

Stories of Change

Annual Report 2018





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EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

In this report, we are excited to share with you the stories of children and other relevant stakeholders who acted against sexual exploitation of children in 2018.

From their own insights, we hope to give you a clear picture of what we aim to achieve when we plan and implement our projects and activities: changed behaviors and practices that will lead to a nation where children are empowered to assert their rights and adults act in the best interest of children. Whether it is a behavioral change manifested by an individual or a practice change which resulted from our collaboration with different sectors, transformations like these are key to ending sexual exploitation of children in the Philippines.

But as the saying goes, change doesn't happen overnight. In fact, it takes years of hard work and collaboration before we realize the transformation we long for. Nevertheless, it is achievable when we all work together and start with ourselves.

I suggest that you ask yourself: how can I help in my own way? Whether you are a child, a young adult, a guardian, a student, a businessman, or anyone for that matter, you play an important role in upholding children's rights.

We hope the stories in this report will inspire you to become advocates in your own right and encourage others to do the same.

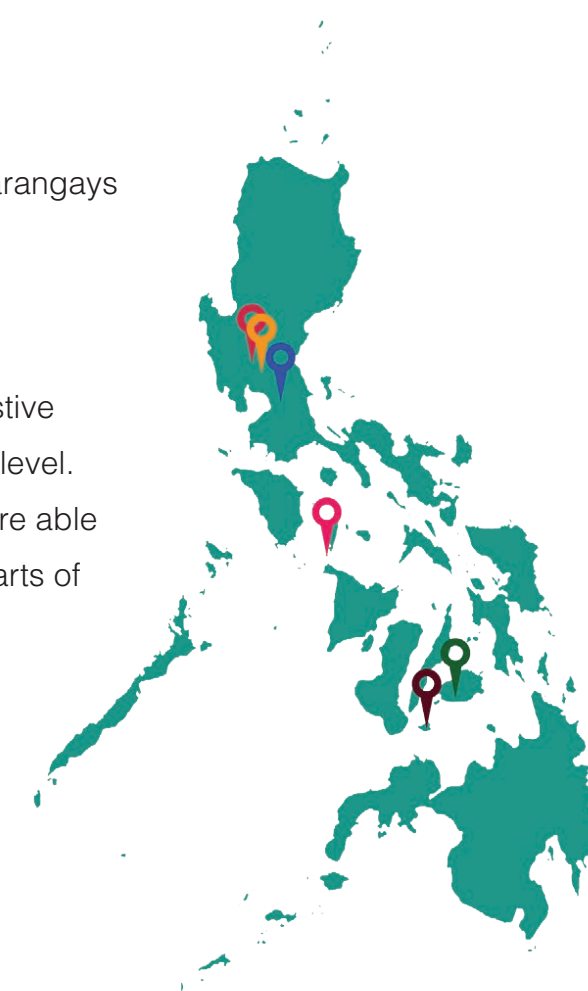


Dolores Alforte
Executive Director
ECPAT Philippines

WHERE WE WORK

Majority of this year's accomplishments took place in over 40 barangays in ECPAT's current project areas: **Quezon City**, **Angeles City**, **City of San Fernando**, **Bohol**, **Siquijor**, and **Boracay**.

All activities conducted among stakeholders were a result of exhaustive advocacy work starting from the community level up to the regional level. Through ECPAT's government and CSO partners nationwide, we were able to go beyond project areas and reach more stakeholders in other parts of the country.



EMPOWERING CHILDREN TO ASSERT THEIR RIGHTS AND PROTECT EACH OTHER

Walking the walk: Youth advocate supports a youth survivor

“It’s not enough to attend seminars and speak about children’s protection without actually helping others.

I cannot bear to see a fellow girl be violated and not do something about it.”

