



Safeguarding Children's Rights



CRC Coalition
CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION ON THE
CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

**Civil Society Coalition on the
Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Annual Report 2017

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

The year 2017 gave the Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CSC-CRC) opportunities to engage with different stakeholders from the international, regional, national, and community levels, and to advocate for the protection of children's rights. CSC-CRC issued position statements on important child rights issues currently happening in the country (i.e., against the of lowering the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) and outcry against children killed by the police during anti-drug operations) and submitted specific recommendations on ten child rights concerns (i.e., SOGIE-based bullying, corporal punishment, child trafficking, online child protection, children in situations of armed conflict, quality, accessible, and affordable education for marginalized children, child malnutrition, and early pregnancy) in its report to the Human Rights Council (HRC) in relation to the 3rd Universal Periodic Review of the Philippines. Furthermore, in collaboration with human rights groups, i.e., Philippine Human Rights Information Center (PhilRights) and the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), CSC-CRC conducted a National Diplomatic Briefing in Manila and lobbying activities with Permanent Missions in Geneva, Switzerland as part of its strategic UPR advocacy campaign. The Coalition shared the results of its UPR advocacy activities at the national and global arena with Save the Children staff of various country offices during a webinar in September 2017. It also prepared a statement, reiterating its position on child rights issues highlighted in its UPR report, which was read by a representative of Save the Children Geneva Advocacy Office during the 36th HRC session on the adoption of the results of the Philippines' UPR. In September 2017, the UPR outcome report was released. Out of the ten priority issues of CSC-CRC, the government accepted recommendations of UN Member States related to six children's issues, namely: (1) child trafficking, (2) online child protection, (3) education of marginalized children, (4) child malnutrition, (5) teenage pregnancy, and (6) children affected by war on drugs. Another accepted recommendation was on violence against children (VAC), which is also related to the issue on corporal punishment.

These issues were also raised before the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on VAC, Ms. Marta Santos-Pais during her dialogue with children and CSOs on June 6, 2017. Engagements with CSOs and children continued as CSC-CRC prepared for its alternative report. Consultations with children and CSOs were conducted in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao in separate sessions from October to November 2017. Out of 104 children participants, 47 (44%) represented marginalized sectors - fishing communities, informal settlements, indigenous communities, residential care facilities, poor communities, victims of abuse, LGBT, internally displaced persons, armed conflict situations, out of school youth/children, child labor and children with disability. The island consultations gave the Coalition the opportunity to strengthen its application of

child participation standards. CSC-CRC engaged Children Talk to Children (C2C) youth facilitators in developing and conducting the children's consultations. An evaluation session with C2C youth facilitators who participated in the Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao consultations was conducted in December 2017.

CSC-CRC also responded to opportunities to contribute to the following platforms such as the finalization of the 3rd National Plan of Action led by the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), mid-year report on SOGI of UN Independent Expert Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn, program guide for the ASEAN People's Forum, and the concept note on children as human rights defenders. The children's inputs will be forwarded to CRC Asia and Child Rights Connect in preparation for the day of general discussion in 2018.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY ACTIVITIES

From the UPR report preparation in 2016, CSC-CRC continued its UPR engagements in 2017 by organizing a diplomatic briefing in Manila and directly engaging with permanent missions in Geneva in coordination with Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates. The clear statements and recommendations in the UPR brief developed by CSC-CRC facilitated the effective lobbying at the national and international levels.



Melanie Llana, Lead of Systems WG discussing the UPR advocacy engagement to CSOs during the Luzon Alternative Report Consultation, 2017 October

At least 45 UN Member States supported 80% of CSC-CRC's priority issues. In the outcome report on the Philippines' UPR, the government accepted recommendations pertaining to six out of ten priority issues lobbied by CSC-CRC. Although the recommendations were not worded exactly as CSC-CRC's since most of the recommendations of permanent missions were quite general, the recommendations nonetheless tackled the priority issues highlighted by the Coalition. The results of CSC-CRC's UPR engagements were shared with members of C2C, during the island consultations with CSOs and children to prepare the NGO Alternative report, and with Save the Children partners during the Local to Global meeting held in Geneva Switzerland last December 2017.

