



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

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Consideration of reports of States parties

### Replies of the Philippines to the list of issues in relation to its combined fifth and sixth reports\*

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## List of Acronyms of Agencies, Councils and other Organizations

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
BCPC	Barangay Council for the Protection of Children
BJMP	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology
BuCor	Bureau of Corrections
CHR	Commission on Human Rights
CICL	Children in conflict with the law
CRCF	Centers and Residential Care Facilities
CRN	Child Rights Network
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSAC	Children in situations of armed conflict
CWC	Council for the Welfare of Children
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DDB	Dangerous Drugs Board
DepEd	Department of Education
DICT	Department of Information and Communications Technology
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ECCDC	Early Childhood Care and Development Council
ECQ	Enhanced Community Quarantine
EO	Executive Order
GOP	Government of the Philippines
HOR	House of Representatives
HRAO	Human Rights Affairs Office
IACACP	Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography
ICAB	Inter-Country Adoption Board
JJWA	Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act
JJWC	Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council
LCPC	Local Council for the Protection of Children
LGU	Local Government Units
NAPES	National Action Plan to End Statelessness
NCDA	National Council on Disability Affairs
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NNC	National Nutrition Council
NPAC	National Plan of Action for Children

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NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
OFW	Overseas Filipino Workers
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture
OWWA	Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
PAO	Public Attorney's Office
PCC	Philippine Commission on Children
PDL	Persons Deprived of Liberty
PDP	Philippine Development Plan
PhilJA	Philippine Judicial Academy
PNP	Philippine National Police
POPCOM	Commission on Population and Development
PPAEVAC	Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence against Children
PSA	Philippines Statistics Authority
RA	Republic Act
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHS	Senior High School
SPCSAC	Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
VAC	Violence against children
WCPC	Women and Child Protection Center

## Part one

### Reply to paragraph 1 (a) of the list of issues in relation to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of the Philippines (CRC/C/PHL/Q/5-6)

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP), through Executive agencies concerned, undertook various steps to ensure the protection of children's rights in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate its impacts.
2. The Department of Health (DOH) ensured that access to child health and nutrition services remained unhampered through the issuance of interim guidelines for the following: (a) immunization services in the context of COVID-19 outbreak; (b) delivery of nutrition services in the context of COVID-19 pandemic; and (c) management of pregnant women, women about to give birth, and newborns.
3. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) publicized child protection advisories to inform the public of hotlines/ helplines for child abuse. The DSWD likewise called on partner-agencies and non-government organizations to ensure that their respective hotlines/ helplines for victims of child abuse are open and active. Child victims of violence are extended medical, psycho-social, financial, and other support services by the DSWD.
4. The Department of Education (DepEd) developed a Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, a package of education interventions that are geared to respond to basic challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) issued the "Revised Guidelines on Engagement of Children 15 to Below 18 Years of Age in Public Entertainment or Information During Community Quarantine".
6. The Philippine National Police's (PNP) Women and Child Protection Center (WCPC) and Human Rights Affairs Office (HRAO) activated hotline numbers for reporting and responding to incidence of violence against children (VAC). The PNP also launched an online platform/ complaints desk, "e-Reklamo," an alternative way for citizens to lodge complaints without needing to appear physically before police officers in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic.
7. The PNP collaborated with local offices to ensure that appropriate protection, e.g., legal and social services, are provided to child victims of violence. Moreover, the DSWD and Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) issued Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-001 on the reiteration of protocols on reaching out to children in street situation, children at risk, and children in conflict with the law (CICL) were in place during the implementation of COVID-19 lockdowns, i.e., Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ).
8. The Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA) issued Memorandum Circular No. 2020-09 to guide local civil registry officers regarding the process of registering civil registry documents due to the imposition of the ECQ.
9. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) issued advisories to all *Barangay* (Village) Councils for the Protection of Children (BCPC) to ensure the handling of children who violate curfew and quarantine rules during the COVID-19 pandemic are in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act (JJWA).

### Reply to paragraph 1 (b) of the list of issues

10. The House of Representatives (HOR) approved House Bill No. 7836 providing for stronger protection against rape, sexual exploitation, and abuse increasing the age for determining the commission of statutory rape from below 12 to below 16 years.
11. Republic Act (RA) No. 11596 was signed into law on 10 December 2021, criminalizing the facilitation, solemnization of child marriages, as well as cohabitation of an adult with a child outside wedlock.

12. Senate Bill No. 1334 or the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy Act of 2020, seeking to develop a national program for the prevention of teenage pregnancy is pending before the Senate. A bill with similar purpose was filed in the HOR, i.e., House Bill No. 06579 or the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Act.

### **Reply to paragraph 1 (c) of the list of issues**

13. While the HOR approved House Bill No. 4727, which seeks to reimpose capital punishment for heinous and drug-related offenses, the same did not prosper in the Senate. In the Philippines, a Bill only becomes a law when it has been approved by both chambers of Congress and the President of the Philippines.

14. Further, the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act (JJWA) explicitly provides that no death penalty shall be imposed upon CICL.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (a) of the list of issues**

15. The CWC continued its efforts regarding the creation of the Philippine Commission on Children (PCC) in a bid towards institutional strengthening. The proposed establishment of the PCC seeks to provide overall leadership in the formulation and implementation of integrated policies, plans, and programs for the promotion, protection, and fulfillment of the rights of children.

16. To further strengthen the organization, the CWC requested for additional 40 permanent, i.e., *plantilla*, positions from the Department of Budget and Management.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (b) of the list of issues**

17. The CWC initiated in 2020 the Midterm Review of the National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) 2017–2022. The Midterm Review highlighted the strengths of the NPAC in terms of relevance and effectiveness but noted weaknesses in coordination, monitoring, and evaluation.

18. The CWC facilitated the formulation of the National Strategic Plan on Child Participation in the Philippines, 2017–2022, with the support of the National Committee on Child and Youth Participation. The said Plan seeks to strengthen the promotion of child participation in the family, community, school, media, and other institutions.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (c) of the list of issues**

19. Bills on strengthening the CHR, in its role as the State’s National Human Rights Institution, are pending in both chambers of Congress.

20. The CHR’s budget amounted to a total of PHP 883,097,000.00 in 2021.<sup>1</sup> A total of PHP 921,156,000.00 was allotted to CHR for the year 2022,<sup>2</sup> indicating an increase of PHP 38,059,000.00.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 (a) of the list of issues**

21. The PSA improved the availability of birth registration services through the establishment of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) service outlets all over the country.