–Aizel, 17, Youth Advocate of Children’s Rights

At 12 years old, Aizel knew nothing about her rights as a child. “I didn’t really care about what was going on around me back then. All I cared about was living comfortably under my parents’ care,” she recalled. At 13, when Aizel’s aunt became a beneficiary of ECPAT, she got to come with her every time she visited the office. This was when Aizel learned about Sali Ka Bata (SKB), a group of young people mobilized and trained to advocate for children’s protection against sexual exploitation. She immediately got interested, and not long after, she and her older brother joined the group. “It was only then when I got educated about child rights and the laws that should protect me. I suddenly became aware of the problems that

Filipino children face, and it made me pay attention.”

Four years later, through continuous training and relevant exposure, Aizel has transformed into an active youth advocate. This year, she took part in planning and implementing awareness campaigns on children’s protection against trafficking and sexual exploitation. She also facilitated a series of online safety sessions for children in vulnerable communities and participated in government and non-government consultations on children’s issues. “I got the confidence to speak my mind and propose possible solutions to problems. I wouldn’t have realized what I was capable of had I not been a part of ECPAT.”

As a youth advocate, Aizel is committed not only to sharing important information to other children, but also helping victims of violence. In December 2018, when a school mate disclosed to her that she was sexually abused, Aizel referred the case to ECPAT so her friend would be immediately assisted. “I first told my mom about it and she encouraged me to report it. She was right. It’s not enough to attend seminars and speak about children’s protection without helping others. Also, I cannot bear to see a fellow girl be violated and not do something about it.”

Aizel hopes to see the day when all children are empowered to protect themselves from abuse and exploitation. “We [children] differ in culture, gender and religion but we have something in common: our rights. These can’t be taken away from us. It’s time for us to keep ourselves informed especially because there are emerging threats to children. Let us fight for our rights, not only for ourselves but also for our younger brothers and sisters.”

54

child protection orientations and capacity building trainings conducted for children and youth

3,647

children living in vulnerable communities educated with life skills that will help protect themselves from sexual exploitation

242

children and youth trained as young advocates to implement campaigns and activities on children’s protection rights



ECPAT conducts advocacy sessions to (clockwise from top left): school 1, grade 6 students of North Fairview Elementary School in Brgy. North Fairview, Quezon City, school 3, Carlos P. Garcia High School in Cubao, Quezon City

ECPAT Youth Advocates take part in the #ENDChildRape Campaign

In partnership with the Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (CSCCRC), a group of 23 international and local organizations that monitors the implementation of Child Rights in the Philippines, **ECPAT Children and Youth Advocates (EYCA)** developed a child-friendly workshop module that was used to conduct two (2) children’s consultations on Increasing the Age of Statutory Rape in the Philippines. This was done in support of the #ENDChildRape Campaign which seeks to raise the current age of consent from 12 years old to 16 or higher. Both held in Quezon City, the first leg pilot consultation was conducted on September 8-9, 2018 while the second one, which was supported by UNICEF and CRN, happened on November 10-11, 2018.

A total of 12 members of the child-led group C2C participated in the consultations, while members of EYCA facilitated the workshops.

“In our experience, children are often more receptive to sharing their thoughts on such a sensitive issue when they are talking to fellow young people...” said Erwin Forte, one of the youth facilitators. “We [EYCA] also designed the module to be fun and creative, so the children won’t be bored and exhausted. This way, they’ll be able to actively share their insights on this pressing issue,” he added.

The workshop included sessions on Revisiting the UNCRC; Understanding the physical, social and psychological development of a child; Introduction to the Age of Statutory Rape in the Philippines; Salient provisions of the Anti-Child Rape Law; and the #ENDChildRape campaign.

“What is the basis of the government for setting the age of sexual consent to 12 years old? Isn't it that some girls have not even started their period at the age of 12?” asked by child participants in Filipino as they gained more understanding on the issue at hand. “I think teens tend to become more secretive. For instance, you don't always tell your parents about your activities with friends because you know they won't always approve,” shared one child on his observation of his peers, pointing out that teenagers still need guidance from adults in order to make sound decision on matters that affect them.

ECPAT Philippines and EYCA, as well as other concerned organizations, hope to conduct more consultations in different areas to gather more insights from children of different backgrounds. Results of the consultations will be used as a reinforcing tool in urging legislators to provide stronger protection for boys and girls in the Philippines by increasing the age to determine statutory rape.



