

# **EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR YOUTH AT RISK IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

In 1985, the United Nations (UN) declared the year as the International Youth Year. Since then, youth welfare and other concerns for the young came to the fore thus grasping the world's attention which led to benchmark reforms in global and national policies. It is undeniable that any nation must consider that the youth populace plays a vital role in the quest for peace and progress.

The increased concern is understandable not only because of the size of the youth population but because the development of the youth is critical in nation-building. The transition from youth to adulthood must be regarded with much concern. The UN ESCAP review on the situation of youth in Asia and the Pacific states that "it is important to recognize youth as a unique group in society due to the many aspects of vulnerability they face while passing through a major stage in their lives...In addition to a recognition of the vulnerability associated with the transitional nature of the identity of the youth, it is equally important to recognize youth as a positive force, as a human resource with enormous potentials for contribution to development".

Thus, it is important for any country to view the youth with much concern since it is a major resource of strength and development for any nation, at the same time, to pursue strategies/programmes for them to be a positive force in our society.

## **II. SITUATION**

The Philippines has a relatively young population. The youth 15-24 years old comprise 16.1 million out of the 76.5 million Filipinos enumerated in the 2000 Census of the Philippine population. The number is expected to double in 33 years. Their proportionate share of the total population remains at 20 percent with an annual growth rate of 2.1 percent. There are more males than females. The median age of the youth population remained the same from 1980 to 2000 at 20 years. This means that half of the youth population were between 15 to 19 years old, the other half between 20 to 24.

A total of 5,825,425 children and youth are at risk, composed of 3,000,000 children with disabilities, 246,011 street children, 64,000 victims of armed conflict, 2,400,000 who are exposed to hazardous working conditions, 4,097 sexually abused, 11,317 children in conflict with the law, 3,694 abandoned and neglected and 100,000 commercial sexually exploited.

Latest statistics of street and working children, for example, show that there are approximately four million street and working children and youths in the country which accounted for 20 percent of the total number of employed persons. Out of this, there are 2.2 M children and youth that are stopped or forced to stop schooling who are working in hazardous conditions. These children are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

About 37 percent of the children work from 5-8 hours a day while approximately nine percent worked for more than eight hours and about one-fourth worked even in the evenings.

They suffer from exhaustion, stress, risks, danger, illness and fall hazards. They are exposed to heat, noise, radiation, and pressures. About 23 percent of working children suffer from work related injuries. Only 22 percent of them continue to attend school but their work reportedly had adverse effects on school performance since they are prone to absenteeism and tardiness thus, got low grades. Many are working in the informal sector that are beyond the reach or difficult to detect by authorities.

The worst kind of child labour is commercial sexual exploited children. Since it is a highly illegal activity, it is hard to obtain data as to the number of prostituted children. As of 2002, there were 284 reported cases.

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The study entitled, “Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Philippines: A Situation Analysis” which was commissioned by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and UNICEF, showed that children-victims were mostly females aged 13-18 years old. Most of the children were out-of-school and belonged to large families. They were lured or deceived into the sex trade. The respondents cited poverty, lack of parental care, history of abuse as well as community factors as vices, lack of youth programmes, presence of gangs, and propensity for materialistic or consumerist behaviour as the major factors that force the children into commercial sex.

In urban areas, children who are forced to work to augment their family income usually spend a substantial part of their time in the streets near entertainment areas, bus terminals, ports, parks, and any other area where they can find work. They engage in vending, shoe-shining, begging, watching/washing cars, making deliveries and other odd jobs. Some other children were forced in the streets because of family problems and/or peer influence.

It is difficult to get a headcount of street children since they are usually mobile or transient. A recent study revealed that there are about 246,011 street children in 22 major cities in the country. About 80 percent are boys and 95 percent still have parents. Street children are susceptible to malnutrition, vehicular accidents, injuries, illnesses, drug or substance abuse, sexual exploitation, gambling and harassment. They also tend to join gangs as a form of protection.

### **III. THE YOUTH AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

No less than the President, Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has declared in her Ten Point Agenda that there should be opportunities for the youth. This is in consonance with the Constitutional provision that: “The state recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being...” (Article II, Section 13).

Moreover, as a Member State of the United Nations, the Philippines has fairly aligned its system of criminal justice and social defence with UN criminal policies. In the field of juvenile justice, the Philippines is one of the early signatories to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). One of the fundamental guarantees afforded children under the CRC is a set of protective rights relating to juvenile justice to include rights against torture and deprivation of liberty, the right to rehabilitative care and the right to administration of juvenile justice.

A child in conflict with the law has the right to treatment which promotes the child’s sense of dignity and worth, takes the child’s age into account and aims at his or her reintegration into society. Children are entitled to basic guarantees as well as legal or other assistance for their defence. Judicial proceedings and institutional placements shall be avoided whenever possible.

#### **A. Definition of Juvenile Crime**

Presidential Decree No. 603 (Child and Youth Welfare Code) defines youthful offences as those committed by a child, minor or youth, including one who is emancipated in accordance with the law, who is over nine but under 18 years old at the time of the commission of the offence. Under the Revised Penal Code, a child under nine years of age at the time the offence was committed is exempt from criminal liability. This is also called the “age of absolute irresponsibility”. However, when a youthful offender, at the time of the commission of the offence, is over nine years and over fifteen years, the law makes a distinction. If the minor acted without discernment, he or she is exempt from criminal liability. On the contrary, if one acted with discernment, he or she is criminally liable. “Discernment” refers to the mental capacity of the minor to understand the difference between right and wrong.

#### **B. National Statistics of Children in Conflict with the Law and Treatment Institutions**

The crimes committed by Filipino youth offenders include both index and non-index crimes. Statistics from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on youth served in centre-based rehabilitation programmes showed that crimes against property, including theft, robbery, qualified theft and car-napping, represent the majority of the cases.

In the country, there are three major agencies that provide custodial or confinement facilities and

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services for the youth offenders these include the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), and the Bureau of Corrections which is under the Department of Justice. The DSWD supervises the facilities and services for 6,991 youth offenders nationwide. About 1,340 youth offenders are confined in various regional rehabilitation centres for youth nationwide while 5,651 of youth offenders are under the community-based rehabilitation programme.