<sup>1</sup> Commission on Human Rights. (2021, December 28). General Appropriations Act 2021. CHR. <http://chr.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/General-Appropriations-Act-2021-GAA-RA11518.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> CHR. (2021, January 3). General Appropriations Act 2021. CHR. <https://chr.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/RA-11639-General-Appropriations-Act-2022.pdf>.

22. The DOH developed the 2nd edition of the CRVS Handbook for Health Workers to enhance the knowledge and skills of city/municipal civil registrars, health workers, and other stakeholders in facilitating birth registrations, deaths, and fetal deaths.

23. The government has also set up an Inter-Agency Committee on CRVS to oversee the implementation of the country's plan of action to improve civil registration.

24. The Child Rights Network (CRN), the largest alliance advocating for children's registration rights, pushed for the institutionalization of the CRVS and digitization of data to make it more accessible by simplifying registration procedures, and removing or minimizing fees required for registration.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 (b) of the list of issues**

25. The "Safe Spaces Act" was signed into law with the aim of ensuring equality, security, and safety of every individual, in both private and public spaces, such as schools, workplaces, and even online spaces.

26. The DepEd issued the Gender Responsive Education Policy in 2017 to protect children from all forms of gender-related violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, and bullying. The policy covers indigenous children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender children, and CICL.

27. In partnership with UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the country launched the National Action Plan to End Statelessness (NAPES) in 2017 to address the issue of populations "at risk of statelessness", i.e., children in street situations, foundlings, ethnic minority, and other undocumented children in migration settings.

28. To protect children in situations of armed conflict (CSAC) from all forms of abuse, violence, neglect, discrimination, and other conditions prejudicial to their development, the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act (SPCSAC) was enacted to ensure that policies, programs, and services for the rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration of CSAC are in place.

29. The Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) developed a communication for development strategy to ensure the full implementation of JJWA and localized its Comprehensive National Juvenile Intervention Plan by producing a manual of operation for local leaders.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 (c) of the list of issues**

30. The "Child-Friendly Philippines: A Caring and Protective Society for, by, and with the Children" was launched by the CWC in 2014 as an advocacy and programming framework promoting child participation and child-friendly local governance.

31. The government issued in 2019 the revised Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit to guide local government units (LGUs) in ensuring child participation in the Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC) and in the development of policy, programs, and projects.

### **Reply to paragraph 4 (a) of the list of issues**

32. The PNP has taken effective measures to prevent the killing of children through the implementation of protocols and guidelines/ standards of protection of children's rights, such as Memorandum Circular No. 2021-081 also known as the PNP Child Protection Policy,

which emphasizes the responsibilities of each operational support unit of the PNP in the pursuit of a safe and peaceful community for children.<sup>3</sup>

33. In 2017, the DOJ filed criminal charges against 3 police officers involved in the case of Kian Delos Santos<sup>4</sup> and were found guilty of murder the following year.

34. The Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) issued Regulation No. 6 (s. 2019) which serves as the protocol followed by authorities when handling children allegedly involved in dangerous drugs.

#### **Reply to paragraph 4 (b) of the list of issues**

35. Children who used drugs are included in the YAKAP Bayan Program, a holistic recovery and reintegration program, “to assist recovering persons who used drugs in their recovery journey and to facilitate their social reintegration”.<sup>5</sup>

36. Parents and dependents of child-victims may also avail of the benefits provided by the “Witness Protection Security and Benefit Program” under RA No. 6981 (s. 1991).

#### **Reply to paragraph 4 (c) of the list of issues**

37. From 2018–2019, JJWC found in its monitoring that 69 children involved in drugs were admitted in different residential care facilities in the Davao Region. The PNP, DSWD, and DOH provided services along education, skills training, job opportunities, psychosocial, and medical needs after their release from facilities.

#### **Reply to paragraph 5 of the list of issues**

38. The Supreme Court established a “Special Committee on Facilitated Naturalization for Refugees and Stateless Individuals” that laid down the foundation for refugees and stateless persons to acquire Philippine citizenship through an expedited process, consistent with the goals set forth in the NAPES, Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017–2022, and pledges made during the High-Level Segment on Statelessness.

#### **Reply to paragraph 6 (a) of the list of issues**

39. The Philippine Plan of Action to End Violence against Children (PPAEVAC) 2017–2022, is a multi-sectoral road map designed for the progressive reduction of VAC. In 2019, UNICEF and the CWC started localizing the PPAEVAC to help LGUs address VAC.

40. In 2020, the Midterm Review of the PPAEVAC noted the relevance of the program as the issue of VAC continued to be a high priority particularly at the time of the pandemic when children have become even more vulnerable to abuse. The PPAEVAC’s implementing arm, the National Network to End VAC, remain active in pursuing the targets.

41. Several interventions aimed at strengthening children’s life skills and personal safety in schools were implemented by the DepEd. Concepts on child protection and VAC were integrated in various subjects to build learners’ capacity in facing risks.

42. The DepEd issued Order No. 003 (s. 2021) creating the Child Rights in Education Desk to ensure that the rights of the child in basic education are respected, protected,

<sup>3</sup> NAPOLCOM. (2016, March 7). Revised Rules of Procedure Before the Administrative Disciplinary Authorities and the Internal Affairs Service of the PNP. NAPOLCOM. <https://napolcom.gov.ph/pdf/MC%202016-002.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Caliwan, C. (2018, January 29). DOJ files criminal raps vs. 3 cops in Kian slay. Philippine News Agency. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1023315>.

<sup>5</sup> DSWD Memorandum Circular No. 33 (s. 2020), Guidelines for the implementation of the Yakap Bayan Program, p. 4.

promoted, and fulfilled. The same issuance established the DepEd Child Protection Unit to strengthen the implementation of DepEd's Child Protection Policy.

43. Different agencies provide protective, social, health, mental, legal, economic, and judicial services for child victims of violence. Social workers, law enforcement officers, and health and school personnel, on one hand, continue to train on using the Protocol for Management of Child Victims of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation.

#### **Reply to paragraph 6 (b) of the list of issues**

44. Comprehensive guidelines consolidating all issuances on LCPC have been disseminated to LGUs and other government agencies to ensure that LCPCs remain functional, relevant, and effective.

45. The national government underlined the importance of *Barangay* Women and Children Protection Desks as essential mechanism for reporting cases of violence and abuse, and for supporting victim survivors.

