

Institutionalizing **Child-Friendly Governance**

A REPLICATION GUIDE

In 20 November 1989, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which stressed the rights of children on survival, protection, development and participation in governance. The following year, in 2 September 1990, the convention was enforced and the Philippines was the 31st nation to ratify the Convention by virtue of Senate Resolution Number 109. (Child 21; 2000.)

Recognizing that full realization of the child's rights is necessary for the long-term development of the nation, the Philippines has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as its framework. To promote and safeguard the rights of Filipino children, the country formulated the Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children or **Child 21**. It is a strategic

framework or a roadmap for planning interventions and programs towards the vision of a quality of life for Filipino children in 2025.

The goals and objectives of Child 21 can be achieved through the promotion of a child-friendly movement. This strategic framework is sensitive to the needs of the children based on the premise that certain conditions promote child rights. These conditions are best described as a movement towards a Child-Friendly Society (CFS) where children are nurtured and allowed to grow and develop in dignity, protected from threats to their well-being and free to express themselves and participate in their development.

The power to create or bring about these conditions lies in the hands of every person that comes into contact with and interacts with children, such as:

- The family being the most immediate and consistent environment for the child to grow and develop as human being;
- The Barangay where the child lives as part of a community;
- The barangay health worker, barangay nutrition scholar, doctor, nutritionist-dietitian, nurse, midwife who provide health and nutritional care to the child and mother;
- The school where the child learns;
- The local police and judicial authorities when the child commits a crime;
- The social worker when the child is neglected, abandoned, or needs help; the industry that employs the child's parents or the child her/himself;
- The local government officers who allocates funds for basic services;
- The media which provide the child with entertainment and information that influence her/his perception.

The movement towards a child-friendly society or governance, therefore, cannot be achieved by government and/or the LGUs alone. The realization of child-friendly governance needs the concerted efforts of all sectors in society. This framework is clearly illustrated through the child-friendly wheel shown in the succeeding place.

The people and institutions with whom children interact make up their immediate psychosocial environment, thereby influencing the quality of their experience and affecting their growth and development as human beings.