**Total Number of Children in Conflict with the Law  
as Reported and Served by DSWD  
January to September 2004**

Region	Community-Based			Centre-Based			Total		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Region	Male	Female	Region
NCR	630	74	704	2	88	90	632	162	794
CAR	86	6	92	0	2	2	86	8	94
1	341	35	376	87	0	87	428	35	463
2	123	8	131	0	0	0	123	8	131
3	609	31	640	167	21	188	776	52	828
4	239	38	277	398	0	398	637	38	675
5	10	0	10	0	0	0	10	0	10
6	88	6	94	32	1	33	120	7	127
7	541	49	590	107	4	111	648	53	701
8	305	79	384	78	0	78	383	79	462
9	386	139	525	68	5	73	454	144	598
10	360	23	383	78	0	78	438	23	461
11	775	86	861	112	64	176	887	150	1037
12	335	31	366	0	0	0	335	31	366
Caraga	203	15	218	26	0	26	229	15	244
<b>Total</b>	<b>5031</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>5651</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>1340</b>	<b>6186</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>6991</b>

On the other hand, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) exercises operational jurisdiction over 132 district, 68 city and 290 municipal jails nationwide. Of the total inmate population as of September 2004, an actual inmate population of 2,211 are CICL.

Rehabilitation programmes and services are unceasingly provided to these offenders. These include Social Services, Homelife Services, Educational Services, Health and Dental Services, Economic and Livelihood Projects, Recreation and Sports Activities, Development and Cultural Activities and Spiritual Programmes.

While in the Centre, the youth offenders are provided with the opportunity to be trained to earn/gain skills on income generating activities for the future. These include, tailoring, backyard gardening, candle making, automotive mechanic, Agro-farming, poultry raising, soap-making, high speed sewing, basic electronics, refrigeration and air-conditioning.

Alongside, efforts of the government to improve the situation of the youth offenders, is the active participation of the non-government organization (NGOs) in implementing, networking, mobilizing and advocating for responses to the needs of the offenders.

Just last year, a separate building was constructed with the assistance from the Japan International Cooperating Agency (JICA) at the NBP Compound in Muntinlupa to shelter juvenile offenders. The institution provides rehabilitation services to children in conflict with the law.

### III. PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

#### A. Department of Social Welfare and Development

##### 1. Preventive Strategies

Considering the uniqueness of the needs of the youth sector, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other government and nongovernmental agencies have implemented strategies directed to the youth, his/her family and the community.

##### *Youth opportunities for growth*

- (i) *Free secondary education* — The enactment of Republic Act 6655 or the Free Secondary Education Act of 1988 provided for free secondary education to youths in national high schools, comprehensive high schools, state universities and colleges, specialized schools, trade schools, technical schools, vocational schools, fishery and agricultural schools and other public schools.
- (ii) *Sikap Kabataang Pinoy (SIKAP)* — is designed to ensure the youth's participation in community service and exposes them to actual private and government operations. It also provides employment opportunities, although limited, for the youth.
- (iii) *The Unlad Kabataan (Youth Development) Programme* — is a programme geared toward the total development of the disadvantaged youth in terms of spiritual, economic, physical, psychological, cultural and social development. The services included in this programme are available in the social service units of the local governments.
- (iv) *Education and organization of out-of-school youths* — The DSWD organized the out-of-school youths so as to provide them with opportunities to participate in socio-cultural activities, livelihood projects, community activities and training programmes. They are also taught the value of leadership and education. They are often asked to attend seminars on premarital sex, substance abuse, pregnancy and contraception, violence, smoking, drinking, suicide, STDs/HIV/AIDS, abortion and homosexuality.
- (v) *Information and education activities* — are aimed at raising the awareness of the public in protecting the rights and promoting the welfare of children through intensified information, education and advocacy campaign.
- (vi) *"Ahon Bata sa Lansangan"* — provides for an integrated and comprehensive social welfare services to street children rescued from the streets. The centre serves as a processing centre prior to the children's referral to other agencies, if indicated, on return to their families/relatives.
- (vii) *Bantay-Bata (Child Watch) hotlines* — were established in key cities to report cases of child abuse and exploitation.
- (viii) *Intergenerational programme* — brings together the different generations in new and on-going mutually beneficial structured activities to know the need of individuals and family throughout the life cycle. It is a pilot programme which shall bring children and older adults (senior citizens) together through activities that will promote mutual care and support where the young may be enriched by the warmth and understanding of loving "grandparent figures" at the Centre while gaining a positive insight into the aging process.
- (ix) *Assistance to disadvantaged transnational children* — provides social services for transnational children 0-17 years of age born from relationships between Filipinos and foreign nationals. In collaboration with other GOs and NGOs, services in the form of limited financial and material assistance, educational, legal, medical, practical skills development, repatriation and adoption are extended to them according to their needs.
- (x) *Supervised neighbourhood play* — is a form of day care service providing children 3-12 years old with early childhood enrichment activities through a variety of play activities and opportunities guided by a trained child development worker and/or parent volunteers under the supervision of a social worker.
- (xi) *Bright Child* — is a holistic programme directed at children 0-6 years old. It ensures that service

providers will work together in providing the best opportunities for all children. The programme has four components, namely: a) health and nutrition; b) psychosocial care and development; c) early education; and d) food security and livelihood.

- (xii) *School-on-the-Air* — provides relevant and helpful information to parents with young children (0-6) about early childhood development. This was aired through DZMM “Paksa” (Topic) Programme from September to December 2002.
- (xiii) *Child-minding service* — Day Care centres are established in barangays to take care of developmental needs of children below school age whose parents are employed or busy with house chores.

#### *Strategies directed to the family*

Self-employment assistance is provided through capital extended to parents or their children without interest or collateral. Skills training opportunities for adult members widen their chances of finding gainful employment. Specific programmes include:

- (i) *Systematic Training of Effective Parenting (STEP)* — includes counselling, training of parents and the youth, and information dissemination.
- (ii) *Family Drug Abuse Programme* — is a pilot community-based programme of preparing families to protect their members against the adverse effects of drug abuse. It further aims to equip families with parenting and life skills towards drug-free homes.
- (iii) *Night Care for Children and Working Mothers* — is a preventive measure to eliminate abuses and neglect against young children while mothers are at work during night-time.
- (iv) *Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities (ERPAT)* — is a preventive and developmental intervention on enhancing parental skills which gives importance and emphasis to the father’s parental roles, responsibilities and abilities through activities promoting effective performance of familial tasks of Filipino fathers as well as achieving gender equality for women and men and prevention of violence against women and children.