46. The Protocol for Case Management of Child Victims of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation serve as guide for local duty-bearers in their roles and responsibilities when assisting victims of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

#### **Reply to paragraph 6 (c) of the list of issues**

47. Helplines are available for reporting cases of abuse, exploitation, and violence. These include the 24-hour crisis intervention units of DSWD and *Bantay Bata* 163.

48. In accordance with Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act, the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) is mandated to provide free legal assistance for women and children who are victims of abuse, exploitation, and violence. PAO is also mandated under the Juvenile System Welfare System Act to facilitate the release of minor offenders from jail.

49. RA No. 9262 (s. 2004) mandates the DOH to provide medical assistance to victim-survivors. Furthermore, the DOH, through its Women and Child Protection Program, provides technical and medical support to ensure that Women and Child Protection Units in government health facilities are established and operational.

#### **Reply to paragraph 6 (d) of the list of issues**

50. A general guideline on the establishment and operation of gender-sensitive and child-friendly assistance desks and investigation rooms in prosecution offices nationwide was issued by the DOJ in 2017. It required the presence of authorized social workers in investigations involving child victims, use of gender-sensitive and child-friendly language in proceedings, and maintaining the confidentiality of information.

#### **Reply to paragraph 7 (a) of the list of issues**

51. The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) initiated the Family Development Support Programmes to promote child rights. It includes several capacity-building activities, advocacy and communication campaigns, and values formation. Along with this effort, is the formation of Family Circles composed of families left behind by Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW).

52. OFW Help Desks have been established in LGUs through the Regional Welfare Offices. All in all, OWWA has a total of 4,269 OFW helpdesks nationwide.



### **Reply to paragraph 7 (b) of the list of issues**

53. For children in care, data collection is handled by DSWD-run Centers and Residential Care Facilities (CRCF). The “Pertinent Information of Clients Forms” is the tool used to collect and measure the social functioning of children-residents prior to reunification with the family, independent living, or placement to alternative family care.

54. For both children in DSWD-CRCF and foster care, information systems dubbed as “Adoption and Foster Care Information System” and “Protective Services Information System for Reception and Study Center for Children”, are being developed to improve the data collection.

### **Reply to paragraph 8 (a) of the list of issues**

55. The National Commission on Disability Affairs (NCDA), together with the CWC, developed the National Strategic Plan on Children with Disabilities, 2018–2022. This is the country’s multi-sectoral framework and guide in building an enabling environment where all children with disabilities fully enjoy their rights. Along with this was the development of a 3-year plan of the NCDA Sub-committee on Education.

56. To ensure access to inclusive education, “Guidelines in the Admission of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education and Post-Secondary Institutions in the Philippines” was developed.

### **Reply to paragraph 8 (b) of the list of issues**

57. The JJWC started working with the NCDA on collaborative initiatives to ensure that disability inclusion is mainstreamed across all programs and projects of the former.

58. In an effort towards deinstitutionalization, the DSWD offers various community-based programs such as foster family care and legal guardianship, rehabilitation, and training program for children with disabilities.

### **Reply to paragraph 9 (a) of the list of issues**

59. The DOH issued Interim Guidelines for Immunization Services in the Context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes routine immunization for newborn babies up to 1-year-old infants and selective catch-up vaccination of “defaulters” below 5 years old.

60. The Early Childhood Care and Development Council (ECCDC) strengthened the “System for Prevention, Early Identification, Referral and Intervention of Developmental Delays and Disabilities in Early Childhood” in the midst of the pandemic.

61. The Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM) expanded its services to protect teenage mothers and their children to reduce risks and vulnerability through the “Social Protection Program for Teenage Mothers and Their Children”.

62. The National Nutrition Council issued an order intensifying the continuation of nutrition screening, and growth monitoring and promotion in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and other related disasters.

### **Reply to paragraph 9 (b) of the list of issues**

63. The DOH continued to provide voluntary HIV testing services to persons 15 to below 18, or to any person below 15 who is pregnant or engaged in high-risk behavior with the assistance of a licensed social worker or health worker as stipulated in HIV and AIDS Policy Act.

64. Free antiretroviral treatments are provided to Persons Living with HIV, including infants and children, in DOH-designated HIV treatment facilities.

65. The DepEd issued an order in 2018 on the implementation of the comprehensive sexuality education, a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about all aspects of sexuality that is “rights-based, age-appropriate, and culturally and gender-responsive in all schools.

66. In 2018, RA No. 11036 was passed to provide for the integration of mental health services and wellness programs in the grassroots level. It seeks to improve mental health facilities and promote mental health education in schools and workplaces.

### **Reply to paragraph 9 (c) of the list of issues**

67. In 2016, RA No. 10821 was passed establishing a Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children to ensure that rights of children are protected before, during, and after disasters and other emergency situations and to facilitate the provision of life-saving humanitarian and protection assistance to vulnerable children.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (a) of the list of issues**

68. The DepEd adopted the Policy on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict ensuring that learners are protected and that their rights are respected and upheld during armed conflict. DepEd also adopted the National Policy Framework on Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace, providing the overall strategy and guide for safety and security, the continuity of education, and the role of education in peacebuilding.

69. The Armed Forces of the Philippines adopted a circular that prohibits attacking or targeting schools during military operations or utilizing them as command posts, collection points, barracks, detachments, casualty evacuation points, supply depots, and similar purposes. Schools, even when temporarily abandoned, shall be prevented from utilization or attack by armed groups.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (b) of the list of issues**

70. The DepEd expanded the professional development system by adopting professional standards for supervisors and school heads, establishing a learning service provider authorization system, and a program recognition process to ensure standard-based and programmatic professional development.

71. The DepEd issued the “Guidelines for National Educators Academy of the Philippines Recognition of Professional Development Programs and Courses for Teachers and School Leaders” which provides standards-based professional development programs and courses for teachers and school leaders to ensure their professional growth and advancement.

72. In 2019, the DepEd launched its Last Mile Schools Program which aims to address the gaps in resources and facilities of schools located in geographically isolated and disadvantaged and conflict-affected areas.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (c) of the list of issues**

73. The ECCDC introduced Supplementary Feeding to encourage parents to enroll their children in Child Development Centers. The ECCDC is also promoting the Infant-Toddler Early Development Program for children 0–2 years old and their parents.

74. The ECCD issued an advisory encouraging LGUs to implement the Alternative Mode of Learning Delivery of Quality Early Childhood Care and Development programs in the community. This is in consideration of their unique conditions during the time of COVID-19 pandemic. The programme seeks to ensure that all children aged 0–4 years have access to health, nutrition, early education, and social services in their homes or at alternative venues.

