

# Country Profile Philippines



## STOP CHILD EXPLOITATION!

**In the Philippines, children are at risk of sexual exploitation, forced labour and trafficking. 20% of children using the internet are reported to have faced online exploitation with children from diverse sexual orientations being highly vulnerable.**

The Philippines, a nation comprising 7,641 islands<sup>1</sup> is home to nearly 42 million children.<sup>2</sup> The socio-economic vulnerabilities of the country place children at major risk of sexual exploitation, forced labour and child trafficking. The rate of online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) is alarming. 20% of children using the internet in the Philippines are reported to have faced online sexual abuse and exploitation.<sup>3</sup> Children with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC) are also highly vulnerable to OCSE. Close to 1.37 million are engaged in child labour<sup>4</sup> with 61.9% working in agriculture.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>National Mapping and Resource Information Authority, Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, Government of the Philippines

<sup>2</sup>"Disrupting Harm in the Philippines", 2022, UNICEF, ECPAT and INTERPOL

<sup>3</sup>United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2022).

<sup>4&5</sup> "2021 Working Children Situation", Philippine Statistics Authority

Stakeholder Reach  
2023

CHILDREN  
**3167**

FAMILIES AND  
COMMUNITIES  
**3555**

CIVIL SOCIETY  
REPRESENTATIVES  
**183**

LAW  
ENFORCEMENT  
AGENTS  
**29**

GOVERNMENT  
OFFICIALS  
**948**

PRIVATE  
SECTOR STAFF  
**140**

## Our Projects

### Creating a safer ONLINE Environment for every Child (Project CONEC)

Project locations : Taguig city, Cebu city, Mandaue city, Bohol province

Project CONEC protects children of all ages and genders by creating a strong and responsive child protection system, increasing awareness and capacity of stakeholders to prevent and respond to online child sexual exploitation (OCSE), influencing local service providers and organisations to address OCSE effectively, and providing a social protection package that responds to the specific needs and experiences of affected children, children at-risk, and their families.

### Strengthening the Community-based Protection Systems to eliminate Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) in Visayas Region

Project locations : Iloilo city and Negros Oriental

Western Visayas and Central Visayas are considered to be two of the regions in the Philippines that have the highest incidence of child labour. The project uses a multi-stakeholder approach to enhance the level of protection to affected and at-risk children, enabling their development. The project strengthens response mechanisms of regional and local institutions.



## Safety for Children and their Rights OnLine (SCROL)

Project locations : North and South of Cebu province

SCROL creates a safe online environment for children by enabling systemic changes and building the capacity of the private sector, law enforcement agencies and relevant government departments to strengthen implementation of laws and facilitate policy changes. Its lobby and advocacy component is also done in collaboration with different stakeholders, including children and young people. Survivors of exploitation are supported to access referral services.

## Step Up the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation of Children (SUFASEC)

Project locations : Lapu Lapu city and Cordova municipality in Cebu, Borongan city in Eastern Samar

Unequal social & gender norms and taboos surrounding sexuality limit children's access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, leading to sexual exploitation. As part of the Down to Zero Alliance's<sup>6</sup> initiative to combat the sexual exploitation of children, the SUFASEC Project ensures children's awareness of and access to SRH services, and advocates for systemic changes to tackle sexual exploitation.

Implementing partners : Bidlisiw Foundation, Children's Legal Bureau, Inc., COPE Inc.,<sup>8</sup> ECPAT Philippines, PACT<sup>9</sup>

## Achievements 2023

1. The local government of Santa Fe amended its Children's Code, integrating provisions for addressing OCSE while Naga City's Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC) passed a resolution to endorse the local enactment of the proposed Anti-OSAEC and CSAEM ordinance.<sup>7</sup>
2. The Borongan City Local Government Unit allocated a portion of their annual budget for joint implementation of all relevant programmes and services to tackle sexual exploitation of children.
3. The passage of a resolution to merge the Regional Council Against Child Labor (RCACL) into the Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) for violence against women and children in the Western Visayas Region, collaboration with the Iloilo City Council for the Protection of Children (ICCPC), and the establishment of technical working group for crafting the executive order on the creation of Iloilo City Council Against Child Labor (ICCACL) was made possible because of the convergence of efforts of the different government offices.

Major Donors : European Union, Dutch Post Loterij, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands

- "We invited social workers and LGU (Local Government Units) staff and explained to them how we can use technology to fight these problems (Online Child Sexual Exploitation/OCSE)."



## Janille Rose Gultiano

Senior Stakeholder Management Officer  
PLDT and SMART Communications, a leading telecom company in the Philippines  
PLDT and Smart is our exclusive telecom partner and we work together to help ensure a safer online environment for children.

<sup>6</sup>Down to Zero (DtZ) alliance is a global initiative of a group of INGOs (Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Plan International Netherlands, Defence for Children- ECPAT, Free a Girl, CRC Asia and Conexión) to address sexual exploitation of children.

<sup>7</sup>The Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act is a law of 2022 punishing online sexual exploitation of children at the national level.

<sup>8</sup>Center for Empowerment and Development in Eastern Visayas, Inc

<sup>9</sup>Philippines Against Child Trafficking (PACT)

**We fight against Child Labour, Sexual Exploitation of Children and Humanitarian Crises.**

## Join Our Fight!

Write to us at [philippines@tdh.nl](mailto:philippines@tdh.nl)

## About

### Terre des Hommes Netherlands

Terre des Hommes Netherlands is a global child protection organisation that works in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe. We prevent and stop child exploitation, and empower children to make their voices count. We tackle issues at the roots by enabling systemic change with the support of grassroots-level implementing partners. We ensure that children are at the centre of our initiatives.

[www.terredeshommes.nl](http://www.terredeshommes.nl)  
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## Key Figures

6

Legislations, policies and government programs adopted/implemented/ revised to respond to OCSE issues.

58

Schools now have a system in place to detect sexual abuse.

541

Children and youth participated in advocacy campaigns

121

Children were taught child rights in relation to child labour and know to report cases.

148

Community members and children designed and implemented initiatives to address, respond to and prevent OCSE