#### *Community organization strategy*

This enables community members to identify and assess their needs and problems and formulate corresponding solutions. Volunteers and local councils are also tapped to promote the rights of children and to provide protective measures in the prevention of youth offences.

- (i) *Organization of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children* — composed of barangay officials and representatives of the different sectors in the barangay to identify conditions that may lead to child abuse, neglect and exploitation and adopt measures to protect the rights and promote the welfare of children
- (ii) *Organization of community mobilization/development of volunteers* — the development of a pool of community volunteers who will assist in identifying and reporting suspected victims of child abuse, neglect and exploitation, and who shall be assigned to look after the welfare of the children. Emphasis is given on the role of community volunteers in providing care/assistance to children and detecting severely traumatized children needing therapeutic interventions.

## 2. Protection/Recovery and Reintegration

- (i) *Missing Children Programme* — is the government’s response to the growing number of children who are separated from their families. This programme utilizes a website, the “sagip-com project” which serves as an information centre for missing children wherein pictures and information about missing children can be posted and viewed. It also involves the use of a mobile messaging system with a designated number to receive reports of missing children.
- (ii) *Adoption Programme* — Adoption Resources and Referral Units (ARRUs) were set up in pilot areas to monitor the existence, number and flow of children legally available for adoption and assess prospective adopters and facilitate their matching. ARRUs keeps records of adoption proceedings,

generate resources to help child-caring and child-placing agencies and maintain viability. The DSWD also has a Post Adoption service that provides professional help to adoptee, adopter and biological parents.

- (iii) *Child care and placement services* — provides alternative parental care to children (in especially difficult circumstances) whose parents are unable to provide for their basic needs, temporarily or permanently, brought about by problems in family relationships, illness, extreme poverty, lack of parenting preparation, etc., aggravated by lack of family support. The alternative family care arrangements may be provided through adoption, foster family care, legal guardianship or residential care depending on the needs of the child.
- (iv) *Residential care service* — is an alternative form of family care which provides 24-hour residential group care to children on a temporary basis whose needs cannot, at the time, be adequately met by their biological parents and other alternative family care arrangements. It is an approximation of family life to children under the guidance of staff especially trained for this purpose.
- (v) *Social services for children in need of special protection* — are services provided to children whose parents are unable to provide the required protection and whose conditions demonstrate observable evidence of injurious effects of the failure to meet the children's basic needs. Immediate intervention is provided to a child who is abandoned, neglected, physically or sexually abused or exploited, to prevent further abuse and exploitation and to assist the child/family to overcome the trauma of such experiences.
- (vi) *Special Drug Education Centre (SDEC)* — is a community-based facility which serves as a venue in promoting preventive and developmental services for out-of-school youth and street children. This aims to enable them to cope with the challenges of adolescence particularly their vulnerability to drug and substance abuse. The preventive and developmental services seek to equip the OSY and street children with the knowledge and life-coping skills to prevent drug and substance abuse.
- (vii) *Group home for street children* — provides an alternative home arrangement for rehabilitated street children who are abandoned by their families. Children are trained for independent living by social workers.
- (viii) *Legal guardianship* — is a socio-legal process of providing substitute parental care through the appointment of a legal guardian for the child and his or her property until the child reaches the age of majority. This does not give the child equal rights and status as that of a biological or adoptive child like right to a name, inheritance, etc.

### 3. Interventions and Services for Children in Conflict with the Law

Certain services are provided by the government to youth offenders and to assist them and their families. The objective is to rehabilitate and reintegrate youth offenders into the mainstream of society and facilitate their access to developmental opportunities. The DSWD implements both community-based or non-institutional and centre-based or institutional programmes for youth offenders.

#### *Centre-based*

- (i) *Casework/group work services* — the focus is on treatment and rehabilitation of children who have undergone traumatic experiences that may affect their growth and development as human beings.
- (ii) *Organization of support groups* — examples are survivor groups or parent groups, etc. to assist in the rehabilitation efforts of children victims.
- (iii) *Psychological and psychiatric intervention* — refers to tests and other modes of assessment as well as therapeutic sessions extended to the child to determine aptitudes, capacities, interests and behavioural problems to facilitate treatment in accordance with individual needs.
- (iv) *Medical services* — is the form of referral for medico-legal examination, hospitalization and medical treatment if indicated.
- (v) *Livelihood service* — refers to the provision of skills training and grant of capital assistance to enable the child and family to engage in income producing activities to alleviate their financial

difficulties and improve their economic conditions.

- (vi) *Group living services/homelife services* — this provision of well-balanced, organized and non-formal activities to the children which are geared toward achievement of treatment/rehabilitative goals for the child and the group as a whole.
- (vii) *Educational services* — provides opportunities for the continuing education of the children through formal or non-formal education in cooperation with the Department of Education and NGOs.
- (viii) *Spiritual/religious activities* — attendance at church, bible studies and fellowships that would bring the children to the knowledge of their Creator.
- (ix) *Functional literacy* — provides alternative education, cultural activities such as art and music session, theatre workshops, tutoring, spiritual guidance to develop creativity and critical thinking.
- (x) *Provision of limited financial assistance* — to meet needs for food, clothing, footwear, transportation assistance, school supplies and emergency needs for medicines.
- (xi) *Issuance of travel clearance* — to minors travelling alone or with only one parent.
- (xii) *Recreational, sports and other socio-cultural activities* — the provision of a wide range of both indoor and outdoor activities to encourage and motivate the children to participate on the basis of their interests and needs. As much as possible, community facilities can be used.

