

PHILIPPINE PROGRAM AGAINST CHILD LABOR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2023-2028

I. Background and Rationale

The Philippine Program Against Child Labor (PPACL) is a program designed by the Philippine government in cooperation with employers groups, workers organizations, civil society organizations, and international social development organizations for the purpose of preventing and eliminating child labor in the country.

In 2017, the members of the then National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) and its social partners participated in a Strategic Planning Workshop for the formulation of the PPACL Strategic Framework for the period 2017-2022. The Framework captured their vision, mission, guiding values, and program outcomes and outputs directed toward the prevention and elimination of child labor.

In 2020, a Mid-Term Assessment was conducted to examine the progress in the implementation of the PPACL Framework from 2017 to 2019, identify challenges and possible threats in efforts to eliminate child labor in the Philippines, update the PPACL Strategic Framework, develop the Strategic Action Plan for 2020 to 2022, and agree on the composition of the Technical Working Groups (TWGs) of the newly institutionalized National Council Against Child Labor (NCACL) pursuant to Executive Order No. 92 issued on 17 September 2019.

An Assessment Workshop was likewise conducted on 14-16 September 2022 to determine the extent of program implementation vis-à-vis targets spelled out in the PPACL Strategic Framework 2020-2022. Considering that this Strategic Framework is set to end in 2022, the Assessment Workshop likewise identified gaps and challenges in program implementation and came up with corresponding recommendations designed to guide the preparation of the next PPACL Strategic Framework and Action Plan.

The updating of the PPACL Strategic Framework is significant for the NCACL to ensure that efforts towards ending child labor are sustained and strategies can address contemporary challenges. For this purpose, the NCACL, led by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) with assistance from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and technical support from social partners and other stakeholders, has organized a two-day workshop to solicit inputs for the formulation of the Strategic Framework covering the period 2023 to 2028. The Workshop Team will formulate the appropriate responses and mechanisms for the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor through the protection, withdrawal, healing, and reintegration of child workers into a nurturing society.

Updating the PPACL Strategic Framework is an important endeavor as it will spell out the thrust of the national program in support of achieving Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7 of ending child labor in all its forms by 2025. It is envisioned that the next PPACL Strategic Framework and its Action Plan will articulate the country's response to the recommendations set forth by the Durban Call to Action on the Elimination of Child Labor adopted during the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labor.

II. Context and Program Description

The NCLC developed the PPACL Strategic Framework 2017-2022 as a nationwide program to prevent and eliminate child labor in the country by converging efforts and resources towards withdrawing 630,000 children from child labor by the end of the program life, 2022. This number is 30% of the 2.1 million child laborers estimated by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in its 2011 Survey on Children, a survey conducted on a nationwide scale with the main objective of collecting comprehensive information on children in labor. DOLE Department Order No. 65-04 (*Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9231 Amending R.A. No. 7610, as amended*) defines child labor as “any work or economic activity performed by a child under 18 years of age that subjects him/her to any form of exploitation or is harmful to his/her health and safety or physical, mental or psychosocial development”.

Envisioning a “child labor-free Philippines,” the mission of PPACL Strategic Framework 2017-2022 is to prevent any child labor at home and in economic activities, and, “to transform the lives of existing child laborers, their families, and communities, towards their sense of self-worth, empowerment, and development.” It also “works towards the prevention and progressive elimination of child labor through protection, withdrawal, healing, and reintegration of child workers into a caring society.” The PPACL is “guided by the principles of child-focused action, rights-based approach, results-based management, gender-responsiveness, cultural sensitivity, sustainable development, children and youth participation, good governance, decent work for all, community development, and inter-agency, tripartite and multi-sectoral collaboration.”¹

The first strategic direction of the NCLC was realized when President Rodrigo Duterte issued Executive Order No. 92 on September 17, 2019, which institutionalizes the National Council Against Child Labor to scale up the implementation of the PPACL. The Council now serves as the reorganized NCLC.

Following the Strategic Framework, the NCLC prepared the PPACL Development Action Plan 2017-2022, which contains a combination of activities/interventions, outputs, and targets that it has intended to pursue to realize the program vision.

