With the support of Save the Children Philippines Country office, under the project Engaging International Human Rights Bodies and the Philippine Government to Mainstream Children’s Rights, CSC-CRC was able to reach the 2016 goal of “Coalition members engaging in systematic CRC monitoring and using monitoring results to advocate with government and other human rights bodies to promote and protect children’s rights”. This was done through strategic engagements with national agencies, regional bodies/organizations, civil society organizations and children’s groups and through the submission of a report to the Human Rights Council (HRC) on the Philippines’ 3rd Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

At the national level, CSC-CRC liaised with the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) in facilitating a national consultation with children in line with the development of the 3rd National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) where over 100 children from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao attended. CSC-CRC likewise engaged with the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) in a forum entitled Beyond Business as usual for Children’s Rights to launch its Situation of Filipino Children Report which focused on inclusive and quality education. Mindful of its thrust to ensure the meaningful participation of marginalized groups of children in various processes, the Coalition, together with the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, held a workshop with children from the LGBT community (Bata at Bahaghari) so their views can be included in the Coalition’s UPR submission. With the success of the Bata at Bahaghari workshop, and through the referral of the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, the Coalition was commissioned by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to conduct a National Consultation on SOGIE-based Bullying in Philippine schools where officials of the DepEd, NGOs, and children participated.

At the regional level, CSC-CRC’s ASEAN engagements included attending workshops/consultations with civil society groups and some representatives of the ASEAN Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) on issues pertaining to the elimination of violence against women and children and emerging child rights concerns in the region.

At the UN level, CSC-CRC submitted a report to the Human Rights Council on the Philippines’ 3rd UPR. The report highlighted pressing child rights issues in the country and specific recommendations to government in addressing these concerns.

The Coalition continued to strengthen its internal capacities through the following activities: a) conduct of learning sessions on SOGIE and the UPR for its members; b) conduct of an Organizational Capacity Development (OCD) workshop as a prelude to the development of an OCD plan; c) preparation of a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Plan; d) hiring of the needed manpower complement for the secretariat; and e) finalization of its website and finance & administrative handbook. More importantly, the Coalition held a Strategic Planning Session where it revisited its vision and mission, finalized its governance structure, elected its new Board of Trustees (BOT) and defined the specific roles and responsibilities of its leaders, members and working groups. CSC-CRC members actively participate in General Assemblies, in special meetings and working group discussions.
PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES

The major outcomes of the project are to (1) increase the capacity of the Coalition to influence key UN, ASEAN and national process to hold government accountable in implementing children’s rights, and (2) to strengthen the Coalition’s institutional processes/ procedures to appropriately respond to changes in its internal and external environment to sustain and actively promote and protect children’s rights. The following are CSC-CRC’s accomplishments:

**Outcome 1: Increase in the capacity of the Coalition to influence key UN, ASEAN and national processes to hold government accountable in implementing children’s rights**

CSC-CRC’s engagements in 2016 reflected its increased capacity to hold the Philippine government accountable to promoting and protecting children’s rights. This was accomplished through strategic engagements with national agencies (i.e., Council for the Welfare of Children, DepEd, CHR, NEDA), regional organizations (i.e., ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, CRC Asia, UNDP, UNESCO) and an international body (i.e., Human Rights Council) in its child rights monitoring and advocacy work.

The Coalition was able to finalize its Child Rights Advocacy Agenda (CRA) which is informed by issues flagged by children in various discussions conducted by Coalition members and by the agenda and thrusts of the Duterte administration which impact on children. The CRA is a tool in determining the issues need to be raised during dialogues with government and influence them in addressing these issues. The first of its CRA, perennial problems on access to and quality of education was presented in a forum last November 2016 titled “Beyond Business as Usual for Children’s Rights” attended by child rights NGOs, students, and officials from the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and DepEd. During the forum, the Coalition’s UPR report and the highlights of General Comment No. 19 on Public Investments for Children’s Rights were also discussed. This activity led to a deeper working relationship with DepEd as CSC-CRC was invited to participate in a consultation workshop to draft DepEd’s Inclusive Education Policy Framework. However, admittedly, it still needs to draft its detailed advocacy plan.

