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**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Save the Children Calls on Local Candidates in 2019 Elections to Prioritize Protection of Children in Times of Disasters and Emergencies**

Save the Children Philippines calls on local officials running for the 2019 elections to support the implementation of RA 10821 or the Children in Emergency and Relief Act of 2016 that addresses the needs of children before, during and after a disaster and emergency.

Lawyer Albert Muyot, CEO of the group said local officials from governors to barangay leaders have critical roles in the success of the implementation of the law under the Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children (CEPC) that integrates disaster risk reduction measures to ensure safety of children during emergencies.

Save the Children Philippines co-organized the 1st National Conference on Children in Emergencies on October 12, 2018 at Dusit Thani Hotel in Makati with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC).

“As politicians file today (October 12) their Certificates of Candidacy (COC) for the 2019 national and local elections, it is the hope of organizers here that they bear in mind the vulnerable situation of children in times of natural and man-made disasters,” said Muyot.

The conference will highlight CEPC implementation in pilot areas- Bulacan, Leyte and Sarangani.

RA 10821, the first legislation of its kind in Asia was passed in 2016 following the experience of Typhoon Haiyan where 6 million children were affected and led to massive deaths and destruction of properties and infrastructure.

The law mandates local officials to establish the following in their respective cities and provinces:

- A Comprehensive Emergency Program to protect and safeguard children, and promotes human rights, ensures children have access to essential services for immediate recovery.
- Heightened Surveillance against child trafficking and other forms of violence and abuse against children in the aftermath of disasters and calamities
- Increased participation of children in disaster risk reduction (DRR) planning and post-disaster needs assessment
- A system of restoring civil documents for children and their families to better access services and protection against the exploitation

- Less disruption of educational services with limited use of schools as evacuation centers and proper use of temporary learning spaces.
- Improved care and process for family tracing and reunification for orphaned, unaccompanied and separated children.
- Improved data collection and reporting related to affected children for better understanding of their needs.
- Child centered training and standard setting for all responders for community and village leaders, school personnel and rescuers.

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**Save the Children**