#### *Community-Based*

- (i) *After care services* — are community-based support services designed to strengthen family life. These are provided to those reunited with their families/guardians from the evacuation/rehabilitation centres in order to facilitate the child's readjustment and reintegration into his family and the community.
- (ii) *Conduct of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)* — a stress management strategy designed to assist children in handling stress caused by armed conflict to prevent trauma and impairment. The Senior Social Worker and the Municipal Social Worker Development Office (MSWDO) shall conduct this activity which may consist of games, songs, storytelling, drama, arts, crafts and others.
- (iii) *Family reunification and counselling* — an intervention that enables unaccompanied displaced children to be reunited with their families. Parents and other members of unaccompanied children are immediately located through tracing and other services. They are also made aware of the dynamics of their children and the roles and responsibilities of each member in the treatment and rehabilitation process. Family care within the child's own community is considered as the first placement option.
- (iv) *Socio-legal services* — the following services are provided to Children in Conflict with the Law:
  - a) *Diversion / Mediation* - the youth offender is diverted to the Juvenile Justice System such as the *Barangay Lupong Tagapamayapa* (Village Justice System) for amicable settlement of his case, community work or other arrangement and parent-child counselling. Through these interventions, the filing of complaints is prevented.
  - b) *Release on Recognizance* - this socio-legal process seeks to release from detention a youth offender who has committed a minor offence. The social worker conducts a case study and recommends to the Court the youth's release to his parents, relatives or other responsible person in the community who will be capable of providing him with protection and supervision while awaiting arraignment or trial. He ensures the youth's presence during court hearings.
  - c) *Custody Supervision* - is a process that provides an opportunity for the youth offender to serve a suspended sentence and to undergo rehabilitation under the care and custody of his/her family or relative or responsible person in the community subject to visitation and guidance of the social worker.

#### **B. Philippine National Police**

The Philippine National Police carries out a Child Protection Programme and initiates activities to promote the welfare of children. The most acknowledged programme of the PNP was the establishment of

the Women and Children's Protection Desk in every police station throughout the country to attend to cases of women and children victims of violence. This programme was in coordination with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), the National Police Commission, the DSWD and with the support of NGOs like the Soroptimist International and Rotary Clubs. As of 2004, about 1,700 Women's Desks were established by the PNP. Simultaneous with the establishment of desks, was the carrying out of seminar-workshops for policewomen and policemen assigned to handle cases of women and child victims of violence.

1. Training and other Capacity-Building Activities for WCPD Officers — improves the working knowledge of the police about the rights of women and children, the proper treatment and handling of women and children cases, and the synergy of actions and collaboration among the stakeholders and service providers.
2. Other Skills Enhancement Programmes — were conducted by foreign police experts on women and children through bilateral agreements such as: Women and Children Protection Course (UK); Sexual Assault Investigation Course (Australia); and Child Abuse Treatment Course (France). It also embarked on partnerships with the Save the Children-UK for the training of the Cebu City Police officers on Juvenile Justice. Currently, it is undertaking an RP-UNICEF Country Programme for Children (CPC V).
3. Production of Information-Education Campaign materials — the WCD officers use the mini-handbook on "Management of Cases of Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances" which contains certain procedures in the handling of children's cases. The PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM) has published the "PNP Handbook on Child Abuse and Neglect" which deals with child interview techniques; the dynamics of child sexual abuse; and its medico-legal implications. A handbook for police personnel about HIV/AIDS was also published entitled "HIV-AIDS Prevention: What the Police Should Know".
4. Outstanding Women and Children's Desk Officers — the PNP strengthened its ties with various Rotary Clubs by conducting this annual search which was initiated in 1995. It aims to recognize deserving members of the WCDO.
5. Police Diversion of CICL through Case Conferencing — after apprehension, an intake form must be filled in to determine whether the CICL has to be subjected to an appropriate diversion programme. At this stage, the police and the social worker shall call the parties in interest from both sides to discuss with them the direction of the case and the intervention needed for the CICL. The principal aim of the diversion is to exhaust all possible remedies balancing accountability of the child, his competency to become a renewed person, and safety on the part of the community.
6. PNP Women's Crisis and Child Protection Centre — is based in Camp Crame which places under one roof the PNP professionals who are involved in the treatment of children and women victims of violence and abuse. It was established in 2001 by the PNP, together with the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) and the Advisory Board Foundation, a Washington-based NGO.
7. Project OYSTER — is a community-based crime prevention programme and a vehicle for providing livelihood and employment opportunities/assistance for the marginalized Out-of-School Youth in the country. OYSTER stands for Out-of-School Youth Serving Towards Economic Recovery.
8. SAGIP - Sakloloohan at Gabayan Ina at Pamilya (Help and Guide Mothers and Family) Centre — is a place in Muntinlupa City where victims of domestic violence, particularly physical and sexual abuse among women and children, are taken care of by working staff composed of physicians, psychiatrists, social workers and police officers rendering 24-hour service to the victims.
9. GO-NGO collaboration — The police are also represented in various organizations like the Sub-Task Force on Justice for Children, Sub-Task Force Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Sub-Task Force on Children Involved in Armed Conflict, Sub-Task Force on Displaced Children, Technical Working Group on Trafficking of Women and Children and the Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee.
10. Halfway Houses — Some significant initiatives have also been established by local police stations. Halfway Houses for children in conflict with the law were established by the Cavite City Police Office,



the Cabadbaran Police Station in Surigao del Norte, the Iloilo City Police Office, and the Bacolod City Police Office.

11. Other Local Initiatives — The Cebu Police have also entered into an agreement with the various commercial shopping malls regarding child shoplifters. It also has a programme for Street children.
12. PNP Involvement in the Legislative Agenda — The PNP also actively attends to and provides input to various legislative agenda for women and children. It has been involved in the refinements of pending bills on trafficking in women and children, domestic violence, women empowerment and the like.

### **C. National Police Commission**

1. Police Handling of Cases of Children in Conflict with the Law — is a study conducted by the NAPOLCOM commissioned by UNICEF. It was found that while most police officers are aware of the various Philippine laws on children as well as the various UN Declarations on the protection of children, implementation is wanting. The research also found that despite existing policies, procedures and structures that give preferential attention to the plight of children in conflict with the law, there have been problems in the handling of children's cases prior to court proceedings. Some of these concerns and issues that were identified include wrongful arrest, charging a child with a crime, commission abuse during investigation, not informing the child of his/her rights such as the right to medical attention, inaccurate preparation of affidavits by police officers, and complaints of police who are not gender and child sensitive.

One of the reasons cited why there are still cases of children being mishandled by police officers is the fact that the first contact of children in conflict with the law are with police assigned to do police beat and detective patrols. These police field personnel, by the very nature of their work, lack the sensitivity as well as the training in dealing with children.

Moreover, there are a number of groups other than the police, like the barangay tanods, barangay officials, private security guards, school security officials, church-based groups and individual citizens that also come into contact with children who commit misdemeanours. There are about 32 instances where arrests are done by these individuals. Most of them, however, do not have training in handling children in conflict with the law.

