

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SAVE THE CHILDREN LEADS CALL TO ACTION FOR GIRLS' RIGHTS AT 'STAND WITH HEROES'

Government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector partners, academic institutions, child and youth leaders came together during Save the Children Philippines' **"Stand with HERoes: Building the Future of Adolescents Together"** partnership summit on October 28, 2025 to collectively bring adolescent pregnancy, child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU), and the cohabitation of young girls with older men into sharper public and policy focus.

"And that is why we are here today. We want to show evidence that goes beyond numbers. We want to turn numbers into narratives, data into direction, and stories into systems that protect, empower, and sustain," said Atty. Alberto Muyot, Chief Executive Officer of Save the Children Philippines.

Anchored on this message, the summit emphasized the power of cross-sector collaboration in driving lasting change for adolescents, bringing together partners across government, communities, and families to prevent adolescent pregnancy and end CEFMU. By fostering dialogue and aligning advocacy, partners committed to advancing the localization of Republic Act No. 11596 or the law prohibiting child marriage and the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill. These efforts aim to strengthen policies and programs that promote child protection and gender equality and support children, especially girls, to make informed decisions about their futures. The summit reinforced that addressing adolescent pregnancy and CEFMU is not only a social concern, but a shared responsibility requiring strong government action and public support.

A key highlight of the summit was the launch of four research studies and one policy brief on adolescent pregnancy in the Philippines. The studies, **"Rights at Risk: Understanding Gender and Power Relations Impacting Girls and Young Women in CaMaNa Cities and Indigenous Communities in Sarangani," "Listening to Families and Communities: A Follow-up Study in the Power-Up Girls Program," "Family Learning Sessions as a Pathway to Prevent Child Marriage and Adolescent Pregnancy"** and **"Measuring Social Change: Rubrics-Based Evaluation Method for the Power-Up Girls Program"** along with the policy brief titled, **"Leave No Girls Behind: Adolescent-Centred Policies for Preventing Unintended Pregnancies,"** collectively aim to inform

programming and policymaking that supports adolescent girls, strengthen family support systems, and address the root causes of adolescent pregnancy nationwide.

The summit also featured panel discussions, partnership showcases, and collaborative planning sessions that aligned ongoing initiatives with Save the Children Philippines' strategic priorities under its Power Up Girls campaign—an advocacy movement promoting adolescent girls' rights and the prevention of child, early, and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU).

“We provide and advocate for the work to be done at the local level. We talk about partnerships at the national level, but we recognize that the work is at the local level—always listening to the voices of our children,” USec. Lisa Grace S. Bersales of the Commission of Population and Development shared.

The 2025 Partnership Summit reaffirmed Save the Children Philippines' commitment to fostering collaboration for sustainable and impactful results for children.

ABOUT SAVE THE CHILDREN

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the Philippines and around the world, we do whatever it takes – every day and in times of crisis – so children can fulfill their rights to a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn, and protection from harm. With over 100 years of expertise, we are the world's first and leading independent children's organization – transforming lives and the future we share.

More information about Save the Children's programs for and with children is available at www.savethechildren.org.ph.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Amos Jonah Ramos

Communications Officer

Save the Children Philippines

Mobile: +639626937290

Email: amos.ramos@savethechildren.org