75. The DepEd offers various program interventions to encourage enrolment and prevent learners from dropping out. The DepEd is implementing an Alternative Learning System that

provides an option for learning that includes non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.

76. It also offers Open High School Program that aims to retain in school potential dropouts and encourage out-of-school children and youth of high school age to return to school.

77. The DepEd ventured into an innovative learning system called “*Kariton Klasrum*” (pushcart classroom) which utilizes push carts containing learning materials, school supplies, hygiene kits, first aid kits, and DepEd modules. A Voucher Program is another DepEd initiative aimed at increasing access to Senior High School (SHS) by providing financial assistance in the form of vouchers for incoming students in participating private SHS.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (d) of the list of issues**

78. The Department of Public Works and Highways ensures accessibility and safety of public spaces by providing public toilets, wash areas, lighting, call centers, and surveillance videos. The “Accessibility Law” is observed in the plans and designs of public infrastructure projects to address the needs of children with disabilities.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 (e) of the list of issues**

79. The DepEd has integrated environmental health education into its curriculum particularly in the Basic Science Education which seeks to develop scientifically, technologically, and environmentally literate, and productive members of society who are critical problem solvers, responsible stewards of nature, innovative and creative citizens, informed decision makers, and effective communicators.

80. Towards this end, the newly updated K-12 curriculum has incorporated lessons regarding environmental education, specifically, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in the kinder, junior, and senior high school subjects.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (a) of the list of issues**

81. The Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) reported that a scholarship and formation assistance are provided to children of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) incarcerated in New Bilibid Prison, the Correctional Institution for Women, and Davao Prison and Penal Farm, through the Philippine Jesuit Prison Service Foundation Inc.

82. The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) set up a help desk to provide PDLs and their families access to various government services. A lactation program allows nursing PDLs to continue breastfeeding of infants. Livelihood program was put up to equip PDLs with technical skills for post-release employment. They are given opportunities to maintain communication with their families through the provision of access to online and virtual platforms.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (b) of the list of issues**

#### **Ensure the implementation of the anti-child labor legislation**

83. To ensure the implementation of anti-child labor legislation, the DOLE issued several Department Orders to guide the implementers and stakeholders in the operationalization of specific provisions of the law ensuring the protection and safety of children such as:

- Banning Children in Commercial Fishing Operation;
- Children in DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Programs;
- Special Program for Employment of Students;

- Issuance of Work Permit for Children Below 15 years of Age Engaged in Public Entertainment or Information;
- Child Protection Policy in the Department of Labor and Employment;
- Creation of DOLE Task Force Against Illegal Recruitment, Recruitment of Minor Workers, and Trafficking in Persons (TIP);
- Profiling of Child Laborers and Provision of Services to Remove them from Child Labor; and,
- Revised Guidelines on Engagement of Children 15 to Below 18 Years of Age in Public Entertainment or Information During Community Quarantine Labor.

84. Through Executive Order (EO) No. 92, the National Council Against Child Labor was institutionalized to upscale the implementation of the Philippine Program Against Child Labor, which is aimed to transform the lives of child laborers, their families, and communities towards their sense of self-worth, empowerment, and development.

85. The DILG ordered LGUs to issue local legislations addressing child labor and integrate anti-child labor initiatives in their respective Local Development Plans and Programs.

#### **Strengthen monitoring and labor inspections, especially in the mining, agricultural and informal sectors of economy**

86. The DOLE included in its 2020 target for labor inspection the industries cited in the United States Department of Labor 2018 Report on List of Goods Produced by Child Labor in the Philippines (banana, coconut, corn, fashion accessories, fish, gold, hogs, pornography, pyrotechnics, rice, rubber, sugarcane, tobacco, and palm oil).

#### **Ensure that children are withdrawn from child labour and provided with services**

87. In 2020, DOLE inspected 10,814 establishments, four of which have noted violations on RA No. 9231 or the “Special Protection of Children against Child Abuse” such as employing a child below 15 years of age; children engaged as models promoting pornography in clothing items; children working for long hours and at night work and working in hazardous labor. The six children found in the four establishments were removed from child labor by the DOLE after an inspection. Three child laborers in one region received P20,000.00 each as separation pay.

88. Of the 266,873 child laborers profiled from 2018 to 2020, a total of 21,930 were provided with school supplies, food packs, toiletries, hygiene kits, and other items donated by civic and private institutions. Other services provided to the profiled child laborers were: educational assistance, medical assistance, birth registration, and referral to the Special Program for Employment of Students.

#### **Reply to paragraph 11 (c) of the list of issues**

89. The DSWD revitalized the National Network on Street Children that turned inactive for some time. As part of this effort, advocacy on the compliance with the “Protocol in Reaching Out to Children in Street Situation” was expanded among program implementers and stakeholders through the different committees of the CWC at the national and regional levels.

#### **Reply to paragraph 11 (d) of the list of issues**

##### **Competent social workers, judges and relevant professionals in the child justice system**

90. The JJWC, in partnership with the Supreme Court, Philippine Judicial Academy (PhilJA), and UNICEF, trained 171 judges, prosecutors, public attorneys, and social workers in 2018–2020 on “Outcome-Based Education on Juvenile Justice”. The training resulted to a

more effective implementation of diversion and alternatives to detention in accordance with the provisions of the JJWA.

91. The PhilJA has also taken steps in building the competency of social workers, judges, and relevant professionals in the child justice system particularly on handling cases involving children.

92. Through the ongoing collaborative partnership between the DOJ and the JJWC, the utility and practice of diversion by prosecutors increased. Lately, a diversion toolkit was developed as a guide for them on how diversion processes can adjust to the COVID-19 context.

### **The separation of child offenders from victims and from adult offenders**

93. To address the above issue, the JJWC issued guidelines on the monitoring of detention facilities to check the compliance with standards provided under the law, including separation of child offenders from victims and from adult offenders. The DSWD, as the chairperson of the JJWC, also issued Guidelines on the Operation of *Bahay Pag-asa* which specifically states that only CICL should be admitted to the facility while child victims should be placed in another residential facility.

94. The JJWC's sub-national extension in each of the 17 regions in the country has a monitoring team that conducts monitoring visits to all police lock ups and jails to ensure that the above guidelines are complied with. The regional offices of the JJWC report their findings, propose recommendations to appropriate offices, and make follow through actions.