Child participants identify physical, mental, emotional, and social changes that manifest during their development

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2018

The ECPAT Children and Youth Advocates (EYCA) in Quezon City and Angeles City held an awareness walk and spoken poetry event dubbed as **Sumama at Mamulat Laban sa Child Trafficking (Join and be Aware on the Fight Against Child Trafficking)** on **July 28, 2018 at the Quezon City Memorial Circle.** This is in commemoration of the **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons** which happens every 30th of July. About 100 children, youth and adults from **barangay Batasan Hills, Botocan, Gulod, Krus na Ligas, Pinyahan and Sikatuna** graced the event in support of the fight to end child trafficking.



Meanwhile, EYCA in Bohol simultaneously celebrated the event alongside the Sandugo Festival in Tagbilaran City. The young volunteers raised funds by selling bottled water to Festival attendees. Proceeds support the advocates' awareness-raising activities for the protection of Filipino children against sexual exploitation in travel and tourism.



Children's Month 2018

EYCA in Quezon City organized an event dubbed as "Haraya (Imagine)" on November 30, 2018 in Ninoy Aquino Wildlife Center in Quezon City. Children attendees from different barangays enjoyed educational booths and activities which raised their awareness and helped express their thoughts on their rights. In support of this year's national theme "Positive Discipline", the advocates also included a poster-making contest on how parents should care for their children.



In partnership with the local government in Angeles City, EYCA-Angeles held a Walk-for-a-Cause, Spoken Poetry and Poster-Making Event in Angeles City on Nov. 25, 2018. Students from different schools and the Angeles City Youth Development Office joined the celebration. Social Media Influencer Jericho Arceo also graced in the event to support EYCA's advocacy on children's protection against sexual exploitation.



EYCA in Bohol joined the Tubigon Local Government as it launched the #ENDViolence Against Children Campaign on Nov. 27, 2018. They held a face-painting activity for children during the culmination event on Nov. 29, with the help of Tagbilaran City Sangguniang Kabataan Representatives.



Brothers, Survivors, Advocates

Anton was 15 years old while his younger brother Jericho (not their real names) was 14 when they were sexually exploited by a foreigner who lived in their community. When the offender got arrested in 2014, news spread quickly in their neighborhood. The brothers' and other victims' identities were exposed. For years, they lived in fear and shame. "We were bullied and called names at school. I didn't want to go out of the house anymore," shared Anton. Fast forward to 2018, they are now survivors who know how to protect themselves and speak to other vulnerable children about their rights.

"be strong and don't lose hope. Join [children's] activities like we did so you'll learn about your rights, gain confidence, and let go of what happened. Take the experience as a lesson and let your voices be heard"

–Boy survivors' message for other survivors

"Before I met ECPAT, I didn't know it was a child's right to play, nor to go to school, nor not be abused by anyone," shared Jericho, now 19. Since the brothers were identified by ECPAT in 2016, they have attended a series of psychosocial activities, child protection orientations, and seminars that aimed to build their capacities as children. Over time, Anton, now 21, became interested in joining other youth volunteers in conducting online safety orientations in communities and schools. This year, he started helping facilitate the activities himself. "There's been a big change in me. I've had the confidence to speak in front of children about their rights and how to keep themselves safe from abuse and exploitation," he shared. "I am now able to socialize with other children too, I used to be so shy," Jericho seconded. "Also, when I see something wrong, I tell Ate Imee (Social Worker) about it," Jericho added. This year, he sought the help of ECPAT in looking for their missing younger sister whom he suspected was influenced by peers to meet with a foreigner.

Being survivors themselves, Anton and Jericho know that children in their community are highly at-risk to sexual exploitation. Aside from living near a red-light district where foreigners are known to flock in bars and acquire sexual services, Anton thinks that children's lack of information on their rights and supervision from parents also contribute to their vulnerability to sexual exploitation, offline and online. "When we go online gaming in internet shops, children often see applications or links to pornography sites popping up," he shared. He also feels that many children aren't careful of whom they connect with online. "Sometimes, they think they are chatting with a young and good-looking guy, they don't know that behind the photo, it is an old man who wants to abuse them."