To ensure the sustainability of efforts already institutionalized and supported by the national government, the necessity of coming up with an updated version of the PPACL Strategic Framework and Action Plan covering the period 2023 -2028 has become imperative not only for purposes of continuity but also in response to emerging issues and concerns at both domestic and international levels, an example of which is the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

¹ Based on the PPACL Strategic Framework, 2017-2022. Retrieved from <https://bwsc.dole.gov.ph/programs-and-projects-submenu1/clpep/philippine-program-against-child-labor.html>

III. Program Framework

PHILIPPINE PROGRAM AGAINST CHILD LABOR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2023-2028



The Program Framework is structured around six distinct but mutually reinforcing components designed to achieve the end-of-program outcomes. Intermediate outcomes and adaptive strategies will be used to guide program delivery. These shall be spelled out in detail in the Program Action Plan to be formulated upon approval of this Program Framework. The Program Action Plan will be a companion document of this Framework to guide program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

IV. Program Goal and Expected Outcomes

Guided by the program logic, the proposed PPACL Strategic Framework 2023 – 2028 will continue to contribute to attain a ***child labor-free Philippines***.

This goal is envisioned to contribute to the attainment of the goals outlined in the 8-point socio-economic agenda of the Marcos Administration specifically on reducing the vulnerability of Filipinos, through its pillars: a) develop and protect capabilities of individuals and families; and, b) transform production sectors to generate more quality jobs and competitive products. Both goals are geared towards the attainment of the

country's long-term vision, the *Ambisyon Natin 2040*, where all Filipinos are envisioned to enjoy strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure lives.²

The Program Goal is also aligned with the strategy of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023 – 2028 of implementing a holistic approach to addressing child labor. It is likewise supportive of the ASEAN Roadmap on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and the Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7, the realization of which is clearly articulated in the program logic.

More specifically, the PPACL aims to achieve and be measured against the four End of Program Outcomes over a period of six years (2023-2028):

- Adopted positive attitude, behavior, and proactive approaches towards prevention and progressive elimination of child labor as well as reintegration of withdrawn child laborers and their families in mainstream society;
- Strengthened and harmonized structures, supportive systems, processes, and procedures to implement, monitor, and evaluate relevant laws, policies, programs, projects, and services related to child labor at all administrative levels and across all sectors including civil society organizations working on child protection;
- Improved integrated service delivery and expanded access to prevention, withdrawal and protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of child laborers and their families; and
- Improved child labor statistics and effective and efficient knowledge management at all administrative levels.

Cross-cutting Themes for Implementation: Child Rights and Gender Responsive, Disability Inclusive, Good Governance, Culture Sensitivity, and Child and Youth Participation

The PPACL will align with the PDP's policy on the integration of cross-cutting themes into the program formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning stages for both interventions and program management. Cross-cutting themes include child rights and gender responsiveness, disability inclusiveness, good governance, cultural sensitivity, and child and youth participation.

Through implementation and review, the program will ensure the integration of child rights and gender responsiveness, disability inclusiveness, good governance, cultural sensitivity, and the promotion of meaningful child and youth participation in all program components and stages.

The program is informed by learnings and challenges from the previous PPACL and aims to generate more meaningful and sustainable outcomes in addressing the issue of child labor. One challenge is the limited information on gender, disability, and cultural differences. These at-risk populations, specifically minors and people living with disabilities, are not widely understood. Another is the responsiveness of the Philippine laws and policies related to child labor to gender and disability needs of children at risk and child laborers who belong to cultural minority groups.

² Lifted from <https://pdp.neda.gov.ph//philippine-development-plan-2023/2028>. Introduction

To better address these challenges, the program will identify opportunities, approaches, and practical steps to ensure good governance, the integration of gender and disability inclusion as well as cultural sensitivity and child and youth participation issues across all components of the program at all stages of implementation.

Following are some strategies that will be pursued to proactively integrate the above cross-cutting concerns in the PPACL:

- Employ child rights, gender, disability, and culture sensitivity analysis in the design and implementation of programs, projects, and activities and consider the multi-dimensional nature of child labor and child and youth participation issues with gender, disability, and cultural sensitivity.
- Recognize girl-child rights and children living with disability and children living in ethnic communities as part of the broader children's rights framework in all PPAs to be introduced.
- Ensure equal opportunities for male/boy and female/girl with disability, as well as those members of LGBTI and cultural minority groups as stakeholders to participate in consultations, training, and other program activities.
- Incorporate gender, disability, and cultural sensitivity perspectives in developing advocacy materials, training modules, manuals, and guidelines, and analyze children's rights issues and child and youth participation concerns during consultations and discussions.
- Include child rights, child and youth participation, gender, disability, and culture sensitivity analysis in program activities including relevant research/studies conducted.
- Employ gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, culture sensitivity, as well as child and youth participatory teaching tools and techniques in training.
- Generate, use, and present data that are disaggregated by sex, disability, and cultural or ethnic origin in all aspects of program delivery.
- Ensure the development and adoption of tools and techniques that will highlight and measure improved governance and meaningful child and youth participation in program delivery and assessment of performance.