In addition, there are also issues in the CRA which members are already advocating for together with other child rights networks (i.e., Philippine Action for Youth Offenders and Child Rights Network) such as opposition to the lowering of the MACR and promotion of more positive forms of discipline. CSC-CRC closely worked with the John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues.
(ICSI) in drafting the Intersect Quick Facts (IQF) on the MACR. This IQF is being distributed to various stakeholders (i.e., bishops, legislators, relevant government agencies, CSOs, the academe, students, barangays) and shared in social media as part of the ongoing MACR campaign.

Other accomplishments include the conduct of the *Bata at Bahaghari* workshop (April 2016) in partnership with the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus that aimed to discuss SOGIE issues faced by children from the LGBT community. The children’s inputs were included in CSC-CRC’s UPR submission to the HRC. Following the Coalition’s successful partnership with the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus in the *Bata at Bahaghari* activity, UNDP and UNESCO commissioned CSC-CRC to conduct a National Consultation on SOGIE-based Bullying in the Philippine Education Setting (August 2016). Although faced with several challenges, the Coalition was able to mount the forum which brought together CSOs, children, teachers and important officials of the DepEd. The consultation led to the finalization of a briefing paper on SOGIE-based bullying which was discussed with the DepEd will result into concrete action plans, for consideration and appropriate action.

In September 2016, CSC-CRC submitted its UPR report to the HRC. Data from monitoring activities and results of consultations with children (i.e., C2C, *Bata at Bahaghari* workshop) were used to complete the UPR report. Among the issues highlighted in the submission were: SOGIE-based bullying, children affected by the government’s war on drugs, corporal punishment, malnutrition, early/teenage pregnancy, the lowering of the MACR, child online exploitation, lack access to affordable and quality education of marginalized children, children in situations of armed conflict and trafficking of children. Some of these issues have been included in CSC-CRC’s Child Rights Advocacy Agenda for 2017-2019. The Coalition received positive comments on its UPR report from the Geneva-based counterparts of its members (i.e., World Vision, Vides, Save the Children) which said that the report was well-written and presented concrete recommendations. In 2017, as part of its UPR follow up, CSC-CRC will meet with target embassies to influence them to adopt the Coalition’s UPR recommendations and manifest these during the discussions on the Philippines’ UPR.

As regards the promotion of meaningful children’s participation, which is one of the important mandates of the coalition, CSC-CRC partnered with the CWC to ensure children’s involvement in the development of the 3rd NPAC. In the 2nd NPAC, children were consulted only after the draft report was presented. This time, the children were given the platform to provide inputs as the NPAC is being developed. The 3rd NPAC will be finalized in 2017. Other engagements of CSC-CRC at the regional level included...
level which enabled it to learn from human rights groups in ASEAN included: a) ASEAN Preparatory Meeting for the Child Participation Baseline Study; b) workshop of civil society organizations on ASEAN RPA’s on Elimination of Violence Against Women and Elimination of Violence Against Children; and c) Asia-Pacific Partnership Meeting of Child Rights Coalitions and Networks spearheaded by Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia).

Overall, the activities conducted shows CSC-CRC’s increased capacity in influencing key UN, ASEAN, and national processes to hold government accountable.

**Outcome 2:** Strengthen the Coalition’s institutional processes/procedures to appropriately respond to changes in its internal and external environment to sustain and actively promote and protect children’s rights.

Regarding coalition strengthening, majority of the members contributed their expertise and resources to improve systems and processes that are deemed essential for the Coalition’s efficient and effective operation. For example, most of the members participated in a series of special meetings of the Incorporators and the General Assembly that resulted in the amendment of the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws in accordance with SEC and BIR rules and regulations. The members’ active involvement showed their willingness to support Coalition activities for it to ably respond to changes and challenges, both internally and externally.

