



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Distr.: General
19 November 2025

Original: English
Arabic, English, French and
Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Combined second and third periodic reports submitted by the Philippines under article 35 of the Convention, due in 2022*

[Date received: 17 October 2023]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. In compliance with Article 35 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (the “State”) presents this report for the combined 2nd and 3rd cycle of reporting in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This report covers the period from the State’s constructive dialogue with the CRPD in September 2018 to the present.
2. This report is a byproduct of the inputs received from 32 national government agencies (NGA) responding to the CRPD recommendations, taking into consideration feedback culled from a two-day consultative session with 34 organizations of persons with disabilities, civil society organizations (CSO), and non-government organizations (NGO). The Commission on Human Rights (CHR), as the State’s independent National Human Rights Institution, joined both the consultative sessions and the inter-agency meetings as an observer.
3. The report was further refined by a technical working group composed of the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA), Presidential Human Rights Committee Secretariat (PHRCS), and Department of Foreign Affairs-United Nations and Other International Organizations (DFA-UNIO).
4. The NCDA led the preparation of the report, pursuant to Administrative Order (AO) No. 163, s. 2006, which designates lead agencies in ensuring compliance with treaties to which the State is or will become a State Party. While the Philippines only became a State Party to the UNCRPD in 2008, AO 163 nevertheless mandates the designation of lead agencies for treaties to which the State may thereafter accede. Thus, NCDA has been designated as the lead for the UNCRPD, pursuant to NCDA’s mandate under Executive Order (EO) No. 709 as the primary agency for all matters relating to disability. As the State’s National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up, the PHRCS provided guidance and support in bringing together all the responsible government agencies to contribute to the contents of the report, including the fulfillment of editing requirements. The DFA, as the government agency mandated to pursue Philippine interests in international relations, through the DFA-UNIO, likewise played a crucial role in providing guidance for the report, ensuring that its tone and approach align with the principles and guidelines set forth by the UN.

Definitions

5. Republic Act (RA) No. 7277, as amended by RA 9442, defines persons with disabilities as “those suffering from restriction or different abilities, as a result of a mental, physical, or sensory impairment, to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being,” where impairment means “any loss, diminution, or aberration of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure of function.”

6. Pursuant to the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the said law, the following are the classifications of disability, which refers to “(1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more psychological, physiological, or anatomical function of an individual or activities of such individual, (2) a record of such impairment, or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment”, to wit:

- (i) Deaf or Hard of Hearing;
- (ii) Intellectual Disability;
- (iii) Learning Disability;
- (iv) Mental Disability;
- (v) Physical Disability;
- (vi) Psychosocial Disability;
- (vii) Speech and Language Impairment;

- (viii) Visual Disability;
- (ix) Cancer (pursuant to RA 11215);
- (x) Rare Disease (pursuant to RA 10747).

Articles 1-4

General Obligations and Principles

Legislation, assessment policy, and procedure

7. The State, through the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office and the CHR, developed the Human Rights-Based Approach in Legislation, which calls for the development of a tool to assess the consistency of proposed legislative measures with human rights concepts and principles.

8. Senate Bill No. 601 seeks to further strengthen the NCDA by reorganizing the same into a “National Commission on Disability Affairs,” allowing for a greater reach through the establishment of regional offices. This will equip NCDA better in data collection and the provision of relevant and timely services to the sector. The NCDA, through its Sub-Committees chaired by the respective pertinent government agencies and the Regional Committees on Disability Affairs under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), regularly conducts reviews of the implementation of disability laws, espousing the human rights model of disability, wherein persons with disabilities are participants and contributors to development.

9. To eliminate multiple levels of assessment of disability, NCDA AO 1 (s. 2021) states that persons with apparent disability are no longer required to present a medical assessment, and a medical certificate is no longer necessary for cases of ID renewal.

10. For schools, the State, through the Department of Education (DepEd), issued “Policy on the Implementation of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool” (DepEd Order No. 29, s. 2018), covering five domains of learning: cognitive, communication, socio-emotional, psycho-motor, and daily living skills. This was developed to assist teachers in planning and designing appropriate learning interventions for students who experience difficulties in learning and self-regulation. The DepEd’s issuance on policy development (DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2015) guided DepEd in reviewing, finalizing, and issuing different policies, including those intended for learners with disabilities.

11. Through the Universal Health Care Law of 2019 (RA 11223), the State provides access to all Filipinos through a whole-of-system, whole-of-government approach to the delivery of health services centered on people’s needs. Aligned with the provisions of RA 11223, the Department of Health (DOH) developed the Revised National Policy on Strengthening the Health and Wellness Program for Persons with Disabilities (DOH AO 2015-0004), which mandates the DOH to institute a national health program for persons with disabilities, establish medical rehabilitation centers in provincial hospitals, and adopt an integrated and comprehensive program to the health development of persons with disabilities in order to make essential health services available at an affordable cost. DOH AO 2015-0004 also mandates DOH’s regional offices to provide technical assistance and guide the localization of the Health and Wellness Program for Persons with Disabilities.

12. The Mandatory Philippine Health (PhilHealth) Insurance Coverage for All Persons with Disability of 2019 (RA 11228) orders the automatic PhilHealth coverage for all persons with disabilities, whose premium contributions shall be paid by the national government provided that the premium contribution of those in the formal economy shall be shared equally by their employers and the national government. PhilHealth is responsible for developing exclusive packages that cater to the specific health and development needs of persons with disabilities.

Participatory process

13. The State, through the NCDA, involves persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in all its Sub-Committees, ensuring a disability-inclusive policy

and program development. The NCDA conducts access audit to public and private companies and disability sensitivity trainings which both involve representative organizations of persons with disabilities to identify and address physical and attitudinal barriers to ensure meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in development activities on an equal basis with others.

14. In 2021, the NCDA facilitated the establishment of the League of Persons with Disability Affairs Offices (PDAOs), which consists of officers from local government units (LGUs). The League of PDAOs works closely with representatives of the Federation of Persons with Disabilities, composed of disability advocates from the private sector. Since its inception, the NCDA has maintained a strong relationship with the League of PDAOs, ensuring that the voices of the disability sector are heard.

National action plan

15. After the 2018 Constructive Dialogue with the UNCRPD, the NCDA and PHRCS organized a meeting with the NCDA's Sub-Committee Chairpersons to disseminate the Committee's recommendations for the implementation of the UNCRPD. Strategies were developed and implemented, which involved organizing the Accessibility Summit in 2019, participated in by representative organizations of persons with disabilities.

Organizations

16. In April 2021, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) issued DILG Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 2021-041, titled "Strengthening the Functionality of Persons with Disabilities Affairs Offices and Persons with Disabilities Focal Person", to promote the establishment of organizations of persons with disabilities. This directive obliges all LGUs to fulfill their obligations under the PDAO Law (RA 10070), including the promotion of the establishment of organizations of persons with disabilities in their respective territorial jurisdictions. The directive emphasizes that regular public consultations with the disability sector for policy formulation and implementation account for 5% of the criteria for assessing PDAO functionality, while coordination with members of the disability sector for conducting programs, initiatives, and activities constitutes 10%.

17. The State also has local mechanisms in place for the participation of children with disabilities, specifically through the following:

(a) Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC)

The DILG mandated the establishment of LCPCs at the provincial, city/municipal, and *barangay* (village) levels to oversee all children's concerns. The composition of the provincial CPC and the City/ Municipal CPC includes PDAOs and focal persons for persons with disabilities, pursuant to DILG's "Comprehensive Guidelines for the Establishment, Strengthening, and Monitoring of LCPCs" (DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2021-039).

In order to assess the learning needs of the LCPCs, the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), in coordination with the DILG, conducts the LCPC Caravan to discuss the LCPC functionality criteria, LGUs' performance in the LCPC functionality assessment, the possible course of action to address issues and concerns of children based on the existing national plan of action for children, and identify needed technical assistance of the LGUs. From February 2020 to May 2023, LCPC Caravans were conducted in all provinces, cities, and municipalities of Regions I, V, XII, and CARAGA via in-person and virtual modalities. These caravans were organized jointly by the CWC and the Regional Committees/Sub-Committees for the Welfare of Children.

In accordance with Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006 (RA 9344), 1% of the internal revenue allotment of all LGUs are reserved for LCPC programs.

Table 1
CY 2021 LCPC Functionality per LGU Level

LGU Level	Total of No. of LGUs	Ideal	%	Mature	%	Progressive	%	Basic	%
Province	81	13	16.05%	36	44.44%	14	17.28%	7	8.64%
City	146	61	41.78%	52	35.62%	15	10.27%	3	2.05%
Municipality	1 489	472	31.70%	536	36%	259	17.39%	67	4.50%
Barangay	42 044	10 290	24.47%	17 621	41.91%	6 917	16.45%	1 644	3.91%

(b) Local Children's Associations (LCA)

In 2021, the CWC developed the Comprehensive Guidelines for the Establishment, Strengthening, and Monitoring of LCAs, in support of the abovementioned LCPCs, intended to give life to children's right to participation. The LCAs also serve as platform for children to advocate for their rights and responsibilities, as well as to discuss, assess, and articulate their issues and concerns. The guidelines were developed in line with the National Strategic Plan on Child Participation in the Philippines' goal for "all children in the Philippines to be free to express their opinions and for these opinions to be taken seriously by adults in making decisions affecting their lives" and to ensure that "all children are actively and meaningfully engaged in development works in the family, community, and society according to their evolving capacities." Aside from the LCPC allocation, support for LCAs can also be sourced from the *Sangguniang Kabataan* (Youth Council) fund, as indicated in the *Sangguniang Kabataan* Reform Act of 2015 (RA 10742), where 10% of a *barangay*'s¹ general fund shall be allocated and utilized for youth development and empowerment purposes.

The Comprehensive Guidelines was developed in consideration of all children and are thus disability-inclusive. For example, section VI.A.a.4 of the LCA guidelines states that children from the most vulnerable sectors, including children with disabilities, may establish their own LCAs. The Enhanced Guidebook on Child Participation supports this by emphasizing under Section V the provision of reasonable accommodation whenever a child with disabilities is engaged in any community activity.

Accessible information and methodologies concerning consultation procedures

18. The DepEd, as Chair of the NCDA's Sub-Committee on Education, informs other government agencies, non-government, and civil society organizations on education matters concerning learners with disabilities through its quarterly meetings. The DepEd also involves private stakeholders in policy development as resource persons and/or participants.

19. With the creation of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs), pursuant to "An Act Instituting a Policy of Inclusion for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education" (RA 11650), the whole-of-community approach was emphasized. The participation of the private sector as defined in Section 4(o), and the provision of incentives in Section 23 highlight partnerships in promoting inclusivity, particularly for the welfare of learners with disabilities.

20. As the government's lead agency for children, the CWC ensures that all children are consulted during plan development, policy formulation, and advocacy activities. Children are invited to general and sector-specific consultations through their representative organizations. In such activities, only children who gave their written consent and assent are included. Reasonable accommodations are provided for children with disabilities, and child protection policies are strictly enforced to ensure safety. Organizers undergo training to effectively communicate and engage with children, including the ability to read presentations verbatim for children with visual impairments.

¹ A *barangay* (village) refers to the smallest local administrative unit in the Philippine government.

Specific Rights

Article 5 Equality and Non-Discrimination

Discrimination

21. On March 2023, the House of Representatives' Committee on Human Rights tackled House Bill Nos. 188, 224, 1480, and 2128 pertaining to "An Act Prohibiting Discrimination on the Basis of Ethnicity, Race, Color, Age, Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Language, Disability, Educational Attainment, Economic Status, Health, Religious Belief or Expression, Political or Other Opinion, National or Social Origin, Property, Birth and Other Status, and Other Protected Attributes". The bills provide for penalties for violating their provisions and, once enacted, will establish a comprehensive anti-discrimination policy. A similar set of bills is currently pending in the Senate before the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare, and Rural Development.

22. In line with its mandate to destigmatize disability and combat discrimination against individuals in this sector, and applying a whole-of-nation approach, the NCDA actively collaborates with NGAs, NGOs, and private establishments to conduct disability sensitivity trainings and promote disability advocacy initiatives on a regular basis.

Redress mechanisms

23. The Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities (RA 7277) has specific redress mechanisms for cases of discrimination. The Department of Justice (DOJ) is responsible for investigating alleged violations. The law grants the Secretary of Justice (SOJ) the authority to initiate legal proceedings in court against individuals or groups involved in a consistent pattern of discrimination or if any person with disability or a group of persons with disabilities has been the subject of discrimination that raises an issue of public importance.

24. Persons with disabilities can likewise avail of the services of the DOJ Action Center (DOJAC), a key frontline office of the DOJ that acts on requests for assistance or legal advice and conducts administrative investigation of personnel charged with violation of the policies on non-discriminatory acts and practices and confidentiality, among others. Since 2018, the DOJAC has assisted a total of 278 persons with disabilities. In 2022, modifications were made to Client Information Sheets to indicate disability status, to ensure appropriate accommodation. The DOJAC personnel are trained to be sensitive at all times to the potential presence of disabilities in clients.