2. Standard Reporting Format — One of the recommendations of the study on Police Handling of Cases of CICL is the issuance of an order requiring the use of a standard reporting format so that proper, accurate and complete documentation could be made regarding cases of children. This has been done with the issuance of NAPOLCOM Memorandum Circular No. 2004-003 on May 18, 2004 entitled "*Guidelines for Improving Case Management and Initiating Efforts towards Addressing the Problem of Trafficking in Persons*". While the title specifically talks of Trafficking in Persons, the said Standard Reporting Format can be used by WCCD in recording all cases involving women and children, either as victims and/or offenders

The format aims to establish a uniform or standard system of reporting cases making possible the monitoring and documentation of statistical data on trafficking in persons at the precinct levels as well as other cases of women and children. Aside from this, baseline data will be generated for use of the government as well as non-government sector in the formulation and development of policies, programmes and projects addressing the problem of violence against women and children.

### **D. National Youth Commission**

In 1995, Republic Act 8044 otherwise known as the Youth in Nation-Building Act was approved creating the National Youth Commission to serve as the sole policymaking and coordinating body of all youth programmes and projects of the government. Some of their programme and projects are the following:

1. Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (YEP) — helps the young to develop entrepreneurial skills providing training and technical assistance for the youth's business development with the goal of creating a strong economic base of young entrepreneurs.
2. Kabataan 2000 — is a youth work programme aimed at instilling among the youth the proper values towards work and community service, providing them with opportunities for self-development and

participation in nation building.

3. Integrated Sangguniang Kabataan Organizational, Leadership, and Reorientation (ISKOLAR) Programme — is aimed at developing the management and leadership skills of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SKs) and mould them into strong community leaders and advocates of reform, through values education and seminars.
4. Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Programme (SSEAYP) — is an annual youth exchange that provides the youth with the opportunity to visit ASEAN countries and Japan, on board a Japanese luxury ship. While on country visits, they engage in various activities such as courtesy calls, interaction with local youth, visiting institutions, and staying with local families.
5. National Youth Parliament — is a biennial assembly of youth representing various sub-sectors and geographic groupings nationwide to develop a legislative-executive agenda for youth development.
6. National Youth Environmental Action Plan and Green Brigade — are community-based youth environmental corps composed of the Katipunan ng Kabataan that advocate environmental awareness and action as a means to attain a balanced and healthful ecology.
7. Student Government Management Programme — is designed to help student leaders develop effective task and people management skills by exposing them to innovative management principles, practical tools and technologies that can be readily applied to bring about excellent performance in their respective student bodies.
8. Bantay Tele-Cinema Youth Network — youth are deputized by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) to monitor the enforcement of MTRCB rules and regulations in their respective areas of jurisdiction.
9. National Inter-Fraternity and Sorority Council — was formed to address the problems and issues of fraternities and sororities in campuses and unify them by a common agenda of promoting academic excellence as a vital contribution to nation-building.

#### **E. Council for the Welfare of Children**

The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) is the apex agency for children's protection, welfare and development in the Philippines. It is the focal coordinating agency of the Philippine Government for children's concerns. Created through PD. 603, the CWC is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of all laws, programmes and services for children, as well as ensuring that these are implemented within the code and the Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children, 2000-2025.

1. Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children (Child 21) — The Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children, or Child 21, is a strategic framework that will guide stakeholders in planning programmes and interventions that promote and safeguard the rights of Filipino children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The framework weaves child rights (survival, development, protection and participation) with the child's life cycle. It advocates not only for a more focused targeting for children but also for interfacing critical interventions at the various stages of a child's development. In 2001, CWC started to intensify its effort in advocating and mobilizing resources/networks for the adoption of the Child 21 both at the national and local levels. The goal of the efforts is for the national agencies to use Child 21 as a policy framework for programmes/interventions for children and for the LGUs to pass resolutions/formulate local development plans for children. To date, the DSWD has prepared and finalized their Department Order for Child 21 adoption and it is now ready for endorsement by the Secretary for approval.
2. The Search for Child Friendly Cities and Municipalities — Launched last November 1998, the Search for Child Friendly Cities and Municipalities aims to support the child-friendly movement which is a growing worldwide effort to operationalize the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It involves children themselves, families, communities, church groups, and the government. Aply put, it aims to place children at the centre of all development efforts to effect sensitization of society toward child-friendliness. The Search is also in recognition of the role of the local government units in promoting and

protecting children's right to survival, development, protection, and participation.

#### **IV. FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

There are a number of proposed pieces of legislation being pushed for approval at Congress, these include the Comprehensive Juvenile Justice System Bill and expansion of the coverage of the Law on Release on Recognizance which seeks to release from detention a youth offender who has committed a minor offence to the custody of a responsible member of the community.

Likewise, programmes and projects are being initiated to intensify public awareness of the issue of sexual harassment and inform the public of what it is and where to complain. The police have tried to reorganize its complaint desks to be composed of an all-female unit which will encourage rape victims to come out freely to report their ordeal, and to be supported by a highly-trained male squad of police officers which shall expedite the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence cases. It will continue to conduct training and seminars on juvenile justice issues and pursue a programme advocating restorative justice. This year both the PNP and NAPOLCOM will implement a Diversion Programme for children in conflict with the law.

#### **TOPIC 2: ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE INTEGRATED CRIME PREVENTION APPROACH (MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH) AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE MULTI-AGENCY COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES**

#### **V. THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE INTEGRATED CRIME PREVENTION APPROACH**

The Government has identified several ways of encouraging the community to join in the anti-crime campaign. One way is to provide venues for community-based participation in localized crime fighting. Another is to forge partnerships with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the creation of more crime watch groups nationwide. A third way is to tap media groups in implementing communication strategies that will enhance public awareness.

Great emphasis has been placed on the subject of citizen participation in crime prevention. The process offers a viable means of involving citizens in the planning, decision-making and process change and innovation. Various indigenous concepts of adopting community-based methods were formulated in various urban locales in the Philippines to assist in the process of maintaining peace and order, specifically against criminality.

##### **A. Community-Based Strategy — The Barangay Initiated Ronda System**

The Barangay Initiated Ronda System is an offshoot of Presidential Decree No. 1232 authorizing the organization of community groups to serve as effective vehicles for organized community participation in crime prevention. The said groups are organized by barangay officials. The most common community-based crime prevention programme implemented by the Barangay Council is the Ronda System conducted by the Barangay Security and Development Officers or *Barangay Tanods* (Village Watchmen). Based from the interviews, Ronda was implemented as far back as 1972 and is still in operation today.