For Anton and Jericho, the government, especially the barangays have the responsibility to hold activities that will help children understand their rights and for parents to respond appropriately when something wrong happens. They also encourage other child victims to "be strong and don't lose hope." "They can join activities like we did so they'll learn about their rights, gain confidence and let go of what happened," said Anton. For his part, Enrico would like to tell them to "take the experience as a lesson and let their voices be heard." "Your voice is key to change," he urges child survivors.

49

child survivors of sexual exploitation, including child volunteers living in vulnerable communities provided with educational, medical, legal, psychosocial, and livelihood assistance for their healing, recovery and empowerment.

CREATING CHILD-SAFE COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS

Single mom turned vigilant mom

“It is my job as a mother to monitor the actions of my children, especially now that they are always outside and, on the Internet.”

– Luisa, mother of child survivors

Luisa, 41, is a single mother. She tends to her five children by working as a manicurist. They live in a barangay which is a favored hideout of wanted criminals and other lawless elements. Many foreigners also choose to live in the community because of cheap rent and low cost of living. Some had already bought lands, built houses and established businesses in the locality. In 2014, Luisa found out that her sons Anton and Jericho (not their real names) were sexually exploited by a tourist living in the neighborhood.

“It is not easy being a single parent,” shares Luisa admits that she had been too busy trying to make ends meet for her children that she overlooked signs of their exploitation. “Since my husband left us, I had to work double time.” Luisa even took another job as a massage therapist since her income from the salon won’t suffice. She only learned about what happened to her sons when the foreigner’s house got raided by authorities in 2014. Even though she had been aware of her sons’ frequent visits, along with other boys in the area, to the foreigner’s house, she did not think something wrong was going on.

When ECPAT started conducting child protection seminars for parent beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program (Conditional Cash Transfer) in Luisa’s community in 2016, she was able to attend and realize the importance of allotting time to talk to their kids about their protection. “I learned that children have the right to get proper guidance or else they will be vulnerable to sexual abuse and early pregnancy,” she said. Having understood that sexual abuse and exploitation can also happen online, Luisa now tries to limit her children’s time spent in the internet shop and playing outside the house. “It is my job as a mother to monitor the actions of my children, especially now that they are always on the Internet.” She is also glad to be learning from her kids who also attend child protection activities for children and youth. “My sons always share with me about what they learn in ECPAT seminars. Early this year, when my daughter did not come home for days, they were the ones who urged me to report the incident to the barangay and ECPAT. Because of that, we found her,” she shared. Luisa is now committed to not just improve on her parenting, but also share what she has learned to her loved ones and other parents she might meet in the future.



Child Protection sessions with parent beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)

Going beyond duty: A teacher's concern

As the Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Person in her High School, Liza, also a teacher, understands students' susceptibility to sexual exploitation. "This is the effect of social media and peer pressure. Curiosity [among young people] is also one of the possible factors," she said. A few years ago, Liza responded to a case of child trafficking by endorsing a thorough internal investigation on the case and forwarding it to the police afterwards. This year, she facilitated the sheltering of a student victim of sexual abuse. "It is my obligation to facilitate such action, but more than that, I am concerned for the child's welfare and safety."



“go beyond developing children’s minds intellectually with knowledge, but also teaching them how to protect themselves from bad people. It is a teacher’s role to educate children early on the issue.”

–Liza Mistica, teacher

Liza has had several challenges in responding to cases of sexual violence against students. For instance, victims are often fearful to disclose, that it takes years before they decide to seek help. Worse, some parents are unwilling to cooperate in investigations. Referral procedure of a case can also be difficult considering time constraints, lack of service providers available, and lack of school budget for transportation and other expenses incurred during case endorsement to relevant agencies.

