No. 9231:** An Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7610, otherwise known as the “Special Protection of Children from Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination.
- c. Republic Act No. 9255:** An Act Allowing Illegitimate Children to Use the Surname of their Father, Amending for the Purpose Article 176 of Executive Order No. 209, otherwise known as the “Family Code of the Philippines.”
- d. Republic Act No. 9262** An Act Defining Violence Against Women and their Children, Providing for Protective Measures for Victims, Prescribing

Penalties Therefore, and for Other Purposes.

Local ordinances have been issued by local governments that are child-friendly. Davao City and General Santos City, for instance, have their own version of the Child and Youth Welfare Code. Bohol came up with a Provincial Children’s Code on October 2000.

## APPENDIX 2

### ANG MGA DEKLARASYON NG MGA BATANG

### DUMALO SA ISLAND-WIDE NACCAP CONSULTATIONS NG 2003

#### DEKLARASYON

#### *ng mga bata ng Luzon*

Kaming mga bata ng Luzon na nagtipun-tipon para sa isang Konsultasyon sa Naga City, mula ika-4 at 5 ng Oktubre 2003 ay nagkaisang ibahagi ang aming mga mithiin sa mga sumusunod na kadahilanan:

- Karamihan sa aming mga bata ay hindi pa tahasang napaunlad ang aming mga kakayahan upang maprotektahan ang aming mga karapatan;
- And “advocacy” na ginagawa namin ay minsan hindi nauunawaan ng aming mga magulang, kapwa naming bata, at ng komunidad;
- Karamihan sa aming mga barangay ay walang sapat na kaalaman sa “Child-Friendly Movement;”
- Karamihan sa mga pampublikong paaralan ay kulang na kulang sa pasilidad na siyang sanhi ng mababang kalidad ng edukasyon;
- Kulang na kulang ang mga pasilidad na tutugon sa pangangailangang pangkalusugan naming mga bata lalung-lalo na sa mga probinsiya;
- Hindi sapat ang suporta na ibinibigay ng Kagawaran ng Edukasyon lalo na sa aspeto ng pagbibigay ng karampatang oportunidad sa mga batang lider na makilahok sa mga gawaing pambata;
- Karamihan sa mga organisasyon ng mga bata o BCA ay hindi nabibigyan ng karampatang pansin mula sa mga lokal na pamahalaan;
- Maraming nangyayaring karahasan sa aming pamilya at komunidad na kaming mga bata ang nabibiktima;
- Dumadami ang bilang ng mga bata na nalululong sa masasamang bisyo at lumalayo sa tamang landas ng buhay;

- Karamihan sa mga komunidad at sistema ng lipunan ay hindi pa tanggap ang tunay na pakikilahok naming mga bata sa pagtugon sa mga suliranin na nakaapekto sa aming pag-unlad.

Kung kaya nais naming ipabatid ang aming mga inaasam:

- Na magkaroon ng sapat na oportunidad na mapaunlad ang aming mga kakayahan;
- Na magkaroon ng mas malalim at mas malawakang “advocacy” sa “Child-Friendly Movement” para matigil na ang karahasan at maunawaan ng aming mga magulang, kapwa bata, at komunidad ang ginagawa ng aming mga BCAs;
- Na magkaroon ng sapat at naaayong tugon ang Kagawaran ng Edukasyon sa pagbibigay ng oportunidad sa mga batang lider na sumali at makilahok sa mga gawaing pambata;
- Na dagdagan ang kakulangan sa pasilidad ng mga pampublikong paaralan ng sa gayon ay tumaas ang kalidad ng edukasyon, pati na rin ang mga pasilidad pangkalusugan;
- Na magkapitbisig ang mga NGOs, NGAs, children associations, lokal na pamahalaan at iba pang sektor ng lipunan upang mas maging komprehensibo ang mga tugon nito sa mga suliranin ng mga bata;
- Na kasali sa “advocacy” ang pakikilahok ng aming mga magulang, kapwa bata, at ng mga sektor ng lipunan;
- Na magkaroon ng mas komprehensibong tugon ang mga sektor ng lipunan sa problema ng droga at programang makatutulong sa kapwa naming bata na nalululong sa masamang bisyo na bumangon muli at mapahalagahan ang kagandahang asal;
- Na bigyan kami ng pagkakataong tunay na makilahok sa lahat ng aspeto ng pakikilahok.