Other advocacy efforts of the Coalition this year included the issuance of a position statement on children affected by the anti-drug campaign, preparation of a statement



Marta Pais, SRSG on VAC dialogue with children about corporal punishment, armed conflict, war on drugs, and MAFP

on children's issues which was read before during the 36th HRC session on the adoption of the Philippines' UPR outcome, and a dialogue with with Marta Pais, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on VAC, which was organized by CSC-CRC in coordination with CRC Asia. The Coalition was also able to receive funds from the Church of Sweden to document cases of children affected by the anti-drug campaign.

At the regional level, CSC-CRC participated in the ASEAN People's Forum (APF) through its active involvement in the APF's program committee and during the Human Rights

and Access to Justice Convergence Space. CSC-CRC participated in the APF to ensure that children's rights will be discussed in the APF. In another occasion, CSC-CRC shared with UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation Gender Identity Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn its documentation of the 2016 children's consultation on SOGI, "Bata at Bahaghari." The documentation was made part of Mr. Muntarbhorn's reference in his mid-term report to the HRC on the protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (19 July 2017, paragraph 22, footnote 17). CSC-CRC also engaged with CRC Asia to develop a concept note on children as human rights defenders which is presently led by Child Rights Connect, an NGO based in Geneva. CSC-CRC conducted a focus group discussion with some C2C youth facilitators to gather their views on children as human rights defenders.



Dialogue with Vitit Muntharborn, UN Independent Expert on SOGI

At the country level, CSC-CRC led consultations with CSOs and children in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao to prepare the NGO Alternative Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to be submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2018.



Luzon Consultation on the NGO Alternative Report, 2017 October



Visayas Consultation on the NGO Alternative Report, 2017 November



Mindanao Consultation on the NGO Alternative Report, 2017 November

LESSONS LEARNED

Networking and tapping internal resources and expertise

All members of CSC-CRC have their own fields of expertise. These can be tapped for the learning sessions or capacity building activities. Learning sessions on general comments can be initiated by a CSC-CRC member and the secretariat. For example, there are members working on the issue on the general comment 21 on children in street situations. These members will be asked to take the lead in conducting a peer learning session. This learning came about because members recognized their need to continue learning the UN CRC, including the general comments.

Sustaining linkages with other CSOs

CSC-CRC has established a monitoring mechanism through the CSOs that participated in the island consultations. These CSO can be sources of information from the ground. Validation of data can also be done through the CSOs. Linkages with CSO participants must be sustained beyond reporting period. Relevant literature or resources can be shared with them through email. This realization is in consideration of the need to be able to continuously monitor the implementation of the UN CRC. Data can be generated from the partners on the ground and gathering of data should not only be conducted during reporting period and through conducting island consultations.

Consultations with children and support to child-led activities

This is a good practice that must be enhanced and continued by CSC-CRC to ensure that its reports and advocacy activities are child-informed. Feedback mechanisms must be put in place to regularly consult with children on matters that affect them. The Nine (9) standards of child participation must be observed when conducting activities/programs with children.

The Coalition's Child Protection Policy (CPP)

This must always be observed to ensure the safety and protection of children when involved in its activities. CSC-CRC has to strengthen its reporting mechanism, as well as the assignment of tasks during activities. Members of the CPP Committee must also monitor children after the session. Roles of adult companions in monitoring and reporting must also be reiterated. This came about as a result of the island consultation and the review of the child protection policy in which it was observed that there were no clear communication lines and tasking on monitoring the children during the activities as well as the reporting of children's concerns/issues.

Members



Founded in 1993, the Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC Coalition), formerly known as the Philippine NGO Coalition on the UN CRC, has been submitting periodic reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child since 1994. We also inform and participate in other human rights reporting mechanisms such as the NGO alternative reporting for the International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights following the Philippines' ratification of the UN CRC in 1990.

We have 16 members to date: ChildHope Philippines, ChildFund, Consuelo Foundation, ECPAT Philippines, EDUCO Philippines, ERDA Foundation, Good Neighbors International Philippines, John J. Carroll Institute of Church and Social Issues, Kindernothilfe Philippines, Philippines Against Child Trafficking, Plan International, Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns, Save the Children, Unang Hakbang Foundation, VIDES Philippines Volunteers Foundation Inc., and World Vision Development Foundation.