The Barangay Security and Development Officers (BSDOs) or more popularly known as the Barangay Tanod, are the volunteers who are responsible for peace keeping activities in the barangay. Recruited civilian volunteers are engaged primarily in unarmed civilian assistance that includes intelligence information-gathering, neighbourhood watch or "Rondas"; medical/traffic/emergency assistance; assistance in the identification and implementation of community development projects; and gathering relevant information and data as inputs to peace and order planning and research.

The localities have adapted the programme and taken the liberty of assimilating the concept into the native culture and beliefs. Examples of these are the Oplan Pakigsandurot in Cebu City and the Neighbourhood Watch Group in Baguio City.

The crime prevention activity conducted by these community-based organizations is basically carried out

through the Ronda system. The system is operationalized by teams of volunteers who take turns making rounds (Ronda) around the barangay during critical periods (late at night or early dawn). For operational purposes, the barangay is divided into “pook or puroks” and each “purok or pook” has an appointed leader. There are various methods/styles in conducting the Ronda and each barangay improvises according to its resources and needs.

The main actors in the said programmes are volunteers. The main component is therefore citizen participation. Volunteerism plays a vital role. Sustainability of any grassroots project depend on the harnessing of local resources, particularly that of human resources.

Aside from the Ronda, a number of indirect measures are also conducted. Some of these include establishing day-care centres, organizing the youths, conducting seminars on responsible parenthood, providing training for livelihood and assisting families in the establishment of small scale businesses.

### **B. Forging Partnerships with Citizens’ Groups/Non-Government Organizations**

The greater involvement of the community towards effective social defence in the local setting is being mobilized through various groups. The Crusade Against Violence (CAV), the Citizens’ Action Against Crime (CAAC), and the Movement for the Restoration of Peace and Order (MRPO), the Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga (MAD), the KillDroga and the Citizen’s Crime Watch (CCW) were created as an offshoot of the escalating incidents of violent criminality in the country.

These anti-crime movements undertake: (1) protest rallies as a means of obtaining a more effective response of the government in criminal justice matters; (2) sustained court watch; (3) information campaigns to increase consciousness of victims and their families on the need to cooperate with authorities in reporting crimes and pursuing cases in court; (4) monitoring of cases pending with law enforcement agencies and the Department of Justice; (5) legal assistance; and (6) public education campaigns on crime prevention to encourage vigilance among the citizenry in the campaign against crime and violence.

The Citizens’ Crime Watch is an umbrella organization of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and People’s Organizations (POs) working in partnership with the government in the anti-crime campaign. It provides assistance to the police in information- gathering, reportage of suspicious persons and places, service of subpoenas and other court processes, and monitoring the progress of investigation, prosecution and disposition of heinous offences. In barangays, Barangay Crime Watch Centres are being organized by the Barangay Chairman in consultation with the City/Municipal Peace and Order Council concerned.

#### StreetWatch

Street Watch is a programme designed to get the community actively involved in preventing crime by encouraging neighbours to help each other deal effectively with neighbourhood crime and related problems, and to cooperate in law enforcement. It involves the organization of neighbourhood blocks in a barangay into a Street Watch unit.

Each member of the Street Watch is expected to be on the look-out for crimes and emergencies obtaining within his own premises and that of his immediate neighbour. The monitoring effort shall be assisted by the Foundation for Crime Prevention by providing the necessary infrastructure and networking.

Media Support is provided by one of the major Television networks of the country, GMA Network, Inc. The neighbourhood Street Watch information and education campaign on crime prevention is to be supported by the GMA’s radio and television network. Crime Prevention information and tips are aired in its newscasts, radio and television programmes. GMA has also set up a Street Watch Action centre to follow up cases and report emergencies. The station also airs feature stories and interviews on crime prevention and criminal justice issues.

The Street Watch has established an Emergency Hotline (Emergency Hotline 117) which is centrally managed by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) Company and operated by qualified operators from the Philippine National Police.

### **C. Activities for Enhancing Public Awareness**

The media's role must be in making the public more conscious and aware of the problems of criminality, the sociology of crime, the machinery of the criminal justice system, the imperfections and problems besetting the system and the arduous process of prosecution. Criminal justice agencies can engage the services of the media for a more effective fight against crime. Towards this end, a Communication Plan was launched in 1994 to educate the public in what the criminal justice system is and its critical role in the prevention and control of crime.

A common strategy among the five pillars of the criminal justice system is the conduct of an Information Education Communication (IEC) Campaign. A Presidential Directive was issued for the five pillars of the criminal justice system to formulate and implement a comprehensive Criminal Justice System Communication Plan (CJS Complan). The CJS Complan was initiated to promote the CJS in order to enhance justice, public order and safety through an integrated and sustained communication programme. Primers, posters, brochures, pamphlets and other materials containing information on the criminal justice system were prepared, reproduced and distributed to the public. CJS agencies also air a weekly one-hour radio programme "Bantay-Katarungan" (Justice Watch) which focuses on crime prevention and the criminal justice system. It is aired every Friday from 11:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon over DZBB Radyo ng Bayan.

### **D. Nationwide Crime Prevention Week Celebration**

The Department of the Interior and Local Government, through the NAPOLCOM, spearheads the annual celebration of the National Crime Prevention Week. Presidential Proclamation No. 461 dated 31 August 1994 declared the first week of September of every year as National Crime Prevention Week (NCPW).

Plans, programmes and activities for the weeklong celebration, are drawn up with the active support and involvement of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), the Peace and Order Councils, the Office of the Press Secretary-Philippine Information Agency (OPS-PIA) and various citizens groups like the Crusade Against Violence and the Citizen Action Against Crime.

In recent years, activities conducted include the Presidential Kick-Off Ceremony, an Inter-Collegiate Debate on Crime Prevention, an On-the-Sport Poster Making Contests, Symposia on Crime Prevention, Skit-Drama Contest for High School Students, Motorcades and Parades. These activities are conducted nationwide.