In August and October of this year, teacher Liza participated in ECPAT trainings on the protocol of case management in handling victims of sexual abuse and exploitation and developing child protection policies in school. "The trainings and

workshops were really beneficial for us teachers, especially because we were able to discuss actual cases and how to deal with them as focal person or teacher of our respective organizations," she expressed.

She calls on her fellow teachers to "go beyond developing children's minds intellectually with knowledge, but also teaching them how to protect themselves from bad people." She believes that "it is a teacher's role to educate children early on the issue" to prevent them from being victimized. She also reminds colleagues to assist child victims by "informing their immediate guardians and assisting them on endorsing the case to proper authorities."

To increase children's awareness and vigilance, teacher Liza's school now conducts periodic room-to-room seminars on child protection and other Gender and Development topics to students.

2,751

Parent beneficiaries of 4Ps sensitized on child rights, recognizing red flags of sexual exploitation of children online and offline, and reporting procedures

612

Teachers, Barangay Officials and Civil Society Representatives trained on the Protocol on Case Management of Child Victims of Abuse and Exploitation Online and Offline and Developing Child Protection Policy

60

Multi-Disciplinary Trainings on Case Management Protocol and child protection orientations conducted for community leaders, members and school personnel

RALLYING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY TO END SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Tripartite partnership with Panglao LGU and Business Sector leads to hundreds of response-ready tourism workers and establishments

Over 500 tourism workers in over 200 establishments in Panglao Island, Bohol were given child protection seminars on responding to cases of sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism (SECTT) from September to December 2018. This was part of the implementation of the Child Protection Municipal Ordinance lobbied by ECPAT and the Bohol Association of Hotels, Resorts and Restaurants (BAHRR), and enacted by the Municipal Council in 2016. The ordinance mandates businesses to undergo trainings and develop child protection policies as a pre-requisite in securing business permits.

For the first part of the implementation, the Panglao Tourism Office coordinated the seminars while ECPAT Philippines conducted them.



The next step is for business administrators to work with the the LGU in formulating their own referral pathways of reporting incidents. Once completed, the LGU will issue a Child Protection Policy Certificate to be displayed at the front desk of each establishment.

Meanwhile, upon receiving a report from ECPAT regarding a suspected case of child sexual exploitation in September 2, the Mayor issued an Executive Order to create a Panglao Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce whose functions are to monitor cases and apprehend sex offenders.

Putting learnings to action: Hotel staff reports a prospective travelling sex offender

Lila (not her real name), a hotel staff in Alona Beach, Panglao Island, admits she had no idea about child rights prior to attending ECPAT's orientation. "I thought children are only those aged 13 years old and below so when I see older teenagers with foreigners, I didn't think it could be sexual exploitation," she recalled.

In September 2018, Lila was one of the hotel workers who were given orientation on children's protection from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. The session included information on how tourism development affects the rights of children, the lasting effects of sexual exploitation to victims, and the unique role of tourism professionals like Lila in addressing the problem. "I was deeply touched by what I learned," she said.

"The trainings were helpful but only if you put them to action. Put your whole heart into doing the right thing,"

-Lila, Hotel Staff

On October 29, 2018, Lila was able to put what she learned to use. While on duty at the front desk, she noticed a foreigner with a young girl inside the hotel premises. As she remembered from the sessions that it is against the law for an adult to be in a secluded area with a child whom he is unrelated to, Lila immediately reported the incident to ECPAT for proper response. She hopes that her fellow tourism frontliners won't hesitate to do the same when faced with suspicious situation.

Partnership with DOT

As a partner of Department of Tourism (DOT) in implementing its Child-Safe Tourism Campaign, ECPAT was able to reach stakeholders in many parts of the National Capital Region, Puerto Galera, Cebu, Siargao, and Zamboanga.