25. To complement the services of the DOJAC, the DOJ inked a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) for the provision of free legal assistance to individuals, especially those from the marginalized sectors, who are not covered by the Public Attorney's Office (PAO). Through the MOA, the DOJAC will endorse individuals to the IBP who do not meet the criteria of an indigent client or are ineligible to access the services provided by the PAO. The IBP will evaluate the cases referred by the DOJAC based on means and merit tests and other relevant factors. If certain individuals still do not qualify for free legal aid from the IBP, the IBP will refer them to lawyers or law groups to handle their cases at reduced or socialized legal fees. The PAO, as an agency attached to the DOJ for policy and program coordination purposes, is mandated by Executive Order No. 292, series of 1987, as amended by RA No. 9406, to extend free legal services to indigent persons and/or to the immediate members of their families.

26. The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the State's premier investigative agency, has disseminated information materials at designated waiting areas for persons with disabilities on their basic rights under existing laws.

27. The Supreme Court (SC) has formulated policies, guidelines, and procedural rules to protect persons with disabilities from discrimination. The New Code of Judicial Conduct requires judges to understand and be aware of diversity. The Rule on Juvenile in Conflict with the Law prohibits discriminatory remarks or practices. The SC's Selection and Promotion Board is also ordered via Administrative Circular (AC) No. 40-2001 and

AC 37-2001AA to not discriminate applicants for judicial posts on the basis of disability, among others, further noting that any such discrimination in proceedings may be subject of a grievance/protest. Additionally, courts are now more accessible through hotline numbers. The SC's issuances, circulars, decisions, and resolutions are also accessible in readable formats through its website.

Reasonable accommodation

28. RA 7277 defines reasonable accommodation as (1) improvement of existing facilities used by employees in order to render these readily accessible to and usable; and (2) modification of work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustments or modifications of examinations, training materials or company policies, rules and regulations, the provisions of auxiliary aids and services, and other similar accommodations for persons with disabilities.

29. To complement RA 7277, the Filipino Sign Language Law (RA 11106) was enacted in 2016. The law imposes an obligation to national and local agencies to guarantee accessibility and eliminate all forms of discrimination in public interactions and transactions. This ensures that the Filipino deaf community can actively participate in society independently and exercise their rights to expression and opinion. Section 14 thereof mandates the strict monitoring and implementation of the obligations of government agencies and private entities. Non-compliance is tantamount to the denial of reasonable accommodation as a form of disability-based discrimination.

30. The passage of An Act Expanding the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disability (RA 10524) is a legislative milestone as it provides equal employment opportunities for qualified persons with disabilities. This includes adherence to qualification standards established by the government and requirements specified by private employers, as well as equal terms and conditions of employment, compensation, privileges, benefits, incentives, and allowances given to able-bodied employees. Private companies that go beyond the minimum required by law in providing reasonable accommodations are incentivized with tax deductions.

Article 6

Women with Disabilities

Human rights situation of women and girls with disabilities

31. Based on the 2020 Annual Report for the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health, the State, through the Philippine National Police (PNP), recorded a total of 833 cases of violence against women (VAW) involving women and young girls with disabilities. Of this, 574 cases of violence involved victim-survivors who are women with disabilities aged 18 years old and above. Data also shows that from 2018 to 2020, 259 young girls with disabilities aged 0–17 years old experienced abuse. There were 404 cases of VAW involving women and young girls with disabilities recorded in 2020. This was a 50-percent increase in the number of cases recorded in 2019 pegged at 269 cases of violence against women and young girls with disabilities. This increase indicates that more individuals are becoming aware of the issue and taking action to address and prevent such incidents.

32. As an intervention, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) through the Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and their Children Secretariat, continues to provide remote VAW referral services to clients through phone, email and Facebook. Victims or informants are connected to the appropriate local authorities as necessary to ensure that they receive direct assistance. This includes facilitating direct reporting and conducting regular follow-ups on cases with the concerned *barangays* (villages) or local women and children protection desks.

33. The PCW's Women's Priority Legislative Agenda calls for an intensified effort for the enactment of gender-responsive laws, to amend or repeal discriminatory provisions of existing laws, and to advocate the formulation and adoption of new laws that promote

women's empowerment and gender equality, mainstreaming the rights of women and girls with disabilities.

34. During the 17th and 18th Congress, the following laws that relate to women and gender and development (GAD) were enacted, furthering the goal of mainstreaming the rights of women and girls with disabilities:

- (a) Health and Nutrition of Mother and Child Act (RA 11148)

Section 8 provides the following program components:

- Counselling and support to parents and caregivers on parent/caregiver-infant/child interaction for responsive care, and early stimulation for early childhood development, and referral for development delays and other disabilities for early prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation;
- Social welfare support to improve access to health and nutrition services such as, but not limited to, dietary supplementation, complementary food, other healthy food products and commodities, assessment and referral for development delays and other disabilities for early prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for infants six (6) months and above who belong to poorest of the poor families; and
- Social welfare support to improve access to health and nutrition services, such as, but not limited to, dietary supplementation, healthy food products and commodities for nutritionally-at-risk pregnant women belonging to poorest of the poor families, including those with disabilities.

- (b) Safe Spaces Act (RA 11313)

Section 15 provides for a penalty next higher in degree when the offended party is a person with disability.

- (c) Expanded Solo Parents Welfare Act (RA 11861)

Although Section 15 provides that solo parents who already receive cash assistance or subsidy from the government are no longer eligible for the additional benefits therein, solo parents with disabilities are exempt from this provision. Hence, they can still avail themselves of the additional benefits, even if they are already receiving other forms of cash assistance or subsidies from the government.

Technical and budgetary resources

35. Adequate technical and budgetary resources are allocated to advance the rights of women and girls with disabilities, aiming to promote the full participation of organizations representing women with disabilities in their initiatives and endeavors.

36. The State, through the PCW, regularly engages in consultations with civil society organizations, private sector, and relevant government agencies to develop periodic reports on upholding the rights of women and girls, as well as national plans and frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment. The PCW's Updated Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Plan for 2019–2025 specifically focuses on enhancing the participation of women with disabilities in government service and the private labor sector, while also increasing their representation in decision-making positions. The GEWE Plan also addresses the health-related vulnerabilities faced by women and girls with disabilities, emphasizing the full implementation of the Reproductive Health Law (RA 10354) and other health policies and plans. Furthermore, it aims to strengthen institutional mechanisms for the delivery of disability-sensitive reproductive health services.

37. From 2019–2022, the CHR conducted investigations, provided referral and monitoring services, and offered legal assistance to a total of 83 women with disabilities. Additionally, they organized various capacity building activities with an aggregate of 1578 women with disabilities as participants. These activities include seminars and workshops on topics such as the UNCRPD, gender-based violence (GBV), disability awareness, mental health, and basic Filipino Sign Language, among others.

Consultations

38. Recognizing the obligations outlined in the UNCRPD and in line with the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5.1, 5.2, and 5.5, the State, through the NCDA, conducted a series of consultations with women with disabilities to develop the Trainer's Training Manual on Gender Equality Focusing on Women with Disabilities. The manual was launched in March 2023.

39. To address the concerns of women and girls with disabilities in their family life, the DSWD ensures their participation in policy reforms through the conduct of regular implementation reviews of programs and services. For instance, persons with disabilities were actively consulted during the development of DSWD's "Cash for Work Program for Persons with Disabilities" under MC No. 20 (s. 2022), and were included among the 217,389 beneficiaries receiving an aggregate equivalent of USD15.076 Million. The DSWD also provides persons with disabilities with a Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) and Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS). From 2015–2022, SLP assistance was provided to 6,444 beneficiaries with disabilities amounting to USD1.453 Million. From 2021 to the first quarter of 2023, AICS assisted 55,008 persons with disabilities, providing about USD8.032 Million.

40. In the development of the IRR of RA 11650, the active participation of women with disabilities and organizations representing children with disabilities is ensured through their involvement in the writeshops.

41. Women with disabilities are also consulted on matters involving their health, as disability-inclusivity is embedded in the DOH's National Strategic Communication Plan on Adolescent Health and a National Strategic Communication Action Plan to Address Adolescent/Early Pregnancy. A notable example is the inclusion of girls with disabilities as participants at the Teenage Pregnancy Summit held in 2019.

42. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) empowers women with disabilities to become vital members of the workforce through activities, such as:

- Conducting a workshop on the DOLE Disability Inclusiveness Governance Framework in 2019;
- Engaging in consultations on the development of the "Guidelines in Support for Workers in the Informal Economy pursuant to the Safe Spaces Act" (Department Order No. 230, series of 2021);
- Participating in consultations during the Job Summit in 2021, which led to the development of the National Employment Recovery Strategy (NERS); and
- Organizing a DOLE Disability Inclusive Governance Framework consultation series in 2022.

43. The 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law, enacted in February 2019, aims to promote the rights and welfare of all working women without discrimination. The law recognizes the significance of their maternal functions and emphasizes importance of creating an enabling environment that allows women to thrive in the workplace. To enforce the law and ensure non-discrimination, it includes provisions for fines and imprisonment.

Protection from GBV

44. At the national level, the Safe Spaces Act (RA 11313) is a key legislation that addresses all forms of gender-based sexual harassment (GBSH) committed in public spaces, educational or training institutions, workplaces, and online platforms. Article V of the said law outlines the duties of employers, employees, and co-workers in preventing, deterring, and penalizing acts of GBSH in the workplace. RA 11313 holds employers accountable for the non-implementation of the duties provided under the law, including inaction in reported GBSH cases.

45. Below are tables containing data from DOLE's yearly spontaneous inspections as mandated by RA 11313:

Table 2

Inspected Establishments and Protection against Workplace GBV Compliance Rate, Philippines: CY 2021, CY 2020 and CY 2019

Indicator	2021		2020		2019	
	No. of Inspected Establishments	Compliance Rate (%)	No. of Inspected Establishments	Compliance Rate (%)	No. of Inspected Establishments	Compliance Rate (%)
With CODI or Committee on Decorum and Investigation (R.A. No. 7877)	59 105	99.50	14 659	97.59	67 686	96.78
Anti-Sexual Harassment policy in place (R.A. 7877)		99.01		96.79		95.54
Copy of R.A. No. 7877 posted/ available for information in the workplace		99.60		98.08		97.00
Awareness-raising activities on the problem of violence and the elimination of all forms VAWC (R.A. 10398)		99.67		98.14		97.47

Table 3

Inspected Establishments and Protection against Workplace GBV Compliance Rate, Philippines: CY 2022

Indicator	No. of Inspected Establishments	Compliance Rate (%)
With CODI or Committee on Decorum and Investigation (RA 7877)	81 314	90.71
Anti-Sexual Harassment policy in place (RA 7877)		90.18
Safe Spaces Act (RA 11313)		99.85
Copy of RA 7877 posted/ available for information in the workplace		99.91
Awareness-raising activities on the problem of violence and the elimination of all forms of VAWC (RA 10398)		99.96
Disseminated or posted in a conspicuous place in the workplace a copy of RA 11313 and its IRR (Section 19 (1), IRR RA 11313)		99.99
Dissemination maybe done through:		
1. Sending copies of the law and its rules through official notices or means of communication to heads of different departments, bureau, offices, units or such subdivisions in a workplace for proper information of their <u>members</u> ;		
2. Posting a copy of the law and its rules <u>online</u> or in the official websites of the <u>workplace</u> ;		
3. Conduct of orientations on the law and its rules and providing its employees with copies in print or electronic form as well as preparing information such as primers, frequently asked questions and the like.		

Indicator	No. of Inspected Establishments	Compliance Rate (%)
Provided anti-sexual harassment seminars, trainings on gender sensitivity and orientation on GBV to all employees, regardless of rank and status (Section 19(b), IRR of RA 11313)		99.96
Developed and disseminated, in consultation with all persons in the workplace, including employees or their representatives and union, if any, a code of conduct or workplace policy which shall:		
1. Expressly reiterate the prohibition on GBSH; 2. Describe the procedures of the internal mechanism created under Section 17(c) of the law; and 3. Set administrative penalties (Section 19(d), IRR of RA 11313)		99.99

46. The GBV Chapter of the PCW's Updated GEWE Plan for 2019–2025 contains a key strategy to address the issue of accessibility within the justice sector. This strategy emphasizes the enhancement of mechanisms that provide appropriate means of communication during investigation, filing, and trial for individuals who are deaf, as well as children and women with intellectual disabilities.

47. The DSWD's "Enhanced Guidelines in the Implementation of the Comprehensive Intervention Against GBV" (DSWD AO No. 12, s. 2013) ensures the provision of effective services to violence against women and their children (VAWC) victims, which is used by NGOs, CSOs, and LGUs.

48. The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 as amended (RA 10364) and the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2022 (RA 11862) mandate the DILG to institute a systematic information and prevention campaign and likewise maintain a databank for the effective monitoring, documentation and prosecution of cases of trafficking in persons (TIP).