### **E. NAPOLCOM Deputation of Local Chief Executives**

Governors and Mayors, after having been elected and qualified as such, are automatically deputized as representatives of the National Police Commission in their respective jurisdictions. As deputies of the NAPOLCOM, they are clothed with ample powers and functions over the police for the maintenance of peace and order in their localities. They are also accountable to the Commission in the exercise of their delegated authority. They regularly submit to the Commission through the Crime Prevention and Coordination Service, a report summarizing their peace and order programmes, projects and activities and appropriate recommendations for the enhancement of the effectiveness of the police units in their respective areas.

To ensure that the local chief executives (LCEs) perform their duties and responsibilities with maximum efficiency, the Commission, through its Inspection, Monitoring and Investigation Service and its regional offices, monitors and evaluates on a continuing basis their performance as deputies in the areas of public safety and effective maintenance of peace and order, specifically, their campaign against all forms of syndicated crimes and illegal activities including jueteng.

#### **1. Powers of LCEs**

- (i) Operational Supervision and Control
- (ii) Exercise Administrative Disciplinary Powers
- (iii) Choose the Chief of Police
- (iv) Recommend Appointment of new PNP Members
- (v) Recommend the Transfer, Reassignment or Detail of PNP Members
- (vi) Conduct Inspection and Audit

2. Responsibilities

- (i) Develop an Integrated Area/Community Public Safety Plan (IA/CPSP)
- (ii) Sponsor Periodic Seminars for PNP Members

**VI. THE NAPOLCOM TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON CRIME PREVENTION  
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND THE PREPARATION  
OF THE NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION PLAN**

In its effort to institutionalize a systems approach to crime control, the National Police Commission, through the Crime Prevention and Coordination Service, established the Technical Committee on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (TCCPCJ). This *ad hoc* interdisciplinary body is under the auspices and functional supervision of the Commission. This Committee, composed of acknowledged experts representing the five pillars of the Criminal Justice System - law enforcement, prosecution, courts, corrections, and community - meet monthly to consult each other and coordinate the plans and projects of the various pillars they represent.

The Commission, through the Technical Committee, formulates an annual National Crime Prevention Plan (NCP) which is submitted to the President sixty days before the ensuing year. It contains appropriate policy recommendations from experts representing the five pillars of the CJS. The Plan is a multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary strategy involving all agencies of the CJS. The programme is a compendium of action programmes and strategies for implementation by the five components.

The NCP's major thrusts are geared towards the improvement of the internal capability of the individual pillars, and the maintenance of close interagency coordination toward the effective reduction of criminality, and the attainment of peace and order. The ultimate goal of the NCP is the improvement of peace and order through enforcement of law, administration of justice and elimination of graft and corruption. The immediate effects that can be expected from the attainment of the above goals of the five pillars of the CJS are a reduction in the crime rate, speedy and efficient prosecution of cases in court, speedy disposition of court cases, jail decongestion, and effective and efficient rehabilitation of offenders and awareness and participation of community members in CJS activities.

The process of regaining people's trust and confidence in the country's criminal justice system is being orchestrated at the highest levels of government and is being coordinated through close networking of the Technical Committee on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Some of the programmes initiated by committee are the following:

**A. Police Level**

Several measures have been initiated at the law enforcement level to maximize the participation of the public at this level of the criminal justice system. Among these is the adoption of the Community Oriented Policing Concept (COPS). The major emphasis of COPS is the imperative of cultivating people-police partnerships to champion the cause of peace and order in the community. People support is the desideratum of police effectiveness and success. The police cannot single-handedly solve the manifold problems of criminality considering its deficiencies in manpower, mobility, communications and firepower. Only the people can fill the gap. The Philippine National Police (PNP) has been directed to hasten the full implementation of community-based policing projects especially in urbanized areas nationwide. All territorial unit commanders have been directed to accelerate the institutionalization of a community policing system in their respective areas in cooperation with local government units (LGUs), other government agencies/offices, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

People empowerment as a strategy in the administration of police administrative disciplinary system finds actualization with the organization and operation of the People's Law Enforcement Boards (PLEBs) in the cities and municipalities throughout the country. Under R.A. No. 6975, the PLEBs are vested with the jurisdiction to hear and decide citizens' complaints against erring personnel that are filed before them. The intent of the law is clear. In the governance over the police, local government units and the community must have a substantial and more meaningful participation, particularly in the area of discipline.

Aside from these flagship programmes, the police also conduct their own public information and

education programmes through a number of TV and radio programmes. They likewise conduct regular "Ugnayans" or dialogue with the community and hold a "People's Day" every month. These activities make police services accessible to the public.

### **B. Prosecution Level**

The Department of Justice, in coordination with various government agencies maintains several programmes to ensure citizen participation at this level of justice administration.

The Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Programme (WPSB) under Republic Act No. 6981 is a legislative enactment granting witnesses certain rights and benefits and defining their responsibilities, if admitted into the Programme. Apart from the primary benefit of security and protection, witnesses may be given any or all of the following benefits under the programme, viz, 1) secure housing facility for high-risk witnesses; 2) financial assistance to witnesses and their dependents, ranging from a minimum of P3,000.00 to about P15,000.00 in certain cases; 3) travelling expenses and subsistence allowance; 4) medical and hospitalization assistance; 5) housing or rental allowance in case of a witness with manageable risks.

The Department of Justice entered into agreement with different government agencies for assistance and services to be afforded to clients. The Department of Foreign Affairs agreed to render assistance in facilitating/securing passports and visas for WPSBP covered witnesses and initiate negotiation with countries to determine the feasibility of an exchange of witnesses. The Philippine Overseas Employment Authority (POEA) agreed to assist the witnesses in obtaining a livelihood abroad through its name hiring or government hiring schemes or other methods of deploying overseas contractual workers. The Department of Labour and Employment and the Department of Social Welfare and Development conduct skills training programmes for witnesses.

Republic Act No. 7309 is the law creating the Board of Claims under the Department of Justice granting compensation for victims of unjust imprisonment or detention and victims of violent crimes.

One of the more vexing problems in the area of justice and human rights is the implementation of the constitutional provision against the deprivation of life, liberty, and property without due process of law. Persons have been accused and imprisoned for crimes they did not commit, only to be subsequently acquitted. For the victims of unjust imprisonment, the compensation is based on the number of months of imprisonment and every fraction thereof is to be considered one month, but in no case will such compensation exceed P1,000.00 per month. In all other cases, the maximum for which the Board may approve a claim shall not exceed P10,000.00 or the amount necessary to reimburse the claimant's expenses incurred for hospitalization, medical treatment, loss of wage, loss of support or other expenses directly related to the injury, whichever be determined by the Board.