Frontliners in Puerto Galera



Eco-tourguides in Las Piñas and Parañaque



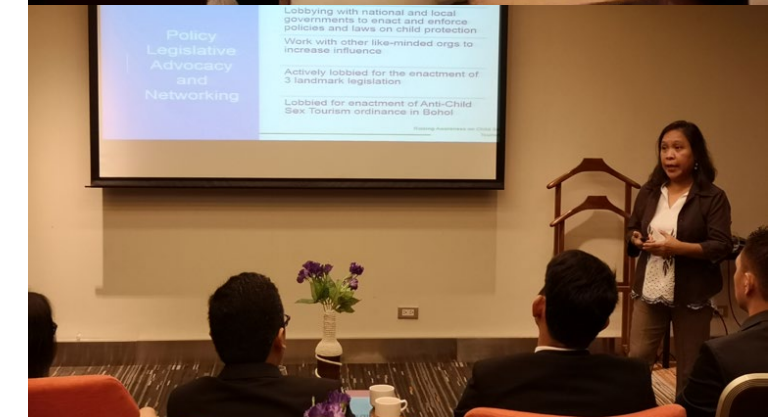
Tourist Drivers in Zamboanga



NCR Tourist Oriented Police

Accor Hotels

As a member of Accor Hotels, a signatory to The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism, Novotel Manila Araneta Center partners with ECPAT Philippines in conducting child protection orientations to all its staff, including on-the-job trainees. A monthly session has been held since May of 2018 to present. On October 17, 2018, Joy-Nostalg Hotel & Suites Manila, another member of Accor in the Philippines, also underwent its first seminar with ECPAT.



Policy
Legislative
Advocacy
and
Networking

Lobbying with national and local governments to enact and enforce policies and laws on child protection. Work with other like-minded orgs to increase influence.

Actively lobbied for the enactment of 3 landmark legislation.

Lobbied for enactment of Anti-Child Sex Tourism ordinance in Bohol.

Boracay Reopening

On September 17-22, 2018, a few weeks before Boracay reopened on October 26, ECPAT conducted a series of awareness-raising activities for children and youth, tourism workers, community leaders and the Aklan Port-Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force composed of Provincial PNP-WCPD, Coast Guard Station Aklan, CAAP, Bureau of Immigration, Aklan Provincial PESO, DOLE, Airport Police, Jetty Port Administrator, Provincial Legal Office, Municipal Social Workers, Public Attorney's Office, OWWA Region 6 and DILG.



“If they want a piece of Boracay, there’s the White Beach. The reason they come here should be the white sand. Do not exploit our children.”

–Aklan Prosecutor Chris Gonzales on tourists in Boracay

93

seminars on the protection of children against sexual exploitation in travel and tourism conducted for tourism professionals

1,947

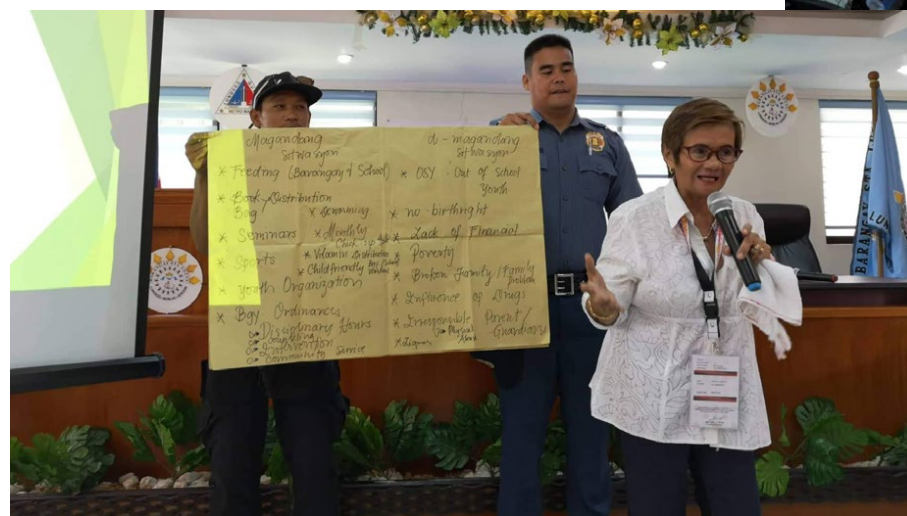
hotel and resort staff, tourist drivers, tour guides, massage therapists, tourist police, local tourism officials and local government representatives capacitated to respond cases of sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism.

