

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAVE THE CHILDREN PHILIPPINES CALLS FOR EMERGENCY PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN AGAINST THREATS OF BETTY PH, INCOMING TYPHOONS

Seven years have passed since the Philippine Government enacted Republic Act 10821 or Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act but many local government units (LGUs) still do not have a Comprehensive Emergency Program for Children (CEPC) in place.

RA 10821 mandated the creation of the CEPC that should take into consideration the humanitarian standards in the protection of children. LGUs are directed to implement social protection programs to ensure the well-being of Filipino children, and pregnant and lactating mothers before, during, and after disasters and other emergency situations.

"Children bear the brunt of the impact of natural calamities and disasters. When they are placed in emergency situations, their only means to survive is to depend on adults for protection and developmental needs," said Save the Children Philippines CEO Atty. Alberto Muyot.

With #BettyPH anticipated to enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility this week and the rainy season fast approaching, the forecasted typhoons are expected to compound the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emergencies to millions of children and put their health, education, protection, and development at risk, especially those living in communities with limited resources and most impacted by inequality and discrimination.

"To protect the rights and wellbeing of children, their families, and communities every day and in times of crisis, and help them recover immediately, we urge the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to prioritize the development and roll-out of CEPC and its localization across all 1,700 LGUs," Muyot added.

Save the Children Philippines advocated for the enactment of RA 10821 in 2016. The humanitarian organization has worked closely with partner LGUs and provided support in the creation of their localized CEPCs. These LGUs include Pasig City, Ormoc City, and Malolos City; the Provinces of Bulacan, Leyte, Eastern Samar, and Sarangani, and the Municipalities in Bustos in Bulacan; the Municipalities of Dulag, Hilongos, and Mayorga in Leyte; the Municipalities of Sulat and Dolores in Eastern Samar; and the Municipalities of Alabel and Maitum in Sarangani.

The law stipulates, among other things, that evacuation centers should be established, transitional shelters for orphaned, separated and unaccompanied children are established which must include gender-specific emergency latrines, bathing cubicles and hand-washing facilities designed for children, stronger measures are enforced to ensure the safety, security, and prevention of child trafficking, child labor and other forms of exploitation, and creation of a plan of action to bring affected children back to school. Immediate delivery of basic necessities and services such as access to basic health services, food, water, nutrition, medicines, clothing, sanitary and hygiene kits, and other emergency essentials should also be facilitated.

In 2022 alone, Save the Children Philippines provided immediate support to more than 215,000 persons, including children and those with disabilities, through emergency relief and early recovery assistance in various humanitarian efforts across the country covering the provision of support to shelter, education, protection, food security, livelihood, and health which covers mental health and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Support Save the Children Philippines' advocacy work on children! For opportunities for partnerships, please reach out to us at supportercare@savethechildren.org.

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