One of the projects implemented by the Prosecution Pillar is the Prosecution, Law Enforcement and Community Coordinating Committee (PROLECCS). Representatives from the different pillars of the CJS had taken cognizance of the low rate of cases rested in court. This could be attributed to limited or lack of evidence presented in court. The Prosecution Pillar felt the need for a closer coordination among prosecution, law enforcement, and community pillars especially in evidence gathering.

Project PROLECCS provides a regular forum to achieve and sustain closer linkages among the prosecutors, law enforcers, and the members of the community in evidence gathering, specifically in cases involving heinous crimes. It is also designed to help attain a 50% increase in the rate of cases rested in court for a five year period. The project envisions to foster an enhanced working relationship and to promote camaraderie among prosecutors, law enforcers and concerned non-government organizations (NGOs) through regular meetings, seminars and conferences. The project was launched in August 1996 in the Metropolitan Manila area and is being participated in by Chiefs of Police, PNP District Directors, representatives from other law enforcement units, and members of the community and cause-oriented groups such as the Crusade Against Violence (CAV), the Citizen's Crime Watch (CCW), and the United People Against Crime (UPAC) among others.

### **C. Judiciary**

The Courts Pillar conducts symposia in different regions of the country to enhance the understanding of

the public in the process involved in the administration of justice. The symposia provide more information and familiarization on the operational system and workings of the judicial system. The symposia enlighten the minds of those with negative beliefs on the judicial system and provide public awareness of the entire criminal justice system. Participants gains insights on the actual situation in courts and the causes of delay in the disposition of cases.

To further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the judges and court personnel, the grant of awards and recognition is given to deserving judges and personnel through a merit and awards system. The Foundation for Judicial Excellence, a private foundation, grants awards for Judicial Excellence every year. This private foundation grants awards to three Outstanding Regional Trial Court Judges and three Outstanding Metropolitan or Municipal Trial Court Judges. Likewise, the foundation also gives awards for Outstanding Public Prosecutors and Outstanding Public Defenders. The awards system is implemented to affirm and encourage exemplary performance and conduct among public servants and to strengthen citizen's faith and confidence in the rule of law.

#### **D. Corrections**

Community involvement in Corrections includes participation in the observance of the National Correctional Consciousness Week which is celebrated every last week of October. Community members are involved in planning activities to commemorate the event.

In line with establishing more responsible rehabilitation and correctional programmes and services for inmates, correctional agencies coordinate with government and nongovernmental organizations like the Episcopal Commission for Prisoners' welfare, CARITAS, formerly the Catholic Charities, and the National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC) in providing small-scale livelihood projects and community-based programmes for inmates. Likewise, several religious groups visit jails to share spiritual messages.

Dedicated members of the community are tapped as volunteers to ensure the success of the parole and probation system. These volunteers are called Parole and Probation Volunteer Aides. These volunteers are screened and trained. Each volunteer supervises a maximum of five clients and keeps all information about a parolee, probationer or pardonee in strict confidence. He works in close coordination with the Chief Probation and Parole Officer in providing counselling and placement assistance.

Another flagship project of the Corrections pillar involving NGOs is the management of the Philippines-Japan Halfway House. The Philippines-Japan Halfway House was designed to provide preparatory rehabilitation activities to released or pre-released clientele in a 24-hour residential setting that is geared towards preparing the clientele to become emotionally, socially, and economically prepared for family and community life to cope with the different pressures in society. Interdisciplinary-trained staffs provide services wherein which all activities are geared to provide therapeutic intent and impact on the clients served.

The construction of the edifice was shouldered by the Nagoya West Lions Club and the Asia Crime Prevention Foundation (ACPF). Several donations from the Nagoya West Lions Club and ACPF were also given through the effort of the United Nations Asia and the Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime (UNAFEI) and the Asia Crime Prevention Philippines (ACPPI). The initial seed money for operation of the Halfway House is taken from the funds of the Five Year Master Plan of Action for Peace and Order. Various Non-government organizations and several private individuals have assisted in the maintenance of the Halfway House to include the Makati Golden Lions Club, the Muntinlupa Lions Club and the Lady Judges Association of the Philippines.

### **VII. ASSESSMENT**

A lot of ground has been covered by the combined efforts of government and community as far as crime prevention and control is concerned. On a macro-level, several measures, like systematic and organizational changes, new policies, national summits and covenants for peace have been introduced to enhance government capabilities to address problems of peace and order.



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Government instrumentalities not previously tapped for crime prevention efforts have found themselves in the frontline of the government's anti-crime campaign. On a micro-level, the police have shifted from the traditional reactive, incident-triggered type of policing to a proactive, problem-solving, community-oriented policing system.

The adoption of the COPS philosophy resulted in a quantum improvement in the relationship between the police and the community. This resulted in a new partnership and increased awareness that criminality is not solely a police problem but a shared responsibility. The precipitating or major causes of crime have been brought to the consciousness, not only of the victims, offenders and the police but also to a wider spectrum of society that includes media, church, legislature and the whole community as well. This improved relationship between the law enforcers and the civil society gave birth to a number of memoranda of agreement between the police and different sectors of society.

There are problems that continuously nag the government's resolve to improve the peace and order. This includes insufficient resources, personnel, logistics, communications equipment, infrastructure and lack of mobility. Project implementers committed the pitfall of heightening expectations among target communities that were not met and causing frustration and demoralization of the citizenry.

Positively viewed, and going by the precept that peace and order is sine qua non to economic progress and development, it can be concluded fairly that there is a vast improvement in peace and order considering the enormous investments that entered the country and the impressive growth in GNP. Investments have also started to come in and this can only be interpreted as the growing confidence of entrepreneurs both in the stability and capability of the Philippine government to address their concerns.

Considering the varied problems confronting Philippine society today, Filipinos must realize that much is left to be done even if the government has continuously strived and is earnestly exerting efforts to implement a unified approach involving all sectors and spheres of Philippine society to effectively deter crime. A holistic approach, with particular emphasis on an active and empowered citizenry where society does not just base its values on its level of well-being but also on its capacity to create justice and human growth, should be carried out vigorously to curb criminality.

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