CAPACITATING LAW ENFORCERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS TO STRENGTHEN CASE MANAGEMENT OF CHILD VICTIMS



“As 4Ps staff who are always in the communities, you know the beneficiaries and their children. Everytime you engage with families, it is an opportunity to talk to the children and check on how they are doing. Child victims will turn to us because they trust us. This is one of our responsibilities,”

–Allan Sanchez, Area Coordinator, to the staff of DSWD-NCR Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) of Quezon City and San Juan during ECPAT’s Multi-Disciplinary Training on the Case Management Protocol



443

Social Workers, including 4Ps Staff, trained to respond to cases of child sexual exploitation in a child-sensitive approach

108

Law Enforcers trained to strengthen rescue and investigation of cases of child sexual exploitation

ENGAGING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN

Hilom: UP Interior Design Class renovates the ECPAT Home

For the first time since its establishment in 2005, the ECPAT Home, a temporary welcome space for child survivors of sexual exploitation, got a magnificent makeover from the graduating University of the Philippines Interior Design Class.

Dubbed as Hilom: Rebuilding Spaces, Rebuilding Lives, the project aimed to give a “welcoming feeling of new hope by creating environments that radiate positive energy, eagerness and inspiration. Hilom means to heal,” said Jazmine Jim, Batch Project Head.

For the theme and design, the class translated the concept of salubong, a Filipino Catholic tradition that reenacts the encounter of the Mother Virgin Mary and her resurrected child, Jesus Christ, using the Philippine Flora and Fauna. Pastel colors were used to exude hope, healing and wellness.



The batch held a series of fund-raising activities including a benefit concert and an art exhibit to support the renovation. The planning and construction took place from August to December 2018.

“We are very happy and grateful for what they’ve done for our assisted children. We know that the output is a product of dedication, hard work and love. We also thank those corporations and individuals who supported the students in whatever way they can,” said Dolores Alforte, ECPAT Executive Director.

“Thank you very much for dedicating your time, talent and resources for us. We hope you can help more children in need. We salute your kindness and we will forever be thankful,” said the assisted girls at the ECPAT Home to the Interior Design Class during the soft launch and blessing of their new shelter on December 15, 2018.



The Nordic Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (NORDCHAM Philippines) invited the ECPAT Youth Advocates to serenade its members with Christmas Carols during its Family Day on December 16, 2018. A donation was made to help provide for the needs of assisted children at the ECPAT Home.

MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

ECPAT Philippines participated in two writeshops organized by Civil Society Coalition on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, in preparation to the submission of the NGO Alternative Report. The first part was held on April 19, 2018 at B Hotel in Quezon City and the second one on September 18-19, 2018 at Novotel in Araneta Center, Cubao. The outputs of the writeshops were presented at a Media Briefing on Child Rights Monitoring in the Philippines on December 11, 2018 where ECPAT discussed the data on Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC). Data on other issues such as the Age of Statutory Rape, Education, Children in Conflict with Law, Child Participation and General Measures of the UNCRC were discussed by other coalition member organizations, namely, Save the Children, World Vision, Educo, ICSI, KNH and Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT).



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ECPAT Philippines held a series of capacity building trainings and workshops for its staff. On April 3-5, 2018, the *Gender-Inclusive and Rights Based Development* training attended by selected staff in 2017 was rolled out to all the employees. A *Strategic Thinking* training followed on August 3-5, 2018 to capacitate staff to make effective and innovative decisions in achieving its organizational goals. The *Project Cycle Management* training on November 15-16, 2018 enabled staff to understand the concepts of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation; Theory of Change; Results Chain and Logical Framework. It also became an opportunity to review the current ECPAT TOC and formulate strategies for the next 5 years. ECPAT also held learning sessions on *Online Sexual Exploitation of Children in the National Context*; *Public Investment for Children*; and *Review of Child Protection Policy* throughout the year.



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Church of Sweden 



DEFENCE for CHILDREN 



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