Amin pong inaasahan na tutugunan ang aming mga adhikain.  
Naniniwala po kami na sa pamamagitan ninyo ay may pag-asang naghihintay sa amin.

Naniniwala rin po kami na hindi lang kami ang laging biktima subalit kabahagi kami ng solusyon.

Nais namin ang isang mundo na para sa amin.

Kami ang kinabukasan, pero kami rin ang ngayon!

Sa mga bagay na ito, amin pong hinihingi ang inyong suporta.

## **DECLARATION**

### **Luzon Children**

*We, the representatives of children from Luzon who are participants to the National Coalition of Children's Association in the Philippines (NaCCAP) Island –Wide Consultation from October 4 to 5, 2003 in Naga City have come together to express our wishes because of the following reasons:*

- *Many among us are not fully trained to protect our rights;*
- *The methods used in advocating for our rights are sometimes not appropriate and cannot be understood by our parents and fellow children in the communities;*
- *Many of our barangays lack information about the Child-Friendly Movement;*
- *Many public schools lack facilities that have caused low quality education;*
- *There is not enough facility and mechanisms in place to respond to the health needs of children especially in the provinces;*
- *The Department of Education does not give us enough support especially in terms of providing opportunities for child leaders to participate in child-related activities;*

- *Children's organization in barangays are not recognized by the Local Government Units;*
- *There is an increasing number of children who are involved in cases of domestic violence in the communities;*
- *The number of children hooked on drugs and other vices are also increasing;*
- *The society and our government system does not fully accept the concept of child participation especially in planning and implementing programs for children.*

*For this reasons, we call on you to heed our call for the following:*

- *That we are given enough opportunities to harness our talent and skills;*
- *Conduct a more comprehensive advocacy on the Child Friendly Movement to help stop violence and give our parents, fellow children, and the communities a deeper understanding of Barangay Children Associations;*
- *There should be enough and appropriate response from the Department of Education in providing opportunities for child leaders to participate in all activities concerning children;*
- *To increase and improve the facilities of health centers as well as in schools to improve the quality of education;*
- *To include our parents, fellow children, and other sectors of the society in advocacy activities for children;*
- *For NGOs, NGAs, Children Associations, Local Government Units, and other members of the society to unite for our cause and come up with a holistic response to meet the needs of children;*
- *To include parents, children, and other members of the community in advocacy activities for children;*
- *To develop a more comprehensive response in combating drug problems and a program to help our fellow children who are hooked on drugs to start a new life and value the importance of good morals;*

- *Provide us with opportunities to participate in all matters concerning our welfare.*

*We are hoping for response and action to all our requests.*

*We believe that the actions you take in behalf of children will give us a better future.*

*We also believe that we are not always the victims but we can also be part of the solution.*

*We want a world fit for children*

*We are the future but we are also the present.*

*We ask for your support and commitment.*

## **DEKLARASYON**

### **ng mga bata ng Visayas**

Kaming mga bata ng Visayas, na nagtipun-tipon para sa NaCCAP Consultation sa Iloilo City, mula ika-11 at 12 ng Oktubre 2003 ay nagkaisang ibahagi ang aming mga mithiin sa mga sumusunod na kadahilanan:

- May mga bata na ayaw nang pumasok sa paaralan dahil takot sila sa kanilang “terror” na mga guro na walang pakialam sa karapatan ng mga bata;
- Karamihan sa mga pampublikong paaralan ay kulang sa pasilidad na siyang sanhi ng mababang kalidad ng edukasyon;
- Karamihan sa pampublikong paaralan ay nagpapataw ng bayarin na di abot-kaya;
- Dumarami na ang kaso ng “drop-out students, out-of-school children at sumasapi sa mga fraternities at gangs” dahil sa kakulangan ng pangaral mula sa mga magulang at impluwensiya ng mga masasamang elemento;

- Dumarami ang bilang ng mga bata na nalulong sa masasamang bisyo tulad ng pagkagumon sa bawal na gamot, paninigarilyo, pagsusugal, paglalasing, at lumalayo sa tamang landas ng buhay;
- Lalong lumalala ang problemang pangkalikasan na nagdudulot ng masamang epekto sa kalusugan ng kapwa naming bata;
- Dumarami ang kapwa naming bata na nagtatrabaho sa mapanganib na kalagayan dahil sa kahirapan sa buhay;
- Maraming nangyayaring karahasan sa aming pamilya at komunidad na kadalasang nabibiktima ay kaming mga bata;
- Karamihan sa aming mga barangay ay wala pang sapat na kaalaman sa “Child-Friendly Movement.”

