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# Philippine Journal of Child Sexual Abuse

an interdisciplinary publication



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PHILLIPINE JOURNAL OF  
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PUBLICATION



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Dr. Lois J. Engelbrecht

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Abstract

In order to prevent the sexual abuse of children we must first understand the issue within the appropriate context. There are very many pieces to the whole puzzle of child sexual abuse and not all pieces are covered. One of those missing pieces is to understand our boys. This paper is an attempt to synthesize what research we have in the Philippines with a focus on our work with boys to increase our understanding of our adult male sexual offenders. This paper hopes to bring together what research we do have to design a proactive response to prevent child sexual abuse. Findings suggest that our boys experience neglect that is often perceived as freedom, a neglect that could be a major factor in why our boys are more at-risk to be abused and to develop inappropriate sexual and other aggressive behavior.

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Abstract

This report presents outcomes and key discussion from research conducted among street-involved boys in Manila, Philippines. The research provides a baseline of information and an initial analysis of their key needs, vulnerabilities, and potential resiliencies and aims to initiate a more nuanced and informed discussion on a male vulnerability of street involved youth in the Philippines for social service providers, policy makers, child-protection advocates, and social researchers.

The study partnered with social workers from three local NGOs in Manila to conduct 51 in-depth, structured interviews with street-

involved boys who at the time of the study were living and/or working on the streets of Manila. The ages of respondents in the study ranged from 10-19 years of age, with a mean age of 14. The interviews focused on a number of key areas of their lives including: demographics, social and family relationships, financial security, sexual history, instances of violence and sexual abuse, health, emotional wellbeing, and future plans. This broad range of data was used to assess present and potential vulnerabilities to various forms of violence with a particular focus on sexual exploitation and abuse.

The research uncovered significant and pressing vulnerabilities among street-involved boys toward sexual and physical violence and found such forms of violence to be a common, and sometimes frequent, reality of life for street-involved boys in Manila. The majority of boys, 65% (33 boys), disclosed experiences of at least some form of sexual violence on the streets or within their communities. This includes, 49% who reported being shown pornography by adults in their communities or in the areas in which they lived and worked, 47% who cited sexual touching by adults and 27% who cited instances in which adults committed sexual acts with them that went beyond just touching. Physical violence, including some brutal accounts were commonly reported to come from police officers, parents, and peers within their communities. This research attempts to define and add nuance to the often little-known needs and vulnerabilities of street-involved boys in Manila and provide recommendations for program development, future research, and continued vigilance against the sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable groups of children in the Philippines.

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## AN EDITORIAL NOTE

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***Welcome to the 7th issue of the Philippine Journal of Child Sexual Abuse. The research on and experience in child sexual abuse in the Philippines is increasing. In order to fill the gap in disseminating the research, the editorial team will make every effort to seek out that research for publication.***

We therefore announce a monetary grant for Philippine multidisciplinary research related to the sexual abuse of children. The award will be administered by the Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse.

Awardees will be granted up to US\$1,000 to support the research.

Candidates must submit proposals to CPTCSA and their work qualified for publication in the Philippine Journal of Child Sexual Abuse.

For information, contact Dr. Lois J. Engelbrecht or any of the editorial board.

***Refer to the back of this journal for the guidelines for submission. We seek academic as well as practical articles to increase our understanding of the multidisciplinary context of child sexual abuse. Researchers and practitioners in the field of social work, psychology, psychiatry, medicine, law, and education are all invited to contribute to filling in all pieces of the puzzle for effective services in the prevention and treatment of child sexual abuse.***

*Dr. Johnny Decatoria*

*Dr. Emma Porio*

*Dr. Reynaldo Lesaca, Jr.*

*Dr. Lois Engelbrecht*

*“What about us?”: An initial literature review of research on boys*  
Lois J. Engelbrecht, PhD

Abstract

In order to prevent the sexual abuse of children we must first understand the issue within the appropriate context. This paper is an attempt to synthesize what research we have in the Philippines with a focus on our work with boys to increase our understanding of our adult male sexual offenders. This paper hopes to bring together what research we do have to design a proactive response to prevent child sexual abuse. Findings suggest that our boys experience neglect that is often perceived as freedom, a neglect that could be a major factor in why our boys are more at-risk to be abused and to develop inappropriate sexual and other aggressive behavior.

Introduction

In order to prevent the sexual abuse of children we must first understand the issue within the appropriate context. This paper is an attempt to synthesize what research we have in the Philippines with a focus on our work with boys. Research on child sexual abuse is far more prevalent in the West than in the Philippines, although certainly the gap is closing, albeit extremely slowly and usually based on a Western paradigm. This paper hopes to bring together what research we do have to design a proactive response to prevent child sexual abuse in the Philippines.

A common universal basic framework from which to build child protection services that has been used in the Philippines is the Four Preconditions to Sexual Abuse (Finkelhor, 1983). Very briefly, the first precondition states that someone is sexually aroused by children or by hurting children, commonly referred to as a pedophile or hebephile (yet most sexual offenders are neither). The second precondition states that these individuals must allow themselves to seek sex with children which would require, for example, a lack of empathy, what we would consider as cognitive distortions, and no impulse control. If the potential sex offender can overcome their empathy or impulse control then this person enters the third precondition and must get past the environmental protectors of our children, which include parents, teachers, the law, and even something as simple as public lighting. And finally, the fourth precondition is the need for the person looking to have sex with children to seek access to and then complete a successful grooming process by overcoming the child.

The Four Preconditions to Sexual Abuse model is often used to design prevention work. Most often the use of this model has tended to quickly gloss over the first precondition, the motivation for sex with children and instead to focus on everything around the sexual arousal and not on the sexual arousal itself.

The most common response to prevent child sexual abuse and one that we have found to be relevant in this country is to begin with the 4th precondition. Our research has tended to focus on the vulnerability and resilience of our children. Most research points to the vulnerability of our girls. Research has also pointed us to poverty. Both of these variables, while important, do not include much of the child population; focusing on girls and poverty avoids half of the population that is boys and another chunk of the population that is not in poverty. By avoiding these populations we need to understand that we likewise avoid the big chunk of the potential offender who focuses on sex with boys or has access to those children not in poverty.

Services built that focus on children all recognize the need to work also with the family and schools. These fall in the 3rd precondition, the adults around the child who have the real duty to protect children. Working with these populations, the major protectors of our children, the aim is to increase protection of children without having to further burden children with a task that is mostly out of their ability to achieve.

There are numerous examples of child protection work at these two levels, the potential victim and the environment around the potential victim. What has not yet received adequate attention, until recently, however, is a focus on the sexology of the potential offender and the stressors that push that person to actually offend. These are explained in the first two preconditions to child sexual abuse.

There is little research on the Filipino child sexual offender and most were not peer reviewed. Bacolod (2007) studied the personality of incarcerated sex offenders in Iwahig penal colony. Fabe-Jegonia (2009) studied patterns of personality