95. The BJMP created the Comprehensive Operations Manual Revised 2015 that provides detailed process in instances where courts order the commitment of CICL. As of 28 February 2021, the BJMP has a total of 36 CICL under its custody. Efforts for their eventual transfer to child-caring institutions are continuously being undertaken. The BJMP assures that CICL under its custody are given utmost care and proper treatment especially their segregation from the adult population.

96. In the BuCor, CICLs are housed in separate cells to closely monitor their daily movement.

### **Recovery and integration services**

97. The Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons is a comprehensive program that ensures adequate recovery and reintegration services for trafficked persons. It delivers a complete package of services to address psychosocial, social, and economic needs of clients where they will be eventually reintegrated to their families.

### **That the age of criminal responsibility, currently at 15 years of age, is maintained**

98. The JJWC continues its legislative and policy advocacy to ensure the full implementation of JJWA which provides that the age of criminal responsibility remains at 15 years of age. Its advocacy includes engagements with key legislators in the HOR and the Senate, submitting relevant policy briefs, and reports on the status of implementation of the law.

99. The JJWC also developed and disseminated communication materials such as comics, FAQs, infographics, and leaflets and maximized the reach of online platforms to increase the awareness of the target audiences. The JJWC also produced videos documenting the success stories of rehabilitated CICL and good practices of LGUs to showcase the significant positive impacts of the full implementation of the law.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 of the list of issues**

100. The SPCSAC was signed into law in 2019 in order to protect children in situations of armed conflict from all forms of abuse, violence, neglect, cruelty, discrimination, and other conditions prejudicial to their development, taking into consideration their gender, cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

101. Among the prohibited acts in the law include killing, torture, intentional maiming, rape, abduction, recruitment of children into armed groups, hamleting, food blockade, arbitrary detention, and denial of humanitarian access. The age of protection from these enumerated grave child rights violations under the law covers all minors below 18 years of age. Penalties go up to life imprisonment and a fine amounting to PHP5 million.

102. With this, the DepEd developed a national policy framework declaring schools and learners as zones of peace.

103. Under the same law, the Inter-Agency Committee on CSAC was organized. This government inter-agency collaboration institutionalized the monitoring, reporting, and response system similar to the monitoring and reporting mechanism of the UN. Incidents reported and monitored under the system are referred to the DOJ for investigation and prosecution.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 (a) of the list of issues**

104. As the national body tasked to oversee the implementation of the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009, the Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography (IACACP) launched online awareness raising campaigns such as the #StopChildPornPh project in 2016 which capacitated people to identify and report incidence of pornography online and offline. At the onset of the pandemic in 2020, the IACACP also disseminated social media cards to raise awareness on online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

105. The IACACP developed a module as guide in training service providers, duty bearers, parents/guardians, and children in responding to online child sexual abuse and exploitation. This was followed by a series of trainings for social workers, law enforcement officers, and school officials.

106. IACACP and UNICEF recently launched two studies, namely, the “National Study on Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children in the Philippines” and the “Philippine Kids Online Survey.” In alignment with the PPAEVAC, these studies were aimed at enhancing the prevention and protection mechanisms and policies to address the issues in OSAEC and promote a safe online environment of children.

107. Another measure put in place to create safe space for children online is the Child Online Safeguarding Policy of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT). The policy is in compliance with the Free Internet Access in Public Places Act that mandates the DICT to develop standards and mechanisms to protect children from all harm of the internet.

108. In terms of OSAEC response operations, an inter-agency quick action team composed of the DOLE, DSWD, and other law enforcement agencies worked together in detecting, monitoring, and rescuing child laborers in hazardous and exploitative working conditions. From 2014 to 2020, a total of 34 establishments engaging 78 minors in obscene or lewd shows were permanently closed by the DOLE.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 (b) of the list of issues**

109. In response to the growing number of online sexual exploitation of children reports in the country, as well as the lack of reliable data to capture perpetrators, the government, through the DOJ, established the Cyber-TIP Monitoring Center. The Center is equipped with the latest software and hardware tools that will be operated by trained law enforcement agents.

110. The Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center signed a Memorandum of Understanding with End Child Prostitution and Trafficking Philippines and INHOPE for the operation of eProtectKids, a hotline for reporting child sexual abuse and material online. Launched in 2021, eProtectKids is the country’s first global internet hotline against child sexual abuse materials.

## Part two

### Reply to paragraph 14 (a) of the list of issues

111. The following are the Bills on children from the 18th Congress (July 2019–April 2021), which are currently at different levels of approval in the HOR and in the Senate:

- Prohibiting and declaring child marriage as illegal;
- Instituting services and programs for learners with disabilities in support of inclusive education;
- Imposing stiffer penalties for child abuse, exploitation and discrimination;
- Foundling Recognition and Protection Act;
- Increasing the age for determining statutory rape;
- An Act defining and penalizing the crime of cyberbullying;
- Promoting Positive and Non-Violent Discipline Act;
- Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy Act;
- Domestic Administrative Adoption Act;
- SOGIESC-based Anti-Discrimination Act;
- Amending the *Sangguniang Kabataan* Reform Act;
- Magna Carta of Child Development Workers;
- Trust fund for the abandoned, neglected, and voluntarily committed children;
- Alternative Childcare Act;
- Safe Haven Act;
- Banning minors from full-contact competitive sports;
- Online sexual exploitation of children;
- Prohibiting all forms of sexual exploitation of children, providing for stiffer penalties and sanctions;
- Access of minors to pornographic materials and obscene shows;
- Eliminating TIP Act;
- Protection of Minors from Sin Products Act;
- Birth registration of children in need of special protection;
- Street Children Crisis Center Act;
- Center for Missing Children Act;
- Child Welfare Center Act;
- Strengthening the barangay council for the protection of children;
- Rehabilitation centers for children with disabilities;
- Center for children with special needs in every city and municipality;
- Children’s Environmental Protection Act;
- Curfew for children;
- Failure to send children to school as a form of child abuse;
- Failure to pay child support;
- Healthier, brighter and taller Filipino children;

- Infant-friendly Facilities Act;
- Regulation of children’s products containing hazardous substances;
- Television for children;
- Unborn child;
- Philippine commission on children;
- Providing for the identification, assessment, and education of children with autism spectrum disorder;
- An Act to protect children from foods that pose a significant choking hazard;
- An Act to provide assistance for start-up costs of community programs to prevent residential lead-based poisoning in children;
- An Act to provide training on violence prevention to professionals who work with children; and,
- Promoting positive discipline and non-violent discipline of children.