Kung kaya, nais naming ipabatid ang aming mga inaasam:

- Na bigyan ng “orientation” ang mga guro ukol sa mga karapatan naming mga bata at kung paano sila maging “Child-Friendly;”
- Na bigyang pansin at pahalagahan ang mga pangangailangan ng mga pampublikong paaralan para sa mataas na antas ng edukasyon;
- Na ang mga pampublikong paaralan ay hindi na magpapataw ng mga bayarin na siyang diwa ng libreng edukasyon;
- Na may mas komprehensibong tugon at programa ang mga sector ng lipunan tulad ng pamilya, pribadong sektor, at sektor ng edukasyon sa suliranin ng drop-out students at out-of-school children;
- Na magkaroon pa ng mas maraming pagkakataon para sa kapwa naming bata na bumangon muli, makapaglibang, at mapaunlad ang mabubuting asal;
- Na matugunan ng ating pamahalaan, mga sector ng lipunan, at sa aming komunidad ang problemang pangkalikasan sa pamamagitan ng mga proyekto, programang pangkalikasan, mahigpit na pagpapatupad ng batas sa mga lumalabag, masidhing pagmamanman sa mga liblib na pook at “massive information drive;”

- Na mabigyan ng maraming pagkakataon at oportunidad ang mga batang manggagawa na makabalik sa normal nilang buhay bilang isang bata at matulungan ng iba't ibang sector ng lipunan tulad ng nongovernment organizations para makaahon mula sa kahirapan;
- Na magkaroon ng mas malalim at mas malawakan na “advocacy” sa “Child-Friendly Movement” para matigil na ang karahasan at maunawaan ng aming mga magulang, kapwa bata, at komunidad ang ginagawa namin at ng aming mga BCAs;
- Na magkapitbisig ang mga NGOs, NGAs, Children Associations, local na pamahalaan, at iba pang mga sector ng lipunan upang mas maging komprehensibo ang mga tugon sa mga suliranin naming mga bata.

Amin pong inaasahan na tutugunan ang aming mga adhikain.

Naniniwala po kami na sa pamamagitan ninyo ay may pag-asang naghihintay sa amin.

Naniniwala rin po kami na hindi lang kami ang laging biktima subalit kabahagi kami ng solusyon.

Nais namin ng isang mundo pa para sa amin.

Kami ang kinabukasan, pero kami rin ang ngayon.

Sa mga bagay na ito, amin pong hinihingi ang inyong suporta!

## **DEKLARASYON ng mga bata ng Mindanao**

Kaming mga batang delegado ng Mindanao na nagtipun-tipon para sa NaCCAP Consultation sa Zamboanga City, mula ika-24 at 25 ng Oktubre 2003, ay nagkakaisang ibahagi ang aming mga mithiin mula sa mga isyu na aming pinag-usapan at tinalakay.

### Suliranin sa peace and order

Kaming mga bata sa Mindanao ay namulat at naninirahan sa isang magulo at marahas na kapaligiran kung saan apektado ang aming buhay, pamilya, at pamayanan. Karamihan sa amin ay natatakot ng lumabas kung kaya hindi na lumalahok sa mga gawaing pambata. Maraming industriya na ang nasira tulad ng turismo at negosyo dahil sa kaguluhang hatid nito. Marami nang mga inosenteng bata ang namatay, hindi na makapag-aral, at nawasak ang pangarap at buhay sa isang kamalian na ang karaniwang kami ang nabibiktima.

### Suliranin sa malnutrisyon

Marami ng mga bata ang hindi nabibigyan ng sapat at masustansyang pagkain lalo na sa malalayong lugar dahil sa kakulangan ng tugon mula sa ating pamahalaan. Dahil dito, hindi naitataguyod ng mga bata ang kanilang mga karapatan sa maayos at maunlad na paraan.

### Suliranin sa edukasyon

Karamihan sa mga pampublikong paaralan ngayon ay kulang na kulang sa pasilidad na siyang sanhi ng mababang kalidad sa edukasyon. Marami pa ring mga pampublikong paaralan ang nagpapataw ng mga bayarin na hind abot kaya. May mga guro rin na hindi kinikilala ang karapatan ng mga bata. May iba naman na ginagamit ang mga bata para sa kanilang pansariling kapakanan tulad ng mga kaso ng mga mag-aaral na pinagbebenta sa oras ng klase. Bukod dito, malalang problema pa rin ang isyu ng out-of-school children at drop-out students.