49. At the national level, the DILG is leading the following initiatives to strengthen LGU capacity to combat TIP and other forms of GBV at the local level:

(a) Local Committee on Anti-Trafficking and VAWC (LCAT-VAWC)

The DILG, DSWD, and DOJ issued a Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2010-1 creating the LCAT-VAWC, a mechanism established at the provincial, city, and municipal levels to address problems of TIP, VAWC, and other VAW-related issues.

(b) Monitoring of LGU Accomplishments Against TIP

The DILG also monitors the accomplishments of LGUs in the implementation of anti-TIP measures based on their mandates under the existing laws and national policies on TIP. These include measures on the prevention, response, and recovery and rehabilitation. These accomplishments are regularly submitted to the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) Secretariat for inclusion in its report.

(c) LCPC and Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC)

In 2021, the DILG issued the "Comprehensive Guidelines for the Establishment, Strengthening, and Monitoring of the LCPC at All Levels and for Other Purposes" (MC 2021-039) aimed at consolidating and updating the previously issued MCs related to LCPC.

(d) Barangay Violence Against Women (VAW) Desk

Section 9(d) of the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710) and Section 12(D) of its IRR mandate all LGUs to establish a VAW Desk in every *barangay* and provide the same technical and financial assistance.

Pursuant to this, in 2010, the DILG, DSWD, DepEd, DOH, and PCW issued the “Guidelines in the Establishment of a VAW Desk in Every *Barangay*” (JMC No. 2010-2). One of its functions is to respond to GBV cases brought to the *barangay* and refer them to government agencies, NGOs, institutions, and other service providers for appropriate action and further assistance to the victims-survivors.

(e) Child Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA)

In 2019, the DILG together with DSWD, DepEd, and DOH issued the “Revised Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA) and Implementation Guidelines” (JMC 2019-01), which is a results-based assessment tool and an annual mandatory audit designed to gauge the level of performance of LGUs insofar as implementing programs and instituting measures to uplift the welfare status of children. The audit-generated data and results serve as bases for LGUs and NGAs to identify strengths and opportunities worth emulating. This, in turn, helps strengthen child rights governance in the country. Further, CFLGA results are utilized as a basis for LGU planning and programming and determination of areas for technical and/or financial assistance.

LGUs that pass the CFLGA are conferred with the Seal of Child-Friendly Local Governance (SCFLG) by the CWC Board, which is a requirement for both the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) awarded by DILG and the Presidential Award for Child-Friendly Municipalities and Cities. The CWC Board has approved and declared 372 LGUs as successful participants in the 2021 CGFLA assessment. These LGUs are eligible for the 2022 SCFLG.

(f) Capacity Building for LGUs to Address TIP, VAW and Other GBV Cases

The DILG, in partnership with the *Sentro ng Alternatibong Lingap Panlegal*² (SALIGAN) and the UN Office for Project Services, is currently implementing projects to strengthen the capacities of LGUs in handling TIP, VAW, and other GBV cases and in the formulation of the Comprehensive Local Juvenile Intervention Program and Ordinance related to Children at Risk and Children in Conflict with the Law. It is also currently developing a training module on child protection to be used for capacitating LGUs in the promotion of children’s rights and welfare and protection of children from abuse, exploitation and other forms of violence.

(g) Awareness Campaigns

The DILG developed/printed and disseminated information, education, and communication materials to LGUs, including the *barangays*, such as audio-visual presentation on anti-TIP and anti-sexual harassment in streets and public spaces, VAW Desk Handbook, and RA 11313 posters to raise awareness on their roles in addressing GBV and to provide information to the public on reporting GBV cases.

(h) Monitoring of Incidence of VAWC

The DILG is monitoring VAWC incidences reported/brought to the *barangay*, through the VAW Desk and/or BCPC, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, to identify target LGUs for the provision of capacity development interventions. Cases of physical, sexual, psychological/emotional, and economic abuse are referred to the Local Social Welfare and Development Offices (LSWDO), PNP, NBI, medical facilities, legal institutions, courts, NGOs and faith-based organizations for assistance. *Barangay* protection officers may also be assigned as needed.

Redress, rehabilitation, compensation

50. The DOJ investigates and prosecutes violations involving denial of the rights and verbal, non-verbal ridicule and vilification, against women and other persons with disabilities under RA 7277. To provide women with disabilities redress in cases of violence, Section 44 of RA 7277 states that the SOJ shall undertake periodic reviews of compliance of covered entities, and if the SOJ has reasonable cause to believe that (1) any person or group of persons

² Center for Alternative Legal Aid.

is engaged in a pattern of practice of discrimination; or (2) any person or group of persons has been discriminated against under the law and such discrimination raises an issue of general public importance, legal action may be taken in court.

Article 7

Children with Disabilities

Comprehensive strategy

51. In 2018, the State, through the CWC's Sub-Committee on Children with Disabilities, developed the National Strategic Plan on Children with Disabilities to be the country's overarching multi-sectoral framework, program design, and guide for duty-bearers and other stakeholders. It is focused on providing opportunities for children with disabilities to engage in activities for meaningful and fulfilling lives. It is anchored on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and is consistent with the principles of the UNCRPD. The plan has undergone operationalization workshops, which involved conferences on children with disabilities. These workshops engaged stakeholders to determine and commit key projects and activities that will contribute to the achievement of the outcome statements.

52. In 2022, the CWC conducted a technical review and assessment of the plan to determine the progress, accomplishments, and performances in achieving its expected outcomes, and analyze the impact of the changing environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the findings, the plan has been found to be relevant and coherent with international commitments, emphasizing the importance of further promoting the rights of children with disabilities. The CWC recognizes the importance of strengthening coordination and monitoring mechanisms to ensure full implementation of the plan. As such, the CWC is currently in the process of fully establishing its Monitoring and Evaluation Division, which is tasked to update the CWC Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Additionally, the CWC is committed to ensuring the harmonization of the sectoral plans to the national framework.

53. Other pertinent programs of the State, through the Early Childhood Care and Development Council (ECCDC), include:

(a) Inclusion in Early Learning Programs

Early Learning Programs implemented in Child Development Centers are recommended to include children with disabilities. The National Early Learning Curriculum, specifically its suggested learning experiences in the Learning Resource Packages, may be implemented with modifications to accommodate the specific needs of children with disabilities.

(b) National System for Prevention, Early Identification, Referral and Intervention of Delays, Disorders and Disabilities in Early Childhood (PEIRIDDDEC)

The ECCDC conducts three sets of Training of Trainers on the operationalization of the System for PEIRIDDDEC at the Provincial LGUs. These include trainings on (1) Establishment and Implementation of the System for PEIRIDDDEC for Social Welfare and Development Officers, Health Officers, and DepEd Division Office Education Supervisors; (2) Operationalization of the System for PEIRIDDDEC for Child Development Workers and Teachers; and (3) Operationalization of the System for PEIRIDDEC for Community Health Workers. The goal is to promote inclusion in early childhood education for children aged 0–4 with or at-risk for delays and disabilities.

(c) Guidebook for ECCD Service Providers and Parents Managing 0–4-Year-Old Children with Developmental Delays and Disabilities in Early Learning Programs

This Guidebook is distributed to various social welfare development offices, together with support instructional videos.

(d) Human Resource Development (HRD) Programs

The ECCDC implements HRD programs that integrate Inclusive Early Childhood Education and the System for PEIRIDDDEC. This integration enhances the awareness

of service providers regarding the rights of children with disabilities, encompassing their holistic development and effective strategies for managing their unique needs.

54. Civil society members of the CWC's Sub-Committee on Children with Disabilities play a critical role in assisting the Philippine government in providing necessary services for children with disabilities and their families, ensuring the promotion and protection of their welfare and rights. Even amidst the challenges posed by COVID-19 lockdowns, numerous CSOs made positive contributions by sharing information through materials, distributing essential supplies, establishing teleconsultation and teleassessment services, and conducting webinars to empower caregivers of children with disabilities.

Accessible schools

55. The State, through the DepEd, issued the following directives to enhance accessibility of mainstream schools to children with disabilities:

- “Inclusive Education Policy Framework for Basic Education” (DepEd Order No. 21, series of 2019), to implement programs and services for learners with disabilities;
- “Policy Guidelines on the Selection of and Minimum Requirements for the Conversion of Certain Schools with Special Education (SPED) Centers into Prototype ILRC” (DepEd Order No. 45, series of 2021), to spearhead the establishment of ILRCs; and
- “Guidelines on the Utilization of Support Funds for Special Education Program” (DepEd Order No. 18, series of 2022), to support SPED in the entire country; and
- “Child Find Policy for Learners with Disabilities Towards Inclusive Education” (DepEd Order No. 23, series of 2022), to improve the participation of learners with disabilities.

Table 4

DepEd Data on Learners with Disabilities Enrolled in Public Schools as of January 2023

<i>Elementary</i>	Male – 101 543	
	Female – 63 400	164 943
<i>Junior High</i>	Male – 14 771	
	Female – 10 091	24 862
<i>Senior High</i>	Male – 3 185	
	Female – 2 939	6 124

56. A significant achievement is the enrolment of 195,929 learners with disabilities in public schools, comprising 0.8% of the total learner population of 24,036,251³ in public schools.

Protocols and guidelines

57. In line with the UNCRC core principle on children's right to participation, the CWC published a Child Participation Guidebook that serves as a valuable resource for those working directly with children, providing them with a framework for organizing, planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs on child participation. It empowers adult facilitators to promote and uphold the rights of children, enabling them to initiate programs, activities, or projects with children. It is also designed to be used by policy makers at the national and local government levels to guide them in providing and expanding civic spaces for participation of children on matters that impact their lives.

³ 12,412,692 of which are males and 11,623,559 are females.

Article 8

Awareness-raising

58. The NCDA conducts disability-related events annually, in cooperation with other NGAs, LGUs, and the private sector, including organizations of persons with disabilities. These celebrations include but are not limited to:

(a) Women with Disabilities (WWD) Day

Proclamation No. 744, issued in 2004, serves as the legal basis for celebrating WWD Day every last Monday of March, in collaboration with PCW.

The law mandates both NCDA and PCW to spearhead the celebration annually in coordination with other agencies and organizations of and for women with disabilities and ensure its observance that heads of departments, chiefs, bureaus, offices, agencies and instrumentalities of the national government are implementing their plans, programs and activities geared towards the fulfillment of the human rights of women with disabilities.

The latest celebration of WWD Day in March 2023 included a job fair that championed inclusivity for women with disabilities in the workplace, wherein a number of women with disabilities were hired on the spot while several were recommended for a final interview offsite.

(b) National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (NDPR) Week

The NDPR Week is annually celebrated pursuant to Proclamation No. 361 since 2000. While the celebration is spearheaded by NCDA acting as the secretariat, the Chair of the National Working Committee for its annual observance varies from year to year, rotating among the various member national government agencies comprising NCDA. While the title of the celebration still has reference to the old medical model of disability, in recent years, efforts to ensure the application of the rights-based model include grounding the theme to specific rights of persons with disabilities. The most recent celebration of the same in July 2022 emphasized the role of government units in implementing programs and providing services for persons with disabilities towards improvement of their living conditions in health, education, employment opportunities, and other basic necessities as well as enable them to live independently.

(c) White Cane Safety Day

Pursuant to RA 6759, the DepEd takes the lead in the observance of White Cane Safety Day, aimed at instilling public awareness on the concerns of the blind. In 2022, the Resources for the Blind, Inc. partnered with NCDA for “Computer Eyes Camp”, wherein blind high school students and other students with visual impairments were trained in the use of computers.

(d) National ADHD Awareness Week

During the reporting period, except for the years of the pandemic, the State annually celebrated the National ADHD Awareness Week, conducted by the NCDA in partnership with the ADHD Society of the Philippines and other NGAs and NGOs.

(e) International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

The NCDA joins the global community in the observance of IDPD. The country's most recent celebration of IDPD in 2022 saw the launch of NCDA's Awards and Recognition Program (ARP) for private employers and persons with disabilities with outstanding achievements in the workplace. This aligned with two thematic topics for the 2022 global observance of IDPD, namely, innovation for disability-inclusive development in employment (relating to SDG 8) and innovation for disability-inclusive development in reducing inequality (SDG 10).

59. To further the State's awareness-raising efforts, the NCDA launched a broadcast program in March 2022 with the objective of providing educational and informative content both for the sector and the whole of society. Persons with disabilities are often invited as

guests in said broadcast program. To guarantee accessibility of information to the sector, the NCDA also began the process of digitalizing its information, education, and communication (IEC) materials.

60. The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) is a member of the NCDA and heads the latter's Sub-Committee on Advocacy. As such, the PIA utilizes its 16 regional offices and 78 provincial information centers to help publicize annual events, activities, and information campaigns of the NCDA and the NCDA's member government agencies in all disability affairs through various multimedia platforms, including on-ground, on-air, and online.