### **Reply to paragraph 14 (b) of the list of issues**

112. The LCPC Consortium was recently organized to support the CWC and the DILG in strengthening and overseeing the Local Councils for the Welfare of Children at the sub-national levels. The Consortium is composed of 23 government agencies and non-government organizations, which has become part of the CWC structure.

### **Reply to paragraph 14 (c) of the list of issues**

113. The following are the newly introduced policies relevant to children:
- RA No. 10821: An act mandating the provision of emergency relief and protection for children before, during, and after disasters and other emergency situations;
  - RA No. 10666: An act providing safety of children aboard motorcycles;
  - EO No. 12, Attaining and sustaining “zero unmet need for modern family planning” through the strict implementation of the responsible parenthood and reproductive health act, providing funds therefor, and for other purposes;
  - RA No. 10661: An act declaring November of every year as national children’s month;
  - RA No. 10630: An act strengthening the juvenile justice welfare system in the Philippines, amending for the purpose ra no. 9344, otherwise known as the “juvenile justice and welfare act of 2006” and appropriating funds therefore;
  - RA No. 10627: An act requiring all elementary and secondary schools to adopt policies to prevent and address the acts of bullying in their institutions;
  - EO No. 138 Amending E.O No. 56 (S. 2011): An act adopting the comprehensive program framework for children in armed conflict, strengthening the council for the welfare of children, and for other purposes;
  - RA No. 10398: An act declaring November twenty-five of every year as “national consciousness day for the elimination of violence against women and children”;
  - RA No. 10354: An act providing for a national policy on responsible parenthood and reproductive health;
  - RA No. 10165: An act to strengthen and propagate foster care and to provide funds therefore.



### Reply to paragraph 14 (d) of the list of issues

114. On the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).
- Five bills on establishing a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) are currently pending in Congress;
  - Advocacy on establishing a legislated NPM is among the activities under the UN Joint Program on Human Rights by the GOP and the UN;
  - At the National Human Rights Summit organized by the DOJ in 2020, the CHR organized a webinar on the NPM to generate valuable inputs to the continuing discussions on the issue.
115. On the Paris Climate Change Agreement:
- The Philippines submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change on April 2021. The Philippines' NDC sets a 75 percent greenhouse gases emission reduction and avoidance by 2030; and
  - The Philippines is further advancing the implementation of its Paris Agreement target as the first country in the Southeast Asian region to set a moratorium on new coal, and implementing several measures to support renewables. These actions would halt emissions growth and potentially curb the Philippines' emissions by up to 35% below current policy projections in 2030.
116. On the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons:
- The Philippines launched the country's NAPES in 2017, a framework of seven action points which the GOP has committed to implement until 2024. The action points are in line with the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness, which is part of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' 10-year campaign to end statelessness.
117. On the ASEAN Convention against TIP, especially Women and Children.
- The IACAT held the 6th Manila International Dialogue on Human Trafficking for the continuing dialogue on TIP; and,
  - *Barangay* IACAT was launched to serve as an avenue to reach LGUs, *barangays*, and communities to understand the situation of TIP in the country.

## Part three

### Data, Statistics and other Information

#### Reply to paragraph 15 of the list of issues

118. RA No. 9344 mandates LGUs to allot 1% of their internal revenue for the LCPC.
119. RA No. 10742 requires 10% of the general fund of the *barangay* to be set aside solely for youth development and empowerment purposes.
120. While the Philippines has no mechanism to monitor the percentage of each budget line allocated by the national government agencies, a budget tagging tool is being developed.

#### Reply to paragraph 16 (a) of the list of issues

121. From 2018 to 2020, a total of 72,373 incidents of child abuse and violence were recorded by the PNP. Cases include online sexual violence and abuse, child sexual abuse in and outside the home, domestic violence, abandonment, abduction, child labor, and corporal punishment. Data disaggregated by age and sex is outlined below:

**Table 1. Victims of Abuse and VAC by Age Group, 2018–2020**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
0–4 y/o	1 453	1 342	900	3 695
5–9 y/o	4 606	4 229	3 301	12 136
10–14 y/o	10 656	9 767	8 009	28 432
15–17 y/o	10 454	10 214	7 442	28 110
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 169</b>	<b>25 552</b>	<b>19 652</b>	<b>72 373</b>

**Table 2. Count of Male and Female Victims of Abuse and VAC, 2018–2020**

<i>Sex group</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
Female	17 657	17 026	13 996	48 679
Male	9 512	8 526	5 656	23 694
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 169</b>	<b>25 552</b>	<b>19 652</b>	<b>72 373</b>

**Reply to paragraph 16 (b) of the list of issues**

122. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 16 (c) of the list of issues**

123. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 16 (d) of the list of issues**

124. Of total 81,169 cases of HIV diagnosed from 1984 to 2020, four percent (3,489) were 19 years old and younger at the time of diagnosis. Of these, six percent (213) were children less than 10 years old while ninety-four percent (3276) were adolescents. Most of the younger children (2017) were infected through mother-to-child transmission. The adolescents on the other hand were infected through sexual contact. The breakdown of infected children by age are as follows.

**Table 3. Count of HIV Diagnoses by Age Group, 1984 to 2020**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>1984 to 2020</i>	<i>2020 new cases</i>
< 10 y/o	213	0
10–14 y/o	27	0
15–17 y/o	486	6
18–19 y/o	2 763	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 489</b>	<b>27</b>

**Reply to paragraph 16 (e) of the list of issues**

125. About 11% (561,361) of the total number of births from 2017 to 2019 (5,042,661) were to mothers aged 19 years old and below. For the same period, the PSA recorded an increasing number of births to mothers aged 10–14 years old, with an average of increase of 7.5% per year.

**Table 4. Number of Live Births by Age Group of Mother, 2017–2019**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>Total</i>
Under 15	2 077	2 250	2 411	<b>6 738</b>
15–19	194 401	181 717	178 505	<b>554 623</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>196 478</b>	<b>183 967</b>	<b>180 916</b>	<b>561 361</b>

126. Boys in the Philippines are less likely to enter into child marriages. From 2017 to 2019, there were 83,549 girls below 19 years old and below which is more than twice the number of boys.