Sa pagdaan ng panahon, tumataas naman ang kaso ng mga bata na nasasangkot sa child labor. Sa aming nakikita, hindi sapat ang naging tugon ng ating pamahalaan sa paglutus sa suliraning ito.

### Suliranin sa mga pabayang magulang

Marami na ang mga bata ngayon na nauugnay sa masamang bisyo. Minsan hindi tama ang karaniwang tugon ng mga magulang dahil sa kakulangan ng kaalaman tungkol sa ating mga karapatan, at sa mga negatibong paniniwala base sa kanilang mga karanasan. Habang lumilipas ang panahon ay lumalala ang mga suliraning hinaharap ng mga magulang.

### Suliranin sa drug addiction

Dumadami ang bilang ng mga batang nalululong sa masasamang bisyo tulad ng pagkagumon sa bawal na gamot, paninigarilyo, pagsusugal, paglalasing, at lumalayo sa tamang landas ng buhay.

Kung kaya nais naming ipabatid ang mga sumusunod naming inaasam:

- Na isulong ng ating pamalahaan ang usapan at polisiyang pangkapayapaan upang matapos na ang mga karahasang nagaganap sa Mindanao at sa buong bansa. Bigyan ng nararapat na repormang pang-ekonomiya tulad ng mga “livelihood projects at housing programs.” Tulungan ang naghihirap na mamamayan upang maiwasang sumali ang mga ito sa mga rebelding samahan o bandidong grupo. Makabuklod-buklod ang lahat ng sector sa ating lipunan upang makamit ang tunay na kapayapaan at tuluyang mapuksa ang terorismo.
- Na mas patatagin pa ng ating pamahalaan ang mga programa nitong pangkalusugan at gumawa pa ng mga hakbang upang tumbasan ang kakulangan sa pagkain lalo na sa bukid. Na magtulungan ang mga sektor ng lipunan sa pagpapaunlad ng kalusugan tulad na lang ng pagsusulong ng wasto at masustansiyang pagkain.

- Na bigyang pansin at pahalagahan ng pamahalaan ang mga pangangailangan ng mga pampublikong paaralan para sa mataas na kalidad ng edukasyon. Ang mga pampublikong paaralan ay hindi na magpapataw ng mga bayarin na siyang diwa ng libreng edukasyon. Kilalanin ng ating mga paaralan at istrakturang pang-edukasyon ang “advocacy” at tunay na pakikilahok naming mga bata sa lahat ng antas ng partisipasyon. Mas komprehensibong tugon at programa ang mga sector ng lipunan tulad ng pamilya, pribadong sektor, sektor ng edukasyon, pamayanan, at pamahalaan sa suliranin ng out-of-school children at drop-out students.
- Na dapat may mabigat na parusa para sa mga taong nagre-recruit ng mga batang manggagawa. Dapat ring makapag-aral at ipatupad ang sistema ng edukasyon na angkop sa kanila. At kung hindi man, bigyan sila ng livelihood na hindi makakasagabal sa kanyang pag-unlad at karapatan, at mahandugan ng “medical assistance.” Mahigpit na ipatupad ang ILO 182 sa mga lumalabag nito.
- Na magkapitbisig ang bawat pamilya at mabigyan ng sapat na programa ng ating pamahalaan para magkalapit ang bawat miyembro. Dagdagan pa ang mga gawain o activities at pagkakataon kung saan ang mga magulang at anak ay magkakasama. Na panatilihin bukas at malawakan ang programa ng “Child-Friendly Movement” lalo na sa mga pamayanan.
- Na magtulungan ang lahat ng indibidwal upang masugpo ang problema natin sa bawal na gamot. Magkaroon pa ng maraming pagkakataon para sa kapwa naming bata na nalulong sa ipinagbabawal na gamot na bumangon muli, makapaglibang at mapaunlad ang asal sa pamamagitan ng pagdagdag ng mas marami pang “rehabilitation centers” na sinusupportahan ng mga sektor ng lipunan; mga centers na kaigaigaya sa pagbabago at “child-friendly.”

Amin pong inaasahan na tutugunan po ang aming adhikain.  
Naniniwala po kami na sa pamamagitan ninyo ay may pag-asang naghihintay sa amin.

Naniniwala rin po kami na hindi lang kami ang laging biktima subalit kabahagi rin po kami ng solusyon.