Article 9

Accessibility

Expansion of accessibility laws and guidelines

61. The State, through the NCDA's Sub-Committee on Built Environments and Transportation, chaired by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), is in the process of updating the IRR of the Accessibility Law (BP 344) to incorporate Universal Design standards and other relevant technical developments. This includes inputs from persons with disabilities, various concerned NGAs, and other stakeholders, such as private companies in the transportation sector. Meanwhile, applying the current technical specifications in the IRR of BP 344, the State, through DPWH, has conducted an access audit of 1,377 establishments nationwide in 2022. For 2023, Congress allocated roughly USD3.978 Million, or approximately USD248 Thousand, per region for the construction, rehabilitation, and improvement of facilities for persons with disabilities and older persons, including gender-responsive facilities.

62. In expanding accessibility guidelines, the State, through the Department of Tourism (DOT), launched a Barrier-Free Tourism campaign in 2010, which aims to promote non-discrimination and inclusion of persons with disabilities, recognizing that their right to travel can only be realized if the programs are in place to orient tourism frontliners on how to assist travelers with disabilities, enhance the mobility of persons with disabilities, and develop tourist facilities that are accessible and without barriers. To realize this, the DOT mandates and reminds its accredited establishments of the Guidelines on the Provision of the Expanded Benefits and Privileges for Persons with Disabilities (MC 2017-02). It also conducts year-round disability-sensitivity trainings for tour operators and other tourism-related establishments in various regions nationwide. At present, the DOT is in the process of revising its National Accommodation Standards to include indicators that promote inclusivity for persons with disabilities.

Monitoring indicators

63. The State, through the Department of Transportation (DOTr), has been actively engaging with key stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, through workshops, seminars, and focus group discussions in the development of a transport strategy that is accessible, barrier-free, and inclusive. Accessibility audits being conducted by DOTr's Task Force on Accessibility are the primary means of assessing the accessibility of the transport system. These audits analyze the situation in the State's public transport infrastructure from the lens of passengers with limited mobility and in terms of compliance with minimum requirements from existing legislations.

64. The DOTr's vision of an inclusive transport strategy is operationalized in various performance indicators such as the following:

- Increase in number of passengers with limited mobility using public transport;
- Regular conduct of accessibility audits;
- Percent accessibility expenditure over total accessibility budget;
- Availability of valid, reliable, and timely transport data regarding passengers with limited mobility;

- Proportion of staff trained on sensitivity;
- Very satisfactory client rating in handling passengers with limited mobility;
- Number of new inclusive transport policies and issuances approved; and
- Number of passengers with limited mobility per classification consulted per program, activity, and project.

65. Meanwhile, the different transportation sectors have included the following policies and programs:

(a) Railway Sector

New railway systems have incorporated accessibility requirements of passengers in its designs.

An Accessible Travel Policy (ATP) was drafted as the medium for operators, which enumerates the operator's commitments to persons with disabilities towards accessibility and how these are emulated in their facilities and services. Philippine Railways Institute embedded inclusion into its curriculum, making it responsive to the ATP.

(b) Maritime Sector

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) released guidelines on "Mainstreaming Accessibility Perspective and Senior Citizens Concerns into the Regular Activities of the PCG" (MC 01-21).

The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) issued the following policies and guidelines: (1) "Exemptions from Payment of Passenger Terminal Fees" (AO 04-2019) effective 2019, (2) observance of the IRR of An Act Expanding the Benefits and Privileges of Persons with Disability (RA 10754), and (3) "Reserved 20% Discount on Passenger Terminal Fees in all PPA Ports" (MC 07-2014) effective July 2014.

The PPA implemented programs concerning: (1) disability rights promotion & accessibility enhancement, (2) disability support and capacity building, and (3) disability data management.

The Cebu Ports Authority (CPA) issued MC 03 series of 2012, aimed to exempt senior citizens and persons with disability from paying terminal fee in all ports under the jurisdiction of CPA and offers terminal fee discount to students.

The Maritime Industry Authority approved an MC on the minimum standards in domestic passenger ships requiring facilities for persons with limited mobility onboard all Philippine-registered domestic passenger vessels other than high-speed craft and motor *bancas* with outriggers. These include provisions for functional wheelchairs, designation of at least two special coordinators wearing appropriate identification, courtesy space and seats, and special assistance during embarkation/disembarkation and medical emergencies, among other requirements under relevant laws.

The Philippine Merchant Marine Academy includes in their design of all new buildings, the provisions of accessibility for persons with limited mobility and the inclusion of hiring of persons with limited mobility as part of their regular workforce.

(c) Aviation Sector

Assistive devices are procured to aid in healthcare needs, together with the conduct of training and seminars for agency staff, airline representatives, airport frontliners, and ground-handling officers, and other relevant stakeholders.

Accessibility ocular inspections pertaining to internal audits are conducted to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements stipulated in existing legislations, and to implement necessary improvements based on findings are conducted.

Accessibility enhancements are provided, including the installation of signage, prominent display of the International Symbol of Access stickers on airport taxis,

provision of designated accessible parking areas, vehicle stops at arrival curbsides, ramps, and adequate space for wheelchair maneuvering, and maintenance of railings.

(d) Road Sector

The “Omnibus Guidelines on the Planning and Identification of Public Road Transportation Services and Franchise Issuance” (Department Order 2017-011) strongly upholds accessibility as a basic governing principle in the provision of road public transport systems and services. When it comes to franchise issuance, applications that adhere to the prescribed specifications are given top priority. Furthermore, one of the basic policies and principles of the Omnibus Franchising Guidelines is the accessibility of public transport services for all segments of society, including persons with disabilities.

Topics on accessibility are incorporated in the trainings and seminars provided for transport associations applying for conversion to transport cooperatives, in relation to the Private Utility Vehicle Modernization Program.

Accessibility ocular inspections pertaining to internal audits are regularly conducted by agency monitoring officers or members of the Task Force on Accessibility to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements stipulated in existing legislations.

Accessibility enhancements include the installation of signages, prominent display of the International Symbol of Access stickers on public utility vehicles, provision of low floor entry bus with wheelchair ramp and spaces for wheelchair inside public utility buses, provision of dedicated comfort rooms for persons with disabilities, accessible ramps, parking space, and wheelchair inside the tollways facilities.

66. Increasing the use of jeepneys for persons with disabilities requires a multi-faceted approach that involves addressing both physical and attitudinal barriers. As transport needs to be connected seamlessly, the DOTr is taking measures not only on its jeepneys, but also in the other modes of transport, buses, railway, aviation, and maritime transportation services.

67. The DOTr launched campaigns to educate jeepney drivers and operators on the needs of persons with disabilities and how they can make their services more accessible. Drivers and operators are provided with training on how to interact with persons with disabilities, including how to assist them in boarding and alighting from jeepneys. These awareness-raising activities are complemented by the DOTr’s established policies and regulations that require compliance by jeepney operators to accessibility standards, with provisions for penalties for non-compliance.

68. As part of the State’s efforts to monitor indicators in assessing improvements in accessibility, the Department of Information, Communications, and Technology (DICT) issued MC No. 004 in May 2017 with the subject “Prescribing the Philippine Web Accessibility Policy and adopting for this purpose ISO/IEC 40500:2012 Information Technology – W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 as the Philippine Standard for making web content more accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities.” This requires State bodies and private entities to implement the Web Accessibility Policy and accessible information, communication, and technology (ICT) practices that would enable and empower persons with disabilities to access government services and programs online.

69. Under the above policy, the ISO/IEC 40500:2012 Information Technology – W3C WCAG 2.0 serves as the standard for making accessible web content for users, especially persons with disabilities. The WCAG 2.0 has 12 guidelines under four principles, namely: perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust. Government agencies are required to undergo WCAG 2.0 transition and implementation.

70. In addition, the State is set to review the Checklist and the Guidelines on Web Accessibility Audit that was created in 2017. This includes the composition and functions, process, flowchart, online tools, Seal of ICT Best Practices, assessment forms, etc. There will also be training to be conducted on the use of these online tools for more efficient usage, such as among others AChecker as the main tool; European Internet Inclusion Initiative, Tenon, W3C Markup Validation Service, Wave, Contrast Checker, Contrast Ratio, and W3C Developer Tools as supplemental tools.

Article 11

Situations of Risk and Humanitarian emergencies

71. The State, through the Department of National Defense Office of Civil Defense (DND-OCD), conducted in 2022 a midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 with a short-term review of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan 2020–2030.

72. The DSWD implements the “Guidelines on the Management of the Disaster Response Operations Monitoring and Information Center (DROMIC) (AO 30, series of 2004) to ensure availability of an operational, accurate, adequate and timely retrieval and relay information and interpretation of policies relative to emergency environment; focus attention, action and resources to facilitate prompt and appropriate decisions and response by Central and Field Offices management of the needs of the disaster stricken areas; and set up a system to simplify emergency management operations to allow a systematic, coordinated and integrated participation of all work units of the Central and Field Office and reduce uncertainty in management decisions under disaster conditions.

73. The DSWD’s “Guidelines in the Implementation of Temporary Shelter Assistance and Prioritization of Victims of Disaster/Internationally Displaced Persons Thereto“ (AO 9, s. 2014) provides the criteria in the identification, selection, and prioritization of families who will be entitled to occupy temporary shelters that the government will provide. One of the eligibility requirements of beneficiaries include families whose heads are seriously ill, incapacitated to work or with a disability and cannot provide for the minimum requirements for the food and shelter of the family and have no other sources of support.

74. The DSWD’s efforts in tagging houses where at least one person with disability resides provides helpful information in accounting for households that need special attention in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. As of July 2022, the State has identified 183,758 (4.2%) households with at least one person with disability among a total of 4,359,616 households who are beneficiaries of DSWD’s *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*⁴.

75. The pending bill on the Evacuation Center Act which provides for the establishment of permanent and typhoon-resilient evacuation centers that are designed to accommodate the needs of children, women, persons with disabilities, and older persons, is included in the Priority Legislative Agenda under the Philippine Development Plan (2023–2028).

Article 12

Equal recognition before the law

Recognition of full legal capacity

76. Articles 37 to 39 of the Civil Code (RA 386) considers that certain conditions, such as the “state of being deaf-mute”, may limit one’s capacity to act in court proceedings. While these provisions have yet to be amended, laws promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and providing for reasonable accommodations to ensure that persons with disabilities can fully participate in the justice system, such as by way of testifying in court, are already in place and are more recent than the Civil Code, thereby effectively enabling persons with disabilities to validly testify in court proceedings. Nevertheless, the State takes due notice of the recommendation to review said portions of the Civil Code and shall tackle the same via NCDA’s Sub-Committees on Access to Justice and on Policy Development. Furthermore, while Rule 133 of the Rules of Court leaves some discretion to the judge in weighing the testimonies of witnesses, joint efforts of the DOJ, SC, and NCDA in conducting disability-sensitivity trainings and in issuing guidelines for reasonable accommodations are geared towards eliminating bias against the sufficiency and validity of testimonies of persons with disabilities.

⁴ Filipino Family Poverty Reduction Program.

Supported decision-making

77. The DSWD fosters an environment for supported decision-making for persons with disabilities through its “Guidelines in Organizing Persons with Disabilities into Self-Help Groups (SHG)“ (AO 13, series of 2008). The DSWD’s guidelines specifically seeks to organize SHGs by cluster *barangays*, municipalities, provinces/cities, regions and a national federation; nurture the psychological well-being of persons with disabilities through SHG’s mutual help and peer support and counseling; and develop productive skills and confidence of employable members of the SHG organized, thereby improving their economic status.

Article 13

Access to justice

78. The State endeavors that facilities and services used in legal systems are built, developed, and provided on the basis of the principles of universal design. Consistent with BP 344, the DOJ adopted policies and practices that guarantee the accessibility of facilities and services in frontline offices, prisons and administrative offices.

79. Through MC 1 series of 2014, the DOJ’s National Prosecution Service and PAO have put up Assistance Desks which shall be located on the ground floor of all prosecution offices and halls of justice of the country. Offices attached to the DOJ, such as the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Bureau of Immigration, Bureau of Corrections, and the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel all have designated priority lanes, BP 344-compliant restrooms on all floors, wheelchairs, and ramps for persons with disabilities in their buildings. All 508 persons with disabilities confined in the New Bilibid Prison benefit from these services and facilities.

80. In the judiciary, the Child Witness Rule aims to create and maintain an environment that allows children to give reliable and complete evidence, minimizes trauma, encourages children to testify in legal proceedings, and facilitates the ascertainment of truth. The Rule further provides that in child abuse cases, a “child” may also include someone unable to fully take care of himself due to a physical or mental disability or condition. Some of the salient provisions include:

- Appointment of a *guardian ad litem* for a child who is a victim of, accused of, or a witness to a crime, to promote the child’s best interests;
- Provision of an interpreter for the child when the child is unable to communicate in English or Filipino due to disability, among others;
- Appointment of a facilitator who may be a child psychologist, social worker, or guidance counselor, among others, when the court deems it necessary to help the child understand and/or better communicate;
- Allowing the presence of a support person for the child in the court room;
- Having a separate waiting area for children and an option to testify in a place other than the court’s witness stand;
- Provision of screens, one-way mirrors, and other such devices to prevent the child from the accused.