**Table 5. Number of Registered Marriages by Age Group and Sex, 2017–2019**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Count per Year, Sex</i>					
	<i>Male</i>			<i>Female</i>		
	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
Under 15	8	4	43	51	43	45
15–19	7 601	6 314	27 174	32 353	27 174	23 883
<b>Total by year</b>	<b>7 609</b>	<b>6 318</b>	<b>27 217</b>	<b>32 404</b>	<b>27 217</b>	<b>23 928</b>
<b>Total by sex</b>	<b>41 144</b>			<b>83 549</b>		

127. About 153 girls and boys below the age of 15 entered into child marriage from 2017 to 2019. Of these, 56% (85) occurred through a Muslim ceremony in Mindanao where marriage at a very young age is allowed under the Code of Muslim Personal Laws. Meanwhile, the remaining 44% (68) were wed off through a tribal ceremony.

### **Reply to paragraph 16 (f) of the list of issues**

128. The PSA has no available data on this as it could not automatically determine in the records whether a particular Certificate of Live Birth is simulated or otherwise.

### **Reply to paragraph 16 (g) of the list of issues**

129. In school year 2019–2020, the DepEd recorded a total of 2,559,603 children from different ethno-linguistic groups who attended schools from Kinder to Grade 12. Of this, 1,290,043 were boys and 1,269,560 were girls.

### **Reply to paragraph 16 (h) of the list of issues**

130. The DOJ recorded only one stateless child each in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Within the same years, the DOJ noted a total of 503 children of Indonesian descent who were at risk of statelessness.

### **Reply to paragraph 16 (i) of the list of issues**

131. From 2018 to 2020, the DOJ reported that there were about 99 asylum-seeking children and 321 refugee children.

### Reply to paragraph 16 (j) of the list of issues

**Table 6. Number of Working Children by Age Group and Sex (000), 2015–2017**

Age Group (y/o)	Count per Year, Sex (000)									
	2015			2016			2017			Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
5–9	49	37	86	48	35	83	30	27	57	226
10–14	325	223	548	234	160	394	241	152	393	1 335
15–17	789	416	1 205	696	336	1 032	636	258	894	3 131
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 163</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>1 839</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>1 509</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>1 344</b>	<b>4 692</b>

132. Based on available statistics from PSA, the count of working children dropped by 37% from 1.839 million in 2015 to 1.344 million in 2017. Working children from 5–9 age group dropped the most at about 51% (from 86,000 to 57,000), followed by those in the 10–14 age group at 39% (548,000 to 393,000) and 15–17 age group with 35% (1.2 million to 894,000).

133. Meanwhile, the share of working boys to total working children grew by 4 percentage points from 63% in 2015 to 67% in 2017. The share of working girls to total, on the other hand, declined from 37% in 2015 to 33% in 2017.

134. Agriculture remains to be the sector where most of child laborers can be found, at 42.3% as of 2017, followed by wholesale and retail trade at 28.5%. Other major industry groups that likewise hired working children in 2017 included fishing, manufacturing, mining and quarrying, construction, and other service activities and other industries.

### Reply to paragraph 16 (k) of the list of issues

135. The DSWD recorded a total of 1,411 children in street situation that was catered in residential facilities from 2018 to 2019. About 6,263 were served under the Comprehensive Program for Street Children in 2018 while 5,790 were served in 2019. No data disaggregation was provided.

136. As of September 2021, the DSWD has served a total of 2,189 children in street situation including 1, 927 indigenous children called Badjaos under a comprehensive program. In 2020, DSWD served 6,947 children in street situation.

### Reply to paragraph 16 (l) of the list of issues

137. No data.

### Reply to paragraph 17 (a) of the list of issues

138. There are data on children separated from their families as indicated in sub-section c below. However, there is no accurate data in terms of duration of their separation.

### Reply to paragraph 17 (b) of the list of issues

139. No data.

### Reply to paragraph 17 (c) of the list of issues

140. As of September 2021, DSWD recorded a total 262 facilities housing about 1,927 children in street situation, street families, and indigenous peoples. From 2019 to 2021, 376 CICL were placed in different facilities across 16 regions in the country.

### Reply to paragraph 17 (d) of the list of issues

141. Latest data from the DSWD showed a total of 1,721 children under foster care from 2012 to 2015.

### Reply to paragraph 17 (e) of the list of issues

142. From 2010 to 2019, DSWD facilitated the placement of 2,537 children for domestic adoption. There are no current data on children available for adoption.

### Reply to paragraph 17 (f) of the list of issues

#### Inter-Country Adoption

143. Inter-country adoption placements through the Inter-Country Adoption Board drastically decreased from 2010 to 2020, with an average of 20% decrease per year. In the past three years alone, the number of adoption placements dropped by more than 100% – from 225 to 95.

**Table 7. Adoption Placement by Male and Female, 2018–2020**

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
Male	128	103	37	268
Female	97	96	58	251
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>519</b>

**Table 8. Adoption Placement by Age Group, 2018–2020**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
0–23 months old	18	13	3	34
24–35 months old	73	41	17	131
36–59 months old	39	42	11	92
60–83 months old	21	31	13	65
84–106 months old	25	24	8	57
107 months old and above	49	48	43	140
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>519</b>

**Table 9. Adoption Placement in terms of Receiving Region, 2018–2020**

<i>Region</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
USA	97	91	30	218
Canada	18	24	22	64

<i>Region</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
Asia Pacific	9	0	1	10
Europe	101	84	42	227
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>519</b>

### Reply to paragraph 18 (a) of the list of issues

144. No data.

### Reply to paragraph 18 (b) of the list of issues

145. No data.

### Reply to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues

**Table 10. Number of Children with Disabilities Enrolled in Day Care and Preschool, 2019–2020**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	
0–11 months	25	67	92
12–23 months	59	70	129
24–35 months	63	85	148
36–47 months	148	113	261
48–59 months	127	104	231
<b>Total</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>861</b>

**Table 11. Number of Indigenous Children with Disabilities Enrolled in Day Care and Preschool, 2019–2020**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	
0–11 months	31	32	<b>63</b>
12–23 months	64	51	<b>115</b>
24–35 months	49	64	<b>113</b>
36–47 months	144	75	<b>219</b>
48–59 months	91	90	<b>181</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>691</b>

*Note:* Per DSWD, data in the 2 tables above only cover 13 provinces.