Nais namin ng isang mundo pa para sa amin.  
Kami ang kinabukasan pero kami rin ang ngayon.  
Sa mga bagay na ito, amin pong hinihingi ang inyong suporta.

## APPENDIX 3 Recommended Readings

### Local Publications

#### **Resiliency Stories Found in the Philippine Streets**

*Banaag, C. (1997) UNICEF Philippines.*

This study commissioned by UNICEF focuses on the resilience of Filipino street children who were victims of various types of abuse. Twenty-five street children shared their personal characteristics and their environment. The interviews were the basis for identifying the factors that strengthen or compromise an abused child's resiliency.

#### **Small Steps, Great Strides: Doing Participatory Action Research with Children**

*Dela Cruz, M.T., Protacio-Marcelino, E., Balanon, F., Yacat, J., & Francisco, C. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, Arci Cultura e Svillupo (ARCS), and UNICEF Philippines. E-mail: pstcids@yahoo.com*

The book serves as a guide in participatory action research with children based on a research with children on the cultural definitions of abuse. Strategies that worked and those that failed are also featured and discussed.

#### **Standing Up For Ourselves: A Study on the Concepts and Practices of the Young People's Rights to Participation (1999)**

*Francisco, Carolina. ECPAT International, International Young People's Action Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and UNICEF*

*E-mail: [ecpatphi@pworld.net.ph](mailto:ecpatphi@pworld.net.ph) and [ecpatiyp@pworld.net.ph](mailto:ecpatiyp@pworld.net.ph)*

Available for download:

*[http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat\\_inter/Publication/Other/English/Pdf\\_page/ecpat\\_standing\\_up.pdf](http://www.ecpat.net/eng/Ecpat_inter/Publication/Other/English/Pdf_page/ecpat_standing_up.pdf)*

It discusses the capacity of children to participate in projects. It explores different forms of children's participation, methods used in gaining the participation of children, and hindrances to participation. It also includes a guide for planning and implementation of projects that draw on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Standing Up for Ourselves* will be of interest to youth workers and community development practitioners.

#### **"Talagang Kasali ang mga Bata" (Workbook)**

*Save the Children UK Philippines*

*Tel: (02) 3723483*

It documents the participation of children in the preparations leading to the 2002 UN General Assembly on Children. Organizations and schools may request for copies from the Save the Children UK Philippines.

#### **Teacher's Guide to Child Protection in the Philippines**

*Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (CPTSCA)*

*E-mail: [cptcsa@mydestiny.net](mailto:cptcsa@mydestiny.net)*

The Personal Safety Curriculum training courses of the CPTSCA with the DepEd led to the development of this guide. The guide provides tips to public school teachers on how to integrate module of personal safety in the curriculum, detect sign and symptoms of sexual abuse, proper handling when children disclose, and to report child sexual abuse to the proper authorities.

## **Working with Abused Children: From the Lenses of Resiliency and Indigenization**

*Violeta Bautista, Aurorita Roldan, Myra Garces-Bacsal and Elizabeth Protacio-Marcelino  
Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Center for Integrative and  
Development Studies, University of the Philippines and Save the Children UK Philippines.  
E-mail: pstcids@yahoo.com*

The study explored the experiences of abused children and sought to identify indigenous psychosocial interventions that facilitated resiliency. The phenomenological approach was employed in data gathering with life narratives, interviews, and focus group discussions.

### [International Publications](#)

**Baro, Daniela. *A Tool for Change: Reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*. London: Save the Children UK, 2003.**

Available for download:

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/development>

Drawing from Save the Children's experiences, as well as practical experience and research from various parts of the world, this paper reviews the effectiveness of state reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC). It examines Save the Children's involvement in the UN CRC reporting process. The review outlines potential benefits of the reporting process. In its conclusion, it recommends to increase the impact and effectiveness of the reporting process.

**Beenash, Jafri. *Fire It Up!: A Toolkit for Youth Action*. Toronto: Youth Action Network, 2002.**

Available for download:

<http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rac/Fireitup/FireItUp.pdf>

*Fire It Up!* is a manual for youth organizers dedicated to working for a just and sustainable society. It discusses the principles of anti-oppressive organizing including colonialism, feminism, anti-racism, homophobia, ableism, and class. It presents tools and strategies for group organizing (facilitation, consensus decision-making, conflict mediation, networking), event and project planning (fund-raising, media relations, website design, communications), and popular education (icebreakers, energizers, reflection, evaluation). The manual is illustrated. It includes profiles of successful projects and lists of youth organisations, resources and websites.