81. In keeping with the IRR of the Family Courts Act of 1997, Social Service Counselling Divisions (SSCD) in each of the State’s regions continue to assist all family courts and ensure the promotion of the best interest and welfare of children victims and/or witnesses. Social welfare officers, psychologists, medical doctors, and nurses are among the positions created in the SSCDs to ensure the immediate service to psychological, physical and emotional needs of child victims and/or witnesses.

82. In accordance with Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) Circular No. 89-2007, State courts continue to hire the services of sign language interpreters in actions or proceedings where such services would be rendered. Sign language interpreters are entitled to a certain fee on a per appearance basis. If a sign language interpreter needs to appear

outside of Metro Manila, he or she shall be entitled to an additional remuneration as well as travelling and transportation allowances.

83. During the pandemic, the SC, through the “Proposed Guidelines on Videoconferencing”, pilot-tested the use of videoconferencing technology in court hearings to improve court’s efficiency in handling cases and to make them more accessible to all participants. The videoconferencing hearings also ensured that hearings of courts will allow material witnesses and litigants who are deaf or those who cannot travel by reason of disability to testify during their scheduled hearings. Additionally, the SC issued OCA Circular No. 106-2022 encouraging judges to allow the conduct of videoconferencing hearings in cases involving deaf litigants and witnesses when, based on the sound judgment of the court, there are compelling reasons that justify the resort to videoconferencing.

84. In line with the effort of the government to provide persons with disabilities the opportunity to fully exercise their rights and perform their duties in society, the SC issued OCA Circular No. 46-95 directing judges to provide persons with disability convenient access to courtrooms by holding sessions, if absolutely necessary, on the ground floor of courthouses. The SC has incorporated features/facilities responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities in the blueprints for the construction of the new Halls of Justice in compliance with the Accessibility Law.

85. The DOJ, in partnership with the NCDA, has conducted a series of “Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Workshops on Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities” to familiarize DOJ prosecutors and PAO lawyers on disability laws, UNCRPD, gender equality, non-discrimination and other related matters. Similar trainings to equip social welfare officers, judges, court personnel, prosecutors and law enforcement investigators in handling cases involving children, including those with disabilities, are also being conducted by the training arm of the SC, the Philippine Judicial Academy, to increase awareness and demonstrate the sensitivities needed in handling child abuse cases, child trafficking, etc., and foster proper management of judicial proceedings to provide a more child-sensitive environment.

Article 14

Liberty and security of the person

Repeal of Rule 101

86. Rule 101 of the Rules of Court pertaining to hospitalization of “insane” persons is under review by a Committee formed by the SC.

Deinstitutionalization

87. Section 37 of the Philippine Mental Health Act (RA 11036) promotes deinstitutionalization and other recovery-based approaches to the delivery of mental health care services.

88. Section 12 of the same law also mandates all mental health facilities to create their respective Internal Review Boards (IRBs) to expeditiously review all cases, disputes, and controversies involving the treatment, restraint, or confinement of service users within their facilities.

89. Sections 30 and 31 of RA 11036 mandate both the CHR and the DOH to safeguard service users’ rights to protection against torture or cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment, as well as to provide a safe, hygienic, and therapeutic environment with sufficient privacy. Accordingly, the service users shall be assured of appropriate treatment, confinement, or care.

90. The DOH and the CHR issued the “Guidelines on the Creation of the Mental Health Internal Review Board and Providing for its Rules of Practice” (AO 2023-0001) to provide the rules of practice to operationalize the IRB for the efficient disposition of all proceedings, matters, and cases referred to or reviewed by it. This also clearly delineates roles and functions, and streamlines the process of addressing violations, disputes, or complaints against mental health facilities.

91. Basic Training and Training of Trainers capacity-building activities for the creation of an IRB were conducted during the last quarter of 2022. The initiative capacitated service users, care providers, service user organizations, mental and public health professionals through the Basic training on the IRB. Mapping of Service Users Organizations (SUs) and potential IRB pool were also initiated in preparation for the membership for the creation of IRBs in mental health facilities.

92. A policy cascade forum on the said Joint Administrative Order No. 2023-00001 took place in April 2023. IRB trainings and SUs accreditations remain as continuing efforts.

93. For institutionalization, informed consent is one of the fundamental human rights upheld by RA 11036, in accordance with the Philippine Constitutional Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UNCRPD, and all other relevant international and regional human rights conventions and declarations. Section 8 of RA 11036 specifically states that service users must provide informed consent in writing prior to the implementation by mental health professionals, workers, and other service providers of any plan or program of therapy or treatment, including physical or chemical restraint.

94. Section 13 of the same law provides the exceptions to informed consent where it is stated that it is only during psychiatric or neurologic emergencies, or when there is impairment or temporary loss of decision-making capacity in whether physical or chemical, may be administered or implemented pursuant to the following safeguards and conditions:

(a) In compliance with the service user's advance directives, if available, unless doing so would pose an immediate risk of serious harm to the patient or another person;

(b) Only to the extent that such treatment or restraint is necessary, and only while a psychiatric or neurologic emergency, or impairment or temporary loss of capacity, exists or persists;

(c) Upon the order of the service user's attending mental health professional, which order must be reviewed by the IRB of the mental health facility where the patient is being treated within fifteen days from the date such order was issued, and every fifteen days thereafter while the treatment or restraint continues; and

(d) That such involuntary treatment or restraint shall be in strict accordance with guidelines approved by the appropriate authorities, which must contain clear criteria regulating the application and termination of such medical intervention, and fully documented and subject to regular external independent monitoring, review, and audit by the IRB established by RA 11036.

95. In the case of Impairment or Temporary Loss of Decision-Making Capacity, a legal representative may be appointed in writing by the service user to act on their behalf. A service user may set out their preference in relation to treatment through a signed, dated, and notarized advance directive executed for the purpose. An advance directive may be revoked by a new advance directive or by a notarized revocation.

96. As mandated by Section 13 of RA 11036, the DOH in coordination with the CHR and other relevant stakeholders issued the "Guidelines for Informed Consent, Supported Decision Making, Advance Directives, and Legal Representation", providing instructions on how to obtain and document informed consent, advance directive, legal representative, and supported decision making.

97. The State, through the DOH, is in the process of drafting a policy on informed consent for special populations and assent for minors, which shall be published in 2024.

Article 16

Freedom from exploitation, violence, and abuse

98. Intensifying the State's efforts in addressing domestic violence and abuse directed at women and children with disabilities involves a whole-of-nation approach, with key government agencies taking the lead while ensuring that other stakeholders from the private sector are consulted, engaged, and collaborated with.

(a) Complaint mechanisms

As the lead agency providing social protection, the DSWD hails the inclusion of GBV and VAWC incidents as among the cases that can be reported through the 911 National Emergency Hotline, which is open to all victims of VAWC and GBV, including women and children with disabilities. In December 2021, a JMC was signed by the DSWD, DOJ, DILG, PCW, PNP, Australian Embassy, and other NGOs to strengthen the national and local structures in addressing VAWC and GBV. A toll-free hotline service further enhances accessibility and convenience for reporting cases of violence or abuse anytime and anywhere in the country.

In 2022, the CWC launched the MAKABATA Helpline, a pilot project aimed at developing protocols and technology in facilitating immediate coordination and referral of cases involving children for appropriate intervention/response, and monitoring. The Helpline strengthens the CWC's commitment to serve and protect children in situations of armed conflict as mandated by law, and those experiencing other protection issues, such as abuse, neglect, exploitation, and/or discrimination. The CWC is partnering with various stakeholders through a Memorandum of Understanding to intensify the Helpline's referral system. As of May 2023, the MAKABATA Helpline has received 138 reports focused on inquiries on child rights and reported cases of rape, sexual abuse, child support, physical abuse, acts of lasciviousness, among others. Two of these reports were specifically related to children with disabilities, and were promptly referred to the local social welfare and development office concerned for appropriate intervention.

(b) Awareness-Raising and Capacity-Building

The DSWD capacitated its Social Welfare Officers on how to use sign language to assist victim-survivors with speech disabilities. It also conducts regular training programs for those who are directly implementing the programs and services for women and children with disabilities including those that are employed in the DSWD Residential Care Facilities for women and children with disabilities.

(c) Redress mechanisms

In 2022, the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials Act (CSAEM) (RA 11930) was enacted. The law addresses legal gaps by defining and penalizing OSAEC as a separate crime from those punished under other existing laws. Significantly, Section 29 of the law, pertaining to "Reasonable Accommodation for Children with Disabilities", mandates the DOJ and DSWD to develop guidelines aligned with the provisions of the UNCRPD to ensure disability-inclusivity in all stages of OSAEC/CSAEM case management. It likewise mandates the SC to produce its own guidelines to ensure that children with disabilities have access to justice. The DOJ and DSWD are also mandated to extend all necessary legal assistance and support to the city or municipal social welfare and development office for any legal impediment that may arise in performing their functions in assuming temporary protective custody as another form of technical assistance and resource augmentation. Furthermore, the law provides that offenders whose victims acquire a disability as a result of the offense are ineligible for parole.

The IRR of RA 11930 is currently being developed, and the NCDA is part of the technical working group to provide a disability lens in the implementation of the law.

(d) Other Efforts to Address VAWC and GBV

To further enhance the protection of women and children against rape and other forms of sexual abuse, an amendment to the Anti-Rape Law of 1997 took effect in 2022. This increased the age for determining statutory rape from 12 to 16 years of age, and makes statutory rape gender-neutral.

The DSWD introduced the concept of Women and Children-Friendly Spaces, a formal or informal place where women and girls can feel physically and emotionally safe. The term "safe" is used to refer to a space when there is the absence of violence,

trauma, threat to safety, and fear. The guidelines in the institutionalization of Women Friendly Space in Camp Coordination and Camp Management in 2025 was also issued. The DSWD adheres to the “Standards in the Implementation of Psycho-social Services to Women Victims-survivors of Violence and their Children in Center and Residential Facilities” (AO No. 4, s. 2006). These standards apply to all centers and residential care facilities dedicated to assisting women victim-survivors of violence and their children. Its main objective is for the protection and promotion of women’s rights towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination and VAWC with gender-sensitive policies in its Manual of Operations. Notably, these guidelines firmly prioritize disability-inclusivity as a fundamental principle.

Residential care facilities for women and children with disabilities under DSWD include the following facilities:

- *National/Regional Haven for Women* in NCR and Regions I, III, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, catering to women ages 18–59 years who are victims of involuntary or forced prostitution, illegal recruitment, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and armed conflict among others;
- *Haven for Women and Girls* in the Cordillera Administrative Region and Regions II, V, XI, XII and IV-A, for women and girls ages 7–59 years old who are victims of physical and sexual abuse, involuntary prostitution, illegal recruitment, trafficking; and
- *Sanctuary* in NCR for women ages 17–59 years old who are improved from mental illness due to various circumstances.

99. Trafficking in persons is another concern that the State addresses via a multisectoral approach, with the IACAT, chaired by DOJ, taking the lead.

(e) Policy and Legislation

In December 2022, the IACAT passed a resolution approving the 2022 Revised IRR of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (RA 9208), as amended by RA 10364 (Expanded Anti-TIP Act of 2012) and further amended by RA 11862 (Expanded Anti-TIP Act of 2022). The amended law outlines a disability-inclusive recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration of trafficked persons into mainstream of society. To highlight this disability-inclusive approach, RA 11862 mandates the NCDA to develop programs aimed at preventing trafficking in persons with disabilities and extending assistance to trafficked individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, the aforementioned IRR provides the following strategies to monitor the status of persons with disabilities as far as TIP is concerned and consequently develop appropriate measures to prevent such instances:

- Authorities to whom a report of a suspected or alleged TIP incident is made shall immediately get the pertinent details of the TIP incident from the person who made the report, such as, but not limited to, the name, address, age, gender, nationality, ethnicity of the trafficked person, and whether they are with or without disability; and
- Data on trafficked persons and the accused/defendants is collected and disaggregated by age, sex, ethnicity, and type of disability, if any, which is then included and maintained in a database shared among relevant agencies, to complement the central database established by the IACAT.

Under RA 11862, women and girls, including those with disabilities, are accorded heightened protection as tighter control and enforcement measures are in place against internet intermediaries, financial institutions, and other entities that knowingly or negligently permit their services, online platforms, and applications, among others, to be used for promoting trafficking. Law enforcers are also mandated to expedite resolution of cases by initiating investigation and counter-trafficking intelligence gathering within ten days upon receipt of statements, reports, or affidavits.

The DSWD established the “Roles and Responsibilities of the DSWD, its Bureaus, Units and Field Offices and the City/Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO/MSWDO) in the Implementation of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9208)” (AO 73, series of 2003). This AO outlines the DSWD’s responsibilities as a member of the IACAT, including the provision of psycho-social counseling, shelter, and other support services to victims or survivors of trafficking and their families. In accordance with the same AO, the DSWD carries out the “Guidelines in the Implementation of the Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons” which provides detailed procedures of the implementation of the DSWD’s recovery and reintegration program for trafficked persons to ensure improved program access and intensify effective and efficient delivery of comprehensive services. The program beneficiaries include victim-survivors of trafficking, their families, witnesses of human trafficking cases, and communities affected by incidents of human trafficking.