### Reply to paragraph 18 (d) of the list of issues

146. See the table above.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (e) of the list of issues****Table 12. Number of children with disabilities attending schools at different levels**

<i>Different levels of school</i>	<i>SY 2018–2019</i>		<i>Sy 2019–2020</i>		<i>SY 2020–2021</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Primary school	44 896	28 250	83 781	50 264	9 979	5 939
Secondary school	50 807	45 408	72 602	63 351	3 189	2 317
High School	8 359	9 097	13 118	14 778	721	555
Alternative Delivery Modes	7 741	6 024	14 742	10 271	-	-
Special Schools	11 657	16 285	33 049	45 765	14 251	19 962

**Reply to paragraph 18 (f) of the list of issues**

147. See the table above.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (g) of the list of issues**

148. See the table above.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (h) of the list of issues**

149. See the table above.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (i) of the list of issues**

150. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (j) of the list of issues**

151. See the table above.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (k) of the list of issues**

152. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 18 (l) of the list of issues**

153. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 19 (a) of the list of issues****Table 13. Number of Children Arrested, 2018–2020**

<i>Type of Crimes</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
RA 9165 (Prohibited Drugs)	1 960	1 813	1 025	<b>4 798</b>
RA 8353 (Rape)	339	250	165	<b>754</b>
Theft	1 586	905	365	<b>2 856</b>

<i>Type of Crimes</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
Robbery	1 040	657	392	<b>2 089</b>
Physical Injuries	473	266	0	<b>739</b>
Other crimes	4 146	2 179	2 648	<b>8 973</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 544</b>	<b>6 070</b>	<b>4 595</b>	<b>20 209</b>

**Reply to paragraph 19 (b) of the list of issues**

154. About 3,010 children were referred to diversion programs from January to December 2020.

**Table 14. Number of Male and Female Children Referred to Diversion Programmes, 2020**

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Count	2 769	241	3 010

**Reply to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues**

155. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 19 (d) of the list of issues**

**Table 15. Number of Children Detained for Drug-Related Offenses by Age Group, 2018–2020**

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	
6–8 y/o	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
9–11 y/o	5	5	2	<b>12</b>
12–15 y/o	534	575	350	<b>1 459</b>
16–18 y/o	1 718	1 796	1 154	<b>4 668</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 258</b>	<b>2 376</b>	<b>1 506</b>	<b>6 140</b>

**Reply to paragraph 19 (e) of the list of issues**

156. No data.

**Reply to paragraph 19 (f) of the list of issues**

**Table 16. Number of Male and Female Children Detained with Adults, 2018–2020**

<i>Age Group (y/o)</i>	<i>Count by Year, Sex</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>		<i>2019</i>		<i>2020</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
12–15	3	0	6	0	6	0	15
16–18	57	4	43	0	30	1	135



<i>Age Group (y/o)</i>	<i>Count by Year, Sex</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>2018</i>		<i>2019</i>		<i>2020</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>150</b>

### Reply to paragraph 19 (g) of the list of issues

157. No data.

### Reply to paragraph 19 (h) of the list of issues

**Table 17. Number of Male and Female Children Serving Sentence in Detention, as of June 2020**

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Count	119	9	128

### Reply to paragraph 20 of the list of issues

158. During the national adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the subsequent crafting of the PDP 2017–2022, there was a strong recognition of the need to ensure sustainable development and the principle of leaving no one behind. The principle was particularly applied in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of programs and projects for children as the processes were guided by sustainability and inclusivity as both goals and principles.

159. The Philippines presented its second Voluntary National Review on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York City, USA. The review emphasized the synergies between government and non-government actions required to ensure inclusiveness and equality. National and regional level consultations were conducted with national government agencies, LGUs, civil society organizations, academe, and the private sector. The National Economic and Development Authority, in partnership with the Philippine Institute for Development Studies and the UNICEF, conducted a consultation workshop with children to solicit their inputs and recommendations specifically on children's contribution to the attainment of the SDGs.

### Reply to paragraph 21 of the list of issues

160. No new data.

### Reply to paragraph 22 of the list of issues

#### Bullying

161. The State has further strengthened the enactment of laws to prohibit all forms of VAC with the enactment of the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013, Expanded Anti-TIP Act of 2012, and Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012.

162. The enactment of Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 is considered a priority because bullying is rampant in the Philippines, particularly in schools, which is 3% times higher compared to developed countries. According to the Program for International Student Assessment 2018 survey published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, at least 6 in 10 Filipino students are being bullied regularly.

### **Children in Drugs**

163. The 2015 Nationwide Survey on the Nature and Extent of Drug Abuse in the Philippines released by the DDB in 2016 gives an indication of children's involvement in drugs. Students comprise 7 percent of the current drug users in the survey. While the survey did not specifically refer to children, it reported that they are specifically vulnerable to drug abuse as they live in neighborhoods with habitual users or drug dependents.

### **Children Affected by COVID-19**

164. While evidence shows a low prevalence of children infected with COVID-19 and with a low mortality rate compared to adults, children, however, suffer the biggest impact as "hidden victims" of this pandemic affecting their survival, development, and protection rights. Loss of income by parents and caregivers reduced the capability to fully meet food expenses. Meanwhile, mobility restrictions limited children access to essential services such as immunization, supplementary feeding, micronutrient supplementation, deworming, and growth monitoring. Child malnutrition is expected to rise considering the number of children who relied on supplemental feeding in schools.

165. A survey conducted by World Vision revealed that 21% of children respondents were either unwilling or unsure to attend school (face-to-face or blended). About 89% of them anticipated challenges in the use of online platform as 38% do not have access to internet. Parents cited unavailability and/or slow internet connection (47%), lack of computer gadgets (33%), and ineffectiveness of online platform in learning (20%).

166. Due to the confinement at home since the start of the pandemic in 2020, reports on VAC at home by their own parents or guardians increased. Based on *Bantay Bata's* data, cases of child abuse accounted over 200% increase in the volume of calls received and attended during the imposition of the ECQ. Calls included child abuse and other child-related concerns like custody issues, those needing psychosocial support or psychological first-aid and counselling.

### **Teenage Pregnancy**

167. The Philippines recorded a total of 180,916 live births among adolescents aged 10 to 19 in 2019, according to the data from the CRVS System of the PSA. The figure is equivalent to 495 live births per day in the 10 to 19 age group.

168. Pregnancy during adolescence is associated with higher risk of health problems like anemia, sexually transmitted infections, unsafe abortion, postpartum hemorrhage, and mental disorders, such as depression. Adolescents becoming pregnant at an early age have associated risk factors such as having multiple partners and having greater age differences with their partners, which may put them at greater risk of acquiring HIV.

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