**Benson, Peter. *All Kids are our Kids: What Communities Must Do to Raise Caring and Responsible Children and Adolescents*. San Francisco: Jossy-Bass, 1997.**

Available for purchase:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0787910686/kamurj0b/103-1805736-5551863>

The book demonstrates that the building of certain developmental assets can turn the tide in helping our children to be healthy, skillful, and competent adults. The book offers an in-depth exploration of the developmental assets that all kids need and outlines a vision for creating healthy communities.

**Gibbs, Sara, Gillian Mann, and Nicola Mathers. *Child-to-Child: A Practical Guide Empowering Children as Active Citizens*. London, England: Child-to-Child Initiative 1-93, 2002.**

Available for download: <http://www.child-to-child.org/guide/index.html>

Based on the popular education methodologies of Child-to-Child initiatives in London, this manual outlines a process for working with children ages 9-15 on projects that are child-initiated and child-led. It is an illustrated, easy-to-read resource for parents and practitioners in schools and community groups. *Child-to-Child: A Practical Guide Empowering Children as Active Citizens* includes sections on group work, choosing issues, conducting research, taking action, and evaluation. Each section contains games and experiential learning activities. It includes a list of readings, additional resources, and sample lesson plans.

**Lansdown, Gerison. *Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision-Making*. Florence: UNICEF, 2002.**

Available for download: <http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/unicef/democratic.pdf>

'*Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision-Making*' makes the case for a commitment to respecting children's rights to be heard and the need to consolidate and learn from existing practice. It draws on much of the already published research and thinking in the field and on a wide range of international initiatives. In so doing, it seeks to provide practical guidance on the lessons learned to date in working with children as partners. It is a contribution to the development of tools for those who see children's right to participate as a means of promoting and protecting other rights.

**Save the Children. *Participation - Spice it Up!: Practical Tools for Engaging Children and Young People in Planning and Consultations*. London: Save the Children UK, 2003.**

Available for purchase: [http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/functions/indx\\_pubs.html](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/functions/indx_pubs.html)

'*Spice it Up!*' provides ideas and values that underlie youth participation approaches. It also includes tips on the practicalities and pitfalls of planning and running collaborative and creative sessions. The main course of the book consists of over 40 tried and tested activities. These cover everything from getting started, gathering information, long-term planning, and evaluation.

**Zeldin, Shepherd, Annette Kusgen McDaniel, and Dimitri Topitzes. *Youth In Decision-Making: A Study on The Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations*. Wisconsin: Innovation Center/Tides Center University of Wisconsin Extension, 2000.**

Available for download: <http://www.atthetable.org/handout.asp?ID=18>

'*Youth in Decision-Making*' discusses the impacts young people have on adults and organisations when they are involved in decision-making roles. It explores the following questions: Does youth participation lead to changes that improve conditions for young people not directly involved in the decision-making process? Does involving youth in decision-making have positive influences on adults? Does it help adults become stronger allies with youth? Does youth participation contribute to organizational effectiveness, creating organisations that are better able to meet the developmental needs and concerns of adolescents? *Youth in Decision-Making* will be of interest to policy makers and practitioners. It concludes by commenting on the conditions that are needed to allow organisations to include more youth in their decision-making processes.

## Endnotes and references:

<sup>1</sup> Shared by panel speakers John Paul Claudio and Cristina Gino on the National Children's Forum, 28-30 September 2001, Jonel Spring Resort, Calamba, Laguna, organized by the National Coalition of Children's Participation, the Council for the Welfare of Children, and UNICEF Manila.

<sup>2</sup> *Child 21: Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development, 2000-2025, A legacy to the Filipino children of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2000)*. Council for the Welfare of Children, Makati City.

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF. (1998) *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. First ed. UNICEF House, NYC, USA.

<sup>4</sup> Hart, R. (1992) *Children's Participation: From tokenism to citizenship*. Innocenti Essay No. 4, Florence, UNICEF ICDC.

<sup>5</sup> Ennew, J and Plateau, D.P. (2001) *Child Labour: Getting the Message Across*, Bangkok, Regional Working Group on Child Labour.

<sup>6</sup> As stated in ECPAT Phil, *Standing Up for Ourselves: A Study on the Concepts and Practices of Young People's Right to Participation*, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> De-Castro, E. P., Camacho, A.Z., Balanon, F.G., Yacat, J.A., Ong, M.G. (Unpublished 2003) *Building Blocks: A Handbook for Programme Managers on Facilitating Children's Participation in Programmes Addressing Child Labour in Asia*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines.