(f) Awareness-Raising

As part of the IACAT’s efforts to raise public awareness about RA 11862, informational materials highlighting key provisions of the amended law are disseminated in the official online pages/sites of various government agencies.

Annually, in accordance with Proclamation No. 1172, (s. 2006), an 18-day Campaign to End VAW is observed.

(g) Other Efforts Related to TIP

At the national level, help desks are established in strategic locations to provide assistance during holidays. At the local level, the GAD Focal Point System, members of the LCPC, and LCAT VAWC manage the help desks, including the Barangay/Local VAWC desks. The LCAT VAWC is also responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the anti-TIP law.

In terms of social rehabilitation services, the DSWD provides temporary shelter, psychosocial services, and other need-based assistance. Notably, the DSWD has a dedicated TIP Center that caters specifically to TIP victim-survivors. Additionally, as co-chair of the IACAT, the DSWD facilitates the reporting of trafficking incidents and ensures the accessibility of reporting mechanisms. This includes the utilization of the IACAT 1343 ACTIONLINE, a 24/7 telephone hotline dedicated to reporting cases of TIP.

At the local level, the DILG monitors the accomplishments of LGUs in the implementation of anti-TIP measures in the following stages:

- *Prevention:* This involves the establishment of Migrant Advisory & Information Network Desks, development of information and education campaign (IEC) materials, conduct of IEC campaigns, and organization of symposia, trainings, and seminars on anti-trafficking;
- *Protection:* This concerns the proper referral of victims of trafficking to auxiliary services and witness protection programs, and provision of temporary shelter;
- *Recovery/rehabilitation:* This concerns the provision of counselling services, medical and educational support/assistance, and referral of trafficking victims to the claims board; and
- *Reintegration:* This involves the provision of livelihood assistance/skills training for victims of trafficking.

Article 17

Protecting the integrity of the person

100. Ensuring the quality of care in family planning (FP) necessitates the protection of the rights of FP clients by service providers at all times. The rights of FP clients, especially the

right to information and choice, are upheld through appropriate FP counseling. It is crucial that clients have the capacity to make voluntary and informed choices based on accurate, balanced, and complete information. DOH AO 2011-0005 defines “informed choice and voluntarism” (ICV) as “a standard in the delivery of FP services, ensuring that clients freely make their own decision based on accurate and complete information on a broad range of available modern FP methods, and not by any special inducements or forms of coercion or misinterpretation.”

Article 19

Living independently and being included in the community

Legislation

101. Pending for consideration is Senate Bill No. 1602, which is aimed at promoting the full and meaningful participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of community development on an equal footing with others through the establishment of a Disability Support Fund (DSF). The DSF will serve as an additional social protection measure for persons with disabilities and their families as consumers of rehabilitation, habilitation, and disability support services, especially during their early years of intervention and education. It will also link them to referral services and information, individualized plans and funding support when necessary, throughout the lifetime of persons with disabilities.

Community-based support services

102. The DSWD issued the “Guidelines on the Implementation of the Cash-for-Work Program for Persons with Disabilities”, which provides for cash support in exchange for the agreed community work/services/tasks rendered, thereby facilitating community participation and economic inclusion for persons with disabilities. It also serves as a short-term intervention, through temporary employment or a targeted cash transfer intervention, for no-income or low-income households with at least one member with disability.

103. The State ensures affordable housing for persons with disabilities through the National Housing Authority (NHA). In 2021, the NHA issued MC 2021-041, which provides guidelines for the implementation of a Special Housing Program for Persons with Disabilities. On the same year, NHA issued MC 2021-057, which details the technical aspects of housing units to ensure compliance of all NHA Housing Development Projects to the Accessibility Law. These MCs are subject to review every three years in consultation with the disability sector.

104. In promoting independent living, the State also established the following facilities for persons with disabilities:

- *National Vocational Rehabilitation Center* in NCR and the *Area Vocational Rehabilitation Centers* in Regions I, VII, and IX, which provide vocational/social rehabilitation and skills training for socio-economic independence and productivity;
- *Rehabilitation Sheltered Workshop* in NCR and Region IX, which employs persons with disabilities for socio-economic independence and productivity; and
- *Center for the Handicapped* in Region XII, which facilitates the integration in the mainstream of society through basic communication skills development, skills training, and employment.

105. The State also provides reasonable accommodation in its licensure examinations, as evidenced by the existence of licensed professionals with disabilities in different fields. Significantly, in 2023, Anthony Mark Emocling made history by becoming the first ever blind lawyer to be admitted to the Philippine Bar.

Article 20

Personal mobility

106. The State, through the NCDA, annually allocates a budget for the provision of mobility aids and assistive devices by way of augmentation. The DSWD and NCDA institutionalized the provision of auxiliary social services through the publication of a Manual on Auxiliary Services for Persons with Disabilities, which, among others, provides a policy for the provision of technical, financial, and logistical support to organizations of persons with disabilities.

107. To aid in the provision of quality and affordable mobility aids and assistive devices, the State, through the DOH, offers the PhilHealth Z Benefit Package for children with disabilities. This includes seating devices, wheelchairs, prosthesis, orthosis, and physical and occupational therapy for those with mobility impairments; assessment diagnostic tests, hearing devices, and speech therapy for those with hearing impairments; assessment, electronic and non-electronic devices, mobility training, and device use for those with visual impairments; and assessment rehabilitation sessions for those with developmental issues.

108. The State also offers the PhilHealth Z MORPH Package for adults with disabilities. This includes prosthesis for below the knee levels of amputation and for lower and upper limb levels of amputation. Additionally, it covers orthosis for lower limb and spine paralysis, weakness, deformities, stabilization, and rehabilitation sessions.

Article 21

Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information

109. In compliance with the recommendation to amend Section 22 of RA 7277 related to measures to ensure that persons with hearing impairments are provided with language subtitles in its newscast programs, the State passed the Closed Captioning Law (RA 10905), which requires all television stations and producers of television programs to broadcast their content with closed captions or subtitles. The State, through the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB), the lead implementer of said law, issued MC No. 04-2016 for the IRR of RA 10905. The MTRCB, in developing further revisions to this IRR to give more teeth to the law, is in the process of consulting the deaf and hard of hearing community and other stakeholders and duty-bearers, including the television networks and cable channel providers. MTRCB is also in the process of issuing rules for the Filipino Sign Language insets in live broadcasts of newscasts, pursuant to the IRR of RA 11106.

Article 24

Education

Legislation

110. On March 2022, RA 11650 was enacted. This comprehensive law covers all areas relevant to the full inclusion and development of learners with disabilities, including provisions on the institution of ILRCs, creation of multidisciplinary teams, strengthening of child find systems for the early detection/prevention of disabilities, development of individualized education plans, and provision of budgetary allocations for the realization of the law's objectives, among others.

111. Some of the objectives of the law include:

- Provide learners with disabilities with free and appropriate public early and basic education and support and related services to prepare them for independent living and community life;
- Ensure that learners with disabilities have access to the general education system through formal school systems, including the implementation of alternative delivery modes, in accordance with the UNCRPD, among others;
- Promote the full participation of learners with disabilities as active members of society;

- Foster significant and positive changes in community orientation towards disability, to ensure that learners with disabilities are understood, appreciated, and respected for their differences;
- Provide parents or guardians of learners with disabilities information and opportunities to actively participate in the determination of educational placement options and programs, enabling them to make informed choices and decisions;
- Equip and empower teachers with the necessary skills to detect, refer, or introduce interventions regarding disorders, disabilities, and abilities of learners;
- Increase school retention and cohort survival of learners with disabilities; and
- Establish an effective consultative mechanism that actively involves learners with disabilities.

112. To support these objectives, the law mandated the creation of an Inter-Agency Coordinating Council for Learners with Disabilities. This council includes representatives from various government agencies, with the DepEd serving as Chair, the DOH and DSWD as Co-Chairs, and Department of Finance, DPWH, DILG, and NCDA.

113. The law provides for the development of a multi-year roadmap that shall indicate targets for the progressive realization of inclusive education. Additionally, a timeline of five years is provided for the compliance of all public and private basic educational institutions with the provisions of the law.

114. At present, the IRR of said law has undergone two batches of week-long writeshops, under the leadership of the DepEd and participated in by representatives from concerned NGAs, the academe, organizations of persons with disabilities, and other CSOs. More writeshops and consultative sessions are still underway.

115. In the meantime, the DepEd intensified the implementation of its SPED Program to provide adequate and essential skills and values to learners with disabilities to prepare them for independent living and employment. Relevant to this pursuit are the following:

- “Institutionalization of Multi-Factored Assessment Tool” (DepEd Order No. 29, s. 2018);
- “Policy Guidelines on the Adoption of the K to 12 Transition Curriculum Framework for Learners with Disabilities” (DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2020);
- “Policy Guidelines on the Provision of Educational Programs and Services for Learners with Disabilities in the K to 12 Basic Education Program” (DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2021); and
- “Policy Guidelines on the Selection of and Minimum Requirements for the Conversion of Certain Schools with SPED Centers into Prototype Inclusive Learning Resource Centers” (DepEd Order No. 45, s. 2021), including the amendment thereto (DepEd Order No. 15, s. 2022).

116. Additionally, the State, through the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), implements programs, projects, and policies geared towards inclusion, as part of the National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan. This plan includes a two-pronged strategy, namely: (1) Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) for Global Competitiveness and Workforce Readiness, and (2) TVET for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction.

Table 5
Accomplishments in terms of persons with disabilities served from 2018 to 2022

	<i>Enrolled</i>	<i>Graduates</i>	<i>Assessed</i>	<i>Certified</i>
<i>No. of Persons with Disabilities</i>	45 378 (including 14 178 scholars)	43 080	6 390	6 003

Universal design

117. The principle of universal design is embedded in RA 11650. Specifically, Section 6 of the law mandates that all ILRCs shall adopt universal design and UDL concepts as defined in Section 4 thereof, to wit:

(a) Universal Design as defined in the UNCRPD, refers to the design of product, environments, programs, and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal design” shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed; and

(b) Universal Design for Learning (UDL) refers to a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that:

- (i) Provides flexibility in the way information is presented, students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and their engagement; and
- (ii) Reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports mental and physical challenges, and maintain high achievement expectations for all students, including learners with disabilities.

It also refers to a set of principles that guides the design of inclusive classroom instruction and accessible course materials. The three (3) principles of UDL are:

- (i) *Recognition* – refers to multiple methods of representation that give learners a variety of ways to acquire information and build knowledge;
- (ii) *Strategic Learning* – refers to multiple means of student action and expression that provide learners, alternative modes for demonstration what they have learned; and
- (iii) *Affective Learning* – refers to multiple modes of student engagement that tap into learners’ interests, challenge them appropriately, and motivate them to learn.”

118. Through the “Inclusive Education Policy Framework for Basic Education” (DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019), the DepEd paved the way for the realization of ILRCs by starting the conversion of select SPED Centers in 2021. There are 16 SPED Centers converted into ILRCs for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021–2022. For FY 2023, another 16 SPED Centers are being converted into ILRCs.

Reasonable accommodation

119. The concept of reasonable accommodation is well-recognized in RA 11650. It is defined in Section 4(q) as “the necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure learners with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms including their right to quality education”. Section 4(s), in defining Special Needs Education as “the customized instructional program or service designed to meet the diverse needs of an individual with disability”, also refers to the provision of reasonable accommodations, as may be needed. Further, the inclusion policy for learners with disability in Section 5 mandates that all learners with disabilities, whether in public or private schools, shall be accorded reasonable accommodation based on their respective individualized education plans.

Accessibility of learning materials at technical and higher education levels

120. SDG 4.5 targets access to all levels of education and vocational training for persons with disabilities, while SDG 4(a) targets disability-inclusive education facilities and learning environments. Aside from the legislative and policy developments in the Philippines to contribute to these targets, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) works towards ensuring accessibility of learning materials at technical and higher education levels for persons with disabilities.

121. In particular, the State, through the CHED, issued the following policies and guidelines related to the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities:

(a) Student Affairs Services (CMO No. 09, series of 2013, CMO No. 08, s. 2021)

This provides that higher education institutions (HEI) should have programs and activities designed to give equal opportunities to persons with disabilities. Specifically, HEIs shall ensure academic accommodations to persons with disabilities with proper consultation and conference with students with disabilities themselves, together with their teachers, parents/guardian/s, personal assistant/s, and other concerned professionals, whenever necessary.

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, CHED enjoined HEIs to enhance the delivery of student affairs services programs to help students adjust to the learning environment changes that the pandemic brought about, as well as prepare them for the resumption of classes under the new normal.

