

HAMMERING OUT EFFORTS FOR A NATIONAL STRATEGY IN MAKING LOCAL COUNCILS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN EFFECTIVE IN CHILD-FRIENDLY LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The in-depth analysis on the functionality of Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPC) commissioned by the Council for the Welfare of Children (with support from UNICEF Philippines) in 2012 forwarded five recommendations where actions must be formulated. These recommendations comprise the elements of a roadmap that has to be undertaken or pursued to make LCPC more effective in child friendly local governance:

1. Establish a replication strategy for Mainstreaming Child Rights in the Rationalized Local Planning System (RPS)
2. Make the Presidential Award for Child-Friendly LGUs a mobilizing incentive that is truly attractive to LGUs
3. Improve the LCPC monitoring system for greater efficiency and improved reporting by and feedback to constituent LCPC
4. Enact a singular coherent government directive/memorandum circular on the establishment and operations of LCPC
5. Develop a purposive advocacy and mobilization plan that will place child rights in the agenda of Local Government Executive (LCE) and in public debate at the national and local levels.

The National Strategy

CWC started the ball rolling by initiating a “project mode” approach to implement the recommendations through the following:

- Development of the **Advocacy and Communication Plan** with assistance from the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication. The Plan outlines the advocacy and communication strategies that will link and direct the actions of Local Chief Executives and all critical players toward achieving a Child-Friendly Philippines: A Caring and Protective Society for, by and with Children. CWC’s acceptance of a Professorial Seat in the Orientation of Newly-Elected Mayors or ONE-M organized by the League of Municipalities of the Philippines was also pursued. 12 batches of orientation nationwide was conducted that gave CWC a wide opportunity for child rights education and advocacy.
- Introduction of the **Seal of Child-Friendly Local Governance (SCFLG)** – This is a huge advance as this sets the platform for child rights to be in the “minds” of the LCEs and LGUs given the mandatory audit on positive results for children and the accompanying rewards that go with the Seal that will define a more reliable and effective way of monitoring the functionality of the LCPCs. CWC will confer/give the Seal to deserving LGUs.

- A comprehensive review of the **Child-Friendly Presidential Award** was undertaken to make it a highly-coveted and truly attractive Award to LGUs. The review will serve as basis for the enhancement of the mechanics and tools which will be used starting 2014.
- Establishment of the **Communities of Practice (CoP) on Child Friendly Local Governance (CoP CFLG)** as THE replication strategy utilizing the awardees of the Child-Friendly Presidential Award as learning hubs or networks. For 2013, the CoP-CFLG will be comprised of Hall of Fame and National Awardees of the Child-Friendly Presidential Award namely New Lucena –Iloilo; Tubigon, Bohol; Naga City, Vigan City, Mandaluyong City and Davao City. The Development Academy of the Philippines was tapped to assist CWC on curriculum development and in running/managing the learning strategy.

As a support initiative, CWC also spearheaded the Cascading Multi-Level Capacity Building on Strengthening and Sustaining LCPC and has conducted a one national and five regional training of trainers in 2014. This initiative is also supported by the Juvenile Justice Welfare Council, ABK LEAP Project and World Vision Development Foundation, Inc. A pool of trainers composed of ERDA Development Foundation, DILG, DOLE, DSWD and ULAP were organized and mobilized for the purpose.

A consortium of agencies termed as the **LCPC Consortium** was organized to facilitate and oversee the development of the different building blocks of the recommendations of the study and find the resources to implement the actions. The Consortium will include agencies outside of the current CWC membership and is chaired by the DILG-Office of the Undersecretary on Local Government.