<sup>8</sup> From a paper presented by Michelle G. Ong "The Role of the Family in the Philippine Society and in the Protection of Children's Rights" at the Philippine-China Development Resource Center - Amity Foundation on 17-26 October 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Medina, B. (1995). *The Filipino Family: A Text with Selected Readings*. Quezon City, UP Press.

<sup>10</sup> From a paper presented by Michelle G. Ong "The Role of the Family in the Philippine Society and in the Protection of Children's Rights" at the Philippine-China Development Resource Center - Amity Foundation on 17-26 October 2000.

<sup>11</sup> This is according to parents in Davao City in an FGD on defining the best interest of the child. The authors worked with Kaugmaon, an NGO primarily working with child laborers in the communities. From Balanon, F. & Yacat, J. (2003) *Dignity, Potentials, and Rights: Cultural Definitions of the Best Interest of the Child, Documenting the good practices of Kaugmaon and Tambayan in Davao City in upholding the best interest principle*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines and Save the Children UK Philippines: Philippines.

<sup>12</sup> From interviews with parents working with PLAN International from Ilagan, Isabela, about the project with UP CIDS PST on "Developing a Children's Participation for PLAN Philippines" with PLAN Philippines.

<sup>13</sup> Yacat, J.A. & Ong, M. *Beyond the Home: Child Abuse in the Church and School: Childhood and Child Rights Study Series*. University of the Philippines-Center for Integrative and Development Studies Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Save the Children-UK Phil.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Based on the transcriptions of the interviews and focus group discussions with teachers and students in Quezon City, North Cotabato, Ilagan, Isabela, Borongan, Samar, and Camotes, Cebu from several projects of the Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines:

- “Teaching Peace and Human Rights: Integrating Peace Modules in the Curriculum for the Children of Mindanao” in partnership with the British Embassy and Notre Dame University. (Cotabato City, Pagangan, Aleosan, North Cotabato, 2002)
- “Integrating personal safety in the school curricula: The Center for the Prevention of Trafficking and Child Sexual Abuse (CPTCSA) experience in child sexual abuse prevention” with Save the Children UK Philippines. (Quezon City, 2002)
- “Developing a Children’s Participation for PLAN Philippines” with PLAN Philippines. (PLAN partner-schools in Ilagan, Isabela, Borongan, Samar and Camotes, Cebu 2004)

<sup>16</sup> Yacat, J.A. & Ong, M. *Beyond the Home: Child Abuse in the Church and School: Childhood and Child Rights Study Series*. Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, Save the Children-UK Philippines.

<sup>17</sup> *Teaching Peace and Human Rights: Integrating Peace Modules in the Curriculum for the Children of Mindanao*. (2003) Unpublished reports.

<sup>18</sup> *Painted Grey Faces, Behind Bars and in the Streets: Philippine Report, Street Children and the Juvenile Justice System*. (2003) UP CIDS-PST, QC. UP CIDS-PST and the Consortium for Street Children.

<sup>19</sup> Preda, *Minors in Jail: Case Studies, The Philippines* (September 2002), 2003.

<sup>20</sup> PAYO, *Youth in Detention: Issues and Challenges, A Nationwide Survey* (1996), p.30.

<sup>21</sup> From Dir. Lina B. Laigo’s paper “The Role of Children and Youth in the Family and Community Development: The Philippine Experience” presented at the APFAM International Conference on the Family 2003, 23-26 June 2003.

<sup>22</sup> *Building a Child-friendly Nation, National Coalition for Children’s Participation (NCPP)* . July 2002.

<sup>23</sup> From a paper presented by Lina B. Laigo, Executive Director, Council for the Welfare of Children on June 23-26, 2003 at the APFAM International Conference on the Family 2003.

<sup>24</sup> Christian Children’s Fund. (2002) *Building Children and Youth Leaders: The Philippine Experience*. Philippines, Christian Children’s Fund, Inc. - Philippine Office.

<sup>25</sup> From Josefina M. Parentala, Ed. D.’s letter to CWC on March 18, 2004. It outlined the activities of the GSP that upheld children’s participation.

<sup>26</sup> UP CIDS PST. “*Integrating Child Centered Approaches*.” (2002) Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, Save the Children-UK Philippines.