(b) CHED Scholarship Program (CSP) (CMO No. 08, s. 2019)

Through this program, undergraduate scholarships are provided to qualified and deserving Filipino students, with a preference to those belonging to special groups of individuals, including persons with disabilities.

Table 6
Breakdown of CSP beneficiaries with disabilities

Academic Year	No. of Beneficiaries with Disabilities	No. of Persons with Disabilities Beneficiaries Graduates
AY 2020–2021	96	519
AY 2021–2022	134	603

(c) CHED Cares Project

This aims to prepare students to become resilient in the face of adversity and achieve academic success even during uncertain times through a mental health program. The pilot implementation is underway, pending the signing of a memorandum of agreement between CHED and a lead HEI.

122. The State, through TESDA, offers different scholarship programs to ensure equitable access to TVET. In 2022 alone, a total of 14,178 TESDA scholars with disabilities were recorded. The TESDA also enables individuals with mobility concerns to register and avail of free online programs through the TESDA Online Program (TOP), a web-based platform that offers free Massive Open Online Courses for the technical education and skills development of Filipino workers. Using ICT, TOP provides an effective and efficient way to deliver technical-vocational education and training at the learner's own space and time. TESDA technology institutions prioritize accessibility by providing wheelchair ramps and express lanes for frontline services.

Article 25

Health

123. The State, through the DOH, is dedicated to offering universal access to health services to all Filipinos, including sexual and reproductive health services for women and girls with disabilities, as well as persons with psychosocial disabilities. The DOH provides various FP services, including education on reproductive health, assessment of FP needs, prevention and management of reproductive tract infections and other sexually transmitted infections, management of gynecologic conditions, and addressing GBV.

124. The DOH offers medically safe, non-abortifacient, effective, legal, affordable, and quality reproductive health care services, methods, devices, and supplies for contraception, as well as maternal health services such as antenatal care, pregnancy tracking, facility-based births attended by skilled health professionals, the development of a written birth plan, provision of supplements and immunizations, emergency care, among others.

125. The DOH also provides specific interventions for adolescent reproductive health services, including education on responsible sexual behavior and referrals for proper care. Adolescents who are observed to manifest signs of health related red-flags (sexual, mental) are provided with health and psychosocial support in adolescent-friendly health facilities. Furthermore, all rural health units and urban health centers are linked to a referral facility specific and appropriate to the type of disability. A Mother and Child Book containing health information is also available to the public.

126. Additionally, the DOH offers interventions specific for HIV, including HIV prevention, antiretroviral therapy, and vaccination for women living with HIV. The DOH aims to further expand comprehensive reproductive health services to special and vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities.

127. The DOH, in its role as Chair of the Sub-Committee on Health under the NCDA, works closely with the NCDA to ensure the provision of disability-sensitive services to women and children with disabilities, as well as individuals with psychosocial disabilities. The concerns of groups with neurodevelopmental disorders that cause disabilities are also factored in through consultative meetings.

128. In order to effectively train healthcare professionals in providing sexual and reproductive health care education and services in accordance with the UNCRPD, the DOH conducts courses such as the Adolescent Health Care for Primary Service Providers-Foundational Course, Adolescent Health Education and Practical Training, Adolescent Job Aid, Mental Health Gap Programs, and Training on Recognition, Recording, Reporting, and Referral of Abused Women and Children. These courses utilize mental and psychosocial risk assessment tools that are inclusive and age-and-development appropriate.

Article 26

Habilitation and rehabilitation

129. The State, through the DOH, is enhancing the service capabilities of health facilities for rehabilitation purposes. The Philippine Health Facility Development Plan 2020–2040 is the main plan for upgrading and investing in government health facilities. Under this plan, DOH hospitals will be upgraded to become Specialty Hospitals for 16 health specialties, including care for brain and spine, burn, cancer, cardiovascular, dermatology, eye, geriatric, infectious disease and tropical medicine, lung, mental health, neonatal, orthopedic, physical rehabilitation, kidney transplant, toxicology, and trauma.

130. In 2022, the DOH issued the “Mandatory Procurement Timeline in the Issuance of Notices and Execution of Contracts” (Department Order No. 2022-0405), which simplified and streamlined procurement procedures in accordance with the prescribed timelines under the IRR of the Government Procurement Reform Act (RA 9184). This is complemented by a DOH Customized Procurement Manual to guide practitioners in the DOH Central Office, Centers for Health Development, DOH Hospitals, and the Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers, including attached agencies.

Article 27

Work and employment

131. The pertinent law for ensuring workplace-inclusion for persons with disabilities is RA 10524 (An Act Expanding the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disability). This effectively expands the quota system by increasing the number of positions reserved for persons with disabilities. It mandates that at least 1% of all positions in all government agencies be designated for individuals with disabilities. Said law also encourages private corporations with at least 100 employees to reserve at least 1% of positions to persons with disabilities. As an incentive, these corporations are eligible for a tax deduction equivalent to 25% of the total amount paid to persons with disabilities per Section 8 of the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities.

132. The NCDA's Sub-Committee on Training, Employment, and Livelihood, chaired by the DOLE, tackles updates on the implementation of the aforementioned measures quarterly. A major project includes the development of the 2023–2025 Philippine Development Plan on employment of persons with disabilities.

133. The State, through the NCDA, partnered with the Philippine Business and Disability Network (PBDN), an NGO comprised of various multinational corporations and local companies sharing the common goal of promoting disability inclusion in the workplace. In 2022, the inaugural PBDN Conference took place, where private companies shared their best practices in employing and mainstreaming persons with disabilities in the workplace. Government agencies likewise provided updates on pertinent laws and programs, fostering closer ties between the private and public sectors, consistent with the State's whole-of-nation approach in fulfilling with its international obligations. The best practices shared include various forms of reasonable accommodation, as well as structural designs that are in line with the latest in international developments in universal design.

134. To further promote availability of work for persons with disabilities, Section 1 of RA 10070, which established PDAOs, prioritizes qualified persons with disabilities to head PDAOs and to be designated as focal persons. At present, the NCDA is putting together an updated directory of PDAOs and focal persons, which shall serve as a monitoring tool to assess the percentage of positions held by persons with disabilities themselves. Additionally, preparations are underway for establishment of a Disability Affairs Academy, which is aimed at upskilling persons with disabilities so that more members of the sector qualify for these positions.

135. The DOLE, as a matter of practice, provides special lanes for jobseekers with disabilities, and is also in the process of reviewing its Guidelines for the Conduct of Job Fairs, adopting accessibility principles therein.

Table 7
Data regarding DOLE-inspected establishments for years 2019–2022

Year	Inspected Establishments (IEs)		Inspected Establishments employing PWDs		Provision of Ramps/Railings within Work Premises		Compliance to Accessibility Law (BP 344)	
	No. of IEs covered	No. of workers	No. of IEs covered	No. of PWDs employed	No. of IEs with violations	Compliance rate (%)	No. of IEs with violations	Compliance rate (%)
2022	81 314	4 498 048	114	409	18	99.98	0	100
2021	59 105	2 675 656	255	692	74	99.87	0	100
2020	14 659	2 038 071	115	368	49	99.67	1	99.99
2019	67 686	2 944 211	362	1 159	305	99.55	2	99.99

136. The Employees' Compensation Commission also launched a Return-To-Work Assistance Program, which is an interdisciplinary approach to rehabilitation, services, and support that goes beyond typical medical care for a worker who has suffered from work-related incidents. This also includes the provision of prostheses and other assistive devices.

137. To contribute to SDG 8.5, various legislative measures i.e. House Bill Nos. 1505, 1920, 2252, 2284, and 5473, are filed with the aim of providing employment opportunities to jobseekers in disadvantaged situations, including persons with disabilities. The SC has definitively stated in the case of *Bernardo v. National Labor Relations Commission* (GR No. 122917, 12 July 1999) that by virtue of RA 7277, persons with disabilities are entitled to the same terms and conditions as other employees without disabilities, and are entitled to all the benefits granted by existing laws. This gives life to the principle of “equal pay for equal work”.

138. The State, through the DILG, partnered with various agencies in the implementation of its Strengthening Initiatives for Balanced Growth and Opportunities at the Localities (SIBOL) Program, which seeks to improve employment opportunities in local communities

by enhancing the Public Employment Service Office. This includes providing timely and accurate job information on job vacancies and skills requirements, as well as strengthening partnerships with private enterprises to encourage investment and job creation. The SIBOL Program also aims to provide training for targeted beneficiaries in priority sectors such as persons with disabilities.

Article 28

Adequate standard of living and social protection

Criteria for clean water, food, and housing

139. The State, through the DSWD, has established group homes for persons with disabilities under the “Enriched Guidelines in the Operation of Group Home for Neglected, Abandoned, Abused, Unattached, and Poor Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities”. These homes are designed to provide community-based living arrangement with six to eight people each, allowing them to experience independent group living in a homelike atmosphere under the supervision of a social worker. This aims to protect poor, abandoned, and unattached persons with disabilities, offer opportunities for personal development, and restore social functioning and community participation.

Disaggregated data

140. In 2016, the State, through the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), implemented the 2016 National Disability Prevalence Survey/Model Functioning Survey. This initiative was undertaken in accordance with the UNCRPD, adopting the Model Disability Survey based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF).

141. The 2020 Census of Population and Housing included questions on Functional Difficulty for all persons 5 years and over as shown below:

POPULATION CENSUS QUESTIONS 3C									
GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: 1. WRITE THE ANSWER/DETAILED DESCRIPTION ON THE LINES PROVIDED. 2. WRITE THE NUMBER OR CODE CORRESPONDING TO THE ANSWER IN THE BOX/ES. 3. REFER TO THE CODE BOOK FOR THE CODES IN ITEMS P9, P11, AND P12.									
FOR ALL PERSONS			FOR ALL PERSONS 5 YEARS OLD AND OVER						
Religious Affiliation	Citizenship		Ethnicity	Functional Difficulty					
P9	P10	P11	P12	P13					
L I N E N U M B E R	<i>What is _____'s religious affiliation?</i> 1 YES, Filipino citizen 2 YES, Filipino with dual citizenship 3 NO IF CODE “1”, GO TO ITEM P12.	<i>Is _____ a citizen of the Philippines?</i> 1 YES, Filipino citizen 2 YES, Filipino with dual citizenship 3 NO	<i>What country/other country is _____ a citizen of?</i> <i>What is _____'s ethnicity by descent/blood relation/consanguinity?</i> <i>Is he/she a/an _____?</i> MENTION THE PREDOMINANT/COMMON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (IP) OR NON-IP GROUPS IN THE AREA.	<i>The following questions ask about difficulties a person may have doing certain activities because of a HEALTH PROBLEM.</i> <i>Does _____ have any difficulty/problem in...?</i>					
				a	b	c	d	e	f
				Seeing, even if wearing glasses	Hearing, even if using hearing aid	Walking or climbing steps	Remembering or concentrating	Self-caring (such as washing all over or dressing)	Communicating using his/her usual (customary) language
				MENTION THESE CATEGORIES:					
1 – NO, no difficulty		2 – YES, some of difficulty		3 – YES, a lot do it at all		4 – Cannot			

142. PSA spearheaded the implementation of the Community-Based Monitoring System, which includes questions regarding persons with disabilities for all household members. The System covers the following areas:

PERSONS WITH DISABILITY										
FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS										
(15) Does any member of this household have a disability?					YES 1 <input type="checkbox"/> NO 2 GO TO L19					
		HH MEMBER 1			HH MEMBER 2			HH MEMBER 3		
(16) Who among the household members have disability?		LINE NUMBER		<input type="checkbox"/>	LINE NUMBER		<input type="checkbox"/>	LINE NUMBER		<input type="checkbox"/>
(17) Which among the following type of disability/ies does (NAME) have?		DISABILITY 1	DISABILITY 2	DISABILITY 3	DISABILITY 1	DISABILITY 2	DISABILITY 3	DISABILITY 1	DISABILITY 2	DISABILITY 3
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SEE CODES BELOW		SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY	SPECIFY
(18) Has (NAME)'s disability/ies been diagnosed by a doctor?										
YES 1										
NO 2		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CODES FOR (17) TYPE OF DISABILITIES										
A VISUAL DISABILITY	D LEARNING DISABILITY			G PYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITY						
B DEAF OR HEARING DISABILITY	E MENTAL DISABILITY			H SPEECH AND LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT						
C INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	F PHYSICAL DISABILITY (ORTHOPEDIC)			Z OTHERS, SPECIFY						

143. The Labor Force Survey also gathers information on household members who are 15 years old and over with functional difficulty based on the ICF concepts and definition.

144. The Philippine's Social Protection Index is currently under development through a collaborative effort between the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), PSA, and UNICEF.

Social protection schemes

145. In 2022, the DSWD, in partnership with the UNICEF and Life Haven, Inc., launched the findings on the study pertaining to the "Cost of Raising Children with Disabilities". The main result of the study found that it costs 40–80% more to raise a child with disability than a child without disability. These findings are being used by the NCDA and other government agencies to advocate for the passage in both chambers of Congress the DSF Bill, which aims to provide additional social protection for persons with disabilities in the form of a monthly allowance.