The project evaluation of CSC-CRC’s 2013-2015 engagement with Save the Children served as an instrument in identifying the learnings in project implementation specifically on engagements with government, CSOs, human rights bodies and children. It also included recommendations to improve CRC monitoring and child rights advocacy, enhance project management and ensure sustainability. The results of the evaluation have been forwarded to Save the Children and were used...
Conducting the Organizational Capacity and Development (OCD) Workshop became a tool in assessing the coalition’s priorities and agenda, as well as troubleshooting issues that needed to be addressed. An OCD Plan was developed as a result of the workshop. The Coalition also developed its Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Plan, its financial and administrative handbook, and its website which included a child rights information portal.

Moreover, the conduct of the Year-End Assessment and Strategic Planning Workshop was a platform for members to come together to revisit its identity as a coalition, finalize its governance structure, elect its new Board of Trustees, clarify roles and responsibilities of leaders, members and working groups and plan for the Coalition activities in the next three years.
LESSONS LEARNED

Active and Timely Communication
The secretariat coordinator’s provision of regular, accurate and timely information to Coalition Members through emails, text messages, phone calls, and social media enabled them to maximize their participation in Coalition activities, increase their morale, and support them in delivering their outputs as members of the group.

Participation in Face-to-Face or Online Meetings
Apart from meeting in person, the Coalition benefited from using Skype and other online media platforms, which allowed other members who could not physically be present to contribute their ideas during discussions.

Mobilization of Working Groups and Clusters
The mobilization of the Coalition’s Working Groups and Thematic Clusters and the support provided to them by the secretariat facilitated the completion of their tasks and deliverables. In this manner, the Coalition truly works as a team by sharing their expertise and resources during meetings.

Organization of Filing System
All pertinent documents of the Coalition should be properly organized and filed to ensure smooth flow of transactions and which could facilitate easier turn over when secretariat member resigns. Access to official emails should also be ensured to oversight communications.

Openness to Ideas and Learning
Organizations that are open to learning and new ideas are the ones that thrive in the fast-paced world of development. For example, World Vision has developed a concept note to support anti-bullying initiatives based on SOGIE.

Tracking of Publication
It is important to monitor the readership of the Coalition’s publications/ papers/ reports (e.g. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure, UPR report, Discussion paper on Inclusive Education) to determine if these are relevant and useful to duty bearers in their advocacy.

Maintaining National and Regional Linkages
There are emerging issues of children in relation to their SOGIE that need to be addressed to ensure their rights to survival, development, protection and participation. Linking with more groups at the national and regional levels that work with these issues such as the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus and UNDP/ UNESCO should be strengthened.

Defining Roles
When conducting activities in partnership with other organizations or government agencies, the roles should be clearly defined in order to properly execute the program and disseminating task to avoid miscommunication and know the expected deliverables from each other.

Learn from Partners
Influence and learn from the partner’s activities and processes from the preparation, execution, to monitoring.
The Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CSC-CRC) Inc. was formerly known as the Philippine NGO Coalition on the UN CRC (NGO Coalition). Since its establishment in 1993, the NGO Coalition has maintained its entity until it was renamed on March 10, 2015 by virtue of the Certificate of Incorporation issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

To date, the CSC-CRC is composed of 17 local and international non-government organizations, namely, ChildFund Philippines, Child Hope Asia, Consuelo Foundation, ECPAT Philippines, ERDA Foundation, Fundacion Educacion Y Cooperacion (EDUCO), Good Neighbors International Philippines, John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues (ICSI), Kindernothilfe Ev. Philippines (KNH), Open Heart Foundation, Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT), Plan Philippines, Salinlahi Alliance for Children’s Concerns, Save the Children, Unang Hakbang Foundation, VIDES Philippines Volunteers Foundation Inc., and World Vision Development Foundation, Inc.

Through its advocacy and capacity building activities, the CSC-CRC leads civil society efforts towards strengthening government accountability for children’s rights through systematic monitoring of the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Philippines. It has been submitting periodic reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child following the Philippines’ ratification of the UN CRC in 1990. It also submitted to the 2nd and 3rd Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2012, and has contributed to civil society joint submissions/reports to the UPR, and other human rights monitoring mechanisms.
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