<sup>27</sup> From the FGDs with adults from NGOs and the children, in the project *Building Blocks: A handbook for Programme Managers on Facilitating Children’s Participation in Programmes Addressing Child Labour in Asia*. De-Castro, E. P., Camacho, A.Z., Balanon, F.G., Yacat, J.A., Ong, M.G. (Unpublished 2003) Program on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines.

<sup>28</sup> Van Beers, Henk (2002). *Children’s Participation: Experiences in Capacity Building and Training*. Save the Children Sweden.

<sup>29</sup> UNICEF. (2002) *The State of the World’s Children 2003*. New York: UNICEF, p. 24.

**APPENDIX 4**  
**Council Resolution No. 4**

Republic of the Philippines  
COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN  
NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT  
COORDINATING COUNCIL  
No. 10 Apo Street, Sta. Mesa Heights  
1114 Quezon City

COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 4  
Series of 2004

**“A RESOLUTION APPROVING “A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN’S PARTICIPATION:  
A GUIDE IN PROMOTING AND UPHOLDING CHILDREN’S PARTICIPATION IN THE PHILIPPINES”**

**WHEREAS**, children’s participation is one right that has to be upheld by signatory states to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.


**WHEREAS**, the Philippines is one of the state Parties that has given prime attention to this category of rights of children.

**WHEREAS**, as the country’s lead agency for children, the Council with the assistance of UNICEF has formulated a national framework for children’s participation, which aims to guide those who work for children for a better society. It also discusses evolving definitions of child participation, the guiding principles and venues where children can participate meaningfully.

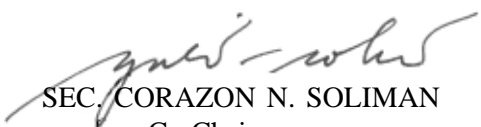
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, by the members of the CWC/NECCDCC Board, in a meeting assembled, to approve the framework as basis for all efforts on child participation nationwide.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the member agencies of the Council shall ensure mainstreaming/utilization of this framework in all efforts and initiatives for children’s.

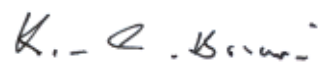
Adopted, this 12th of August in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Four, Quezon City.



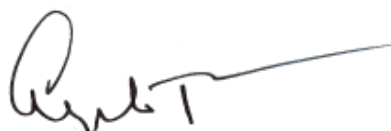
SEC. MANUEL M. DAYRIT  
Chairperson, CWC Board/NECCDCC  
Department of Health



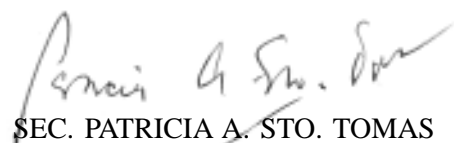
SEC. CORAZON N. SOLIMAN  
Co-Chairperson  
Department of Social Welfare and Development



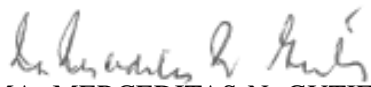
SEC EDILBERTO C. DE JESUS  
Co-Chairperson  
Department of Education



SEC. ANGELO T. REYES  
Co-Chairperson  
Department of Interior and Local Government



SEC. PATRICIA A. STO. TOMAS  
Member  
Department of Labor and Employment



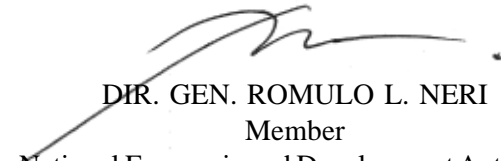
SEC. MA. MERCEDITAS N. GUTIERREZ  
Member  
Department of Justice



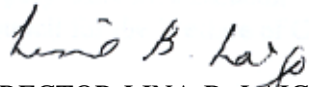
SEC. ARTHUR C. YAP  
Member  
Department of Agriculture



DIRECTOR ELSA M. BAYANI  
Member  
National Nutrition Council



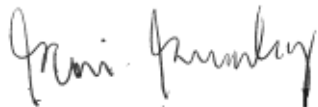
DIR. GEN. ROMULO L. NERI  
Member  
National Economic and Development Authority




DIRECTOR LINA B. LAIGO  
Member  
Council for the Welfare of Children Secretariat



MS. REBECCA L. MARAVILLA  
Member  
Private Individual



MS. GLORIA M. BUMANLAG  
Member  
Private Individual



SYLVIA DIAZ-WILSON  
Member  
ECCD Expert