146. Additionally, there are other pending bills aimed at promoting economic inclusion for the disability sector in line with SDG 10.2:

- SB 1980 – An Act Requiring Free Parking in Commercial Establishments for Senior Citizens, Persons with Disabilities, and Validated Customers;
- SB 1480 – An Act Rationalizing the Disability Pension of Veterans;
- SB 1442 – An Act Providing Equal Cash Incentives to National Athletes and Athletes with Disabilities Who Win Medals in International Sports Competitions;
- SB 1443 – An Act Granting Additional Privileges to Persons with Disabilities;
- SB 311 – An Act Increasing the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disabilities.

Article 29

Participation in Political and Public Life

147. The State, through the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), has taken steps to address discriminatory provisions that prevent persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities from exercising their rights to vote and run for elections.

148. The Accessible Polling Places Act mandates the COMELEC to establish voting precincts called Accessible Polling Place (APP) exclusively for persons with disabilities and senior citizens who express their intention to avail of a separate precinct. In line with this, COMELEC Resolutions have been issued in every conduct of nationwide election to implement the rules regarding APPs.

149. In 2019, the issuance of COMELEC Minute Resolution No. 19-1134 led to the creation Emergency Accessible Polling Places (EAPPs), which are temporary polling places established on the first floor or on the ground level of a voting center, or in close proximity to it, where persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and heavily pregnant voters can cast their votes on election day. These EAPPs serve as an additional option alongside existing APPs.

150. Under the same resolution, the COMELEC also established Satellite-EAPPs (S-EAPP), which are EAPPs located inside homes or residences, including rehabilitation centers and sheltered workshops, where persons with disabilities and/or senior citizens are living or outside thereof but in close proximity thereto.

151. Also in 2019, the COMELEC created the Vulnerable Sectors Office, which aims to facilitate the electoral participation of various vulnerable groups, namely, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, and Persons Deprived of Liberty.

152. The COMELEC and NCDA are also members of the technical working group working on a Senate Bill which seeks to provide alternative modes of voting for highly vulnerable sectors to exercise their right of suffrage. This bill seeks to include pregnant women, internally displaced persons, and repatriated migrant workers, and to provide an option for local absentee voting for these sectors. Members of the disability sector are likewise invited in technical working group meetings to address concerns experienced during previous elections and to ensure the safety and sanctity of the votes of persons with disabilities.

153. For the upcoming *Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan*⁵ in October 2023, the COMELEC is going to conduct a pilot test for early voting for the vulnerable sectors in selected areas in the country.

Article 30

Participation in Cultural Life, Recreation, Leisure, and Sport

Marrakesh Treaty

154. The Philippines acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty on November 2018 and deposited its instrument of accession with the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva, Switzerland on December 2018. To fully implement this, the State, through the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL), published the Philippine Marrakesh Regulations which took effect on March 2020.

155. At present, there are three recognized authorized entities with the ability to import and export books in accessible formats: DepEd, National Library of the Philippines, and Resources for the Blind, Inc. As authorized entities, they are granted approval to create and share accessible format copies.

156. In compliance with the Marrakesh Treaty, the DepEd has translated the following learning materials into accessible formats: (a) 500 self-learning modules into video materials,

⁵ Youth Council.

with funding from UNICEF; (b) 47 textbook tiles of K-12 learning resources; and, (c) 171 sheets of tactile materials for different subjects.

Sports

157. The State, through the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), supports athletes with disabilities through the provision of financial support, training, and enabling their participation in international conferences focused on discussing developments in paralympic events.

158. The PSC allocates funds to the Philippine Sports Association for the Differently Abled – Philippine Paralympic Committee (PHILSPADA-PPC), which serves as the national umbrella organization for sports for persons with disabilities and functions as the national sports association for athletes with disabilities. Its primary objectives are to increase participation in sports by all persons with disabilities across the regions in the country, enhance excellence in sports performance in both national and international competitions, and secure funds and properties for the benefit of these athletes.

Table 8
Total Financial Assistance of PHILSPADA and PPC from 2016–2022 in USD

	PHILSPADA	PPC
2016	390 375	-
2017	930 184	-
2018	1 836 190	71 330
2019	1 020 486	412 618
2020	1 444 705	-
2021	1 173 777	-
2022	1 737 992	8 336

159. In recent years, the PSC has provided support for the following activities:

(a) ASEAN Seminar on the Promotion of the Paralympic Movement, December 2017

The seminar focused on addressing the concerns of athletes and identifying initiatives to support ASEAN paralympians. It also provided recommendations for development priorities in the ASEAN Paralympic Movement. The event saw attendance from senior government officials, sports experts, and paralympic athletes alike.

(b) Meeting on Paraspot, December 2017

This meeting has led to sports officials learning new systematic approaches, technologies, and tools aimed at helping the Philippines' para-athletes become more efficient and effective.

(c) Differently-Abled Women's Holistic Development Seminar, January 2018

The activity aimed at encouraging more women with disabilities to participate in and pursue sports. It was attended by 135 participants.

(d) Differently-Abled Women's Seminar and Fun Games

The activity was held to rationalize and develop sports programs and activities and promote participation in sports of elderly women, women with disabilities, and indigenous women. It was attended by 46 participants.

(e) 2021 Pilipinas Para Games Webinars and Certification Courses

This project was created to address the need for a truly comprehensive grassroots sports development program, which included webinars on how to handle and train para-athletes, the importance of para-athlete classification, as well as a certification course providing information about para-sports in the country.

(f) 2022 Para-Sports Webinar Series, May–June 2022

This activity offered five para-sports series to all Filipinos involved in the local sports industry/sector and community. These para-sports included sitting volleyball, football 5-side, para-badminton, para-powerlifting, and para-cycling.

160. The support of the PSC can also be observed through the following achievements and activities for Filipino athletes with disabilities:

(a) International

- Bronze prize in table tennis by Josephine Medina in the 2016 Rio Paralympics;
- 20 gold, 20 silver, and 29 bronze medals across 9 sports, with an overall ranking of 5th place out of 11, in the 9th ASEAN Para Games in 2017;
- 10 gold, 8 silver, and 11 bronze medals, placing 11th overall out of 45, in the 2018 Asian Para Games;
- 2nd place by Sander Severino in the first FIDE Online Cup for People with Disabilities held in 2020;
- 1st, 6th, and 8th place in the first International Physically Disabled Chess Association Online World Championship held in 2020;
- 6th and 8th place in the wheelchair race and 6th place in swimming in the 2021 Tokyo Paralympic Games;
- 28 gold, 30 silver, and 46 bronze medals across 14 sports in the 2022 ASEAN Para Games; and
- 5th place overall (34 gold, 33 silver, and 50 bronze medals) at the 2023 ASEAN Para Games held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

(b) Local

- 600 athletes participated in the 5th PSC-PHILSPADA National Para Games in 2016;
- 500 athletes participated in the “Differently-Abled Sports for Life” project, which capitalized on sports to transcend barriers and mend divides borne out of differences in individual skills and capabilities. It had multiples legs in different provinces all over the country, in partnership with the PDAO and DepEd, held from July to November 2018. The success of the project led to its replication in May 2019, with 115 participants;
- The 2021 Pilipinas Para Games Online Para Chess Competition was conducted with the purpose of to empower youth with disabilities and discover new para-athletes, with 3-day events each in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Theatre, music, and dance

161. The State, through the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), has been providing support to the Persons with Disabilities Film Festival under the NCCA’s Competitive Grants Program for Film Festival with master classes. This film festival is an activity of “The LoveLife Project”, a non-profit arts and media organization comprised of film, television and new media professionals who come from marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, youth, persons with HIV, individuals with lived experience, and low-income community residents.

162. The following projects were approved for the 2023 Competitive Grants Program:

- Philippine Arts Festival for Children in Marginalized Communities III – Zamboanga Sibugay by Philippine Association for Citizens with Developmental and Learning Disabilities Inc.: This one-day arts festival aimed to provide 50 children aged 7–17 years old, with disabilities, from indigenous communities, are children of migrant workers, or have been orphaned from public schools and community-based centers, to express themselves through various art forms;

- Project HeART: Expression and Healing for the Marginalized Communities by Philippine Women's University: This visual art intervention program hopes to build a positive environment through thinking activities, as well as arts-based activities such as drawing, painting, and craft-making, as relaxation training, exposure, and problem-solving. The focus is on symptom reduction through cognitive techniques and trauma-focused work in imagination, drawing/painting, and narratives like journal making. There will be a private session between the individual child and the clinician. Through art as an interactive process, youths can develop trusting relationships with prosocial adults such as therapists, artists, or teachers; and
- Dance Xchange: The Philippine International Dance Workshop and Festival: This is a project organized by NCCA's National Committee on Dance, and conceptualized as a Philippine celebration of International Dance Day and in accordance with Presidential Proclamation No. 154, declaring the last week of April as "National Dance Week." The Dance Xchange is one of the projects of NCCA that provides opportunities to different sectors, including but not limited to persons with disabilities, to showcase Filipino creative excellence. The Para Dance Sport National Team, composed of dance scholars from across the country, is one of the beneficiaries, promoting ballroom dancing through dance education, training, performances, and competitions.

Specific Obligations

Article 31 Statistics and data collection

163. The Philippine Registry for Persons with Disabilities (PRPWD) is the central database for persons with disabilities, managed and maintained by the DOH by virtue of RA 11228, which directs DOH to maintain an updated database on persons with disabilities and their health and development needs. Data is primarily collected from the PRPWD forms filled up by those applying for a persons with disability ID card, which may be availed of from the applicant's city or municipality. In emergency cases, NCDA also issues such persons with disability ID cards, using the same PRPWD forms. Data gathered includes disaggregation based on the following:

- age;
- sex;
- type of disability;
- cause of disability (i.e. whether congenital or acquired);
- geographical location;
- educational attainment;
- status (i.e. employed, unemployed, or self-employed), category (i.e. government or private), and type (i.e. permanent/regular, seasonal, casual, emergency) of employment; and
- occupation.

164. With this, anyone interested in deriving information as to registered persons with disabilities may request data pertaining to the number of registered persons with disabilities and data disaggregation based on the aforementioned. The PRPWD is updated real-time whenever the officer processing the application uploads the data from the application form to the PRPWD.

165. At present, the NCDA is continuing coordination efforts with pertinent agencies such as the DICT, DILG, and PSA, among others, to continuously find ways in improving data collection strategies.

166. Meanwhile, the PSA's Interagency Statistical Committee on Social Protection and the Interagency Statistical Committee on Health and Nutrition Statistics serve as venues for the review of current methodologies and recommendation of policies towards the improvement of social protection and health statistics. The National Anti-Poverty Commission, which is mandated to invigorate partnerships between the government and basic sectors, including the disability sector, is a regular member of said interagency committee.

Article 32

International cooperation

167. The Philippines, through the DFA, in cooperation with Tanzania, tables the biennial UNGA resolution on “Inclusive Development for and with Persons with Disabilities” (A/RES/75/154 adopted without a vote in December 2020). The State’s tabling of said resolution demonstrates its leadership role in disability issues, the same being the only resolution on disabilities with a balanced approach between development and human rights. It gathered more than 100 co-sponsors during the 75th session.

168. The Philippines also supported other resolutions and statements on the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, such as the “Statement in Support of the UN Secretary General’s Policy Brief on Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19”, wherein the Philippines was part of the Core Group that spearheaded the initiative, and “Realizing the Millennium Development Goals and Other Internationally Agreed Development Goals for Persons with Disabilities” (A/RES/68/142).

169. The Philippines participates actively in international meetings on persons with disabilities, such as the annual session of the Conference of State Parties to the UNCRPD (COSP-CRPD). The Philippines demonstrated its strong commitment to the disability agenda and signaled its continued leadership on disability issues in the UN throughout the 14th COSP-CRPD held virtually on June 2021, citing the State’s efforts to ensure the protection of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict, natural disasters, and other humanitarian emergencies, and through participating in other COSP-CRPD side events hosted by other countries.

170. The Philippines actively engaged in the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2013–2022 and the Incheon Strategy to ‘Make the Rights Real’ for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. In July 2021, the DFA nominated the NCDA as the country’s focal point on disability for the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

171. The Philippine Mission to the UN in New York works closely with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) on disability issues in the UN. At COSP 11, the Philippines co-sponsored the UN DESA-organized side event on “Future Research on Disability and Development”. UN DESA also supports the Philippines in facilitating the above-mentioned biennial resolution led by the Philippines.

172. The DFA also joins the NCDA in the promotion of disability awareness campaigns at DFA Home Office units, Consular Offices, and Foreign Service Posts.

Article 33

National implementation and monitoring

173. The State reviews international projects and ensures compliance with the principles of the UNCRPD and SDGs through the mechanism set by the NEDA and DFA. On April 2023, NEDA’s Subcommittee on SDGs presented to its technical working group members the State’s Updated SDG Pace of Progress as well as the Refined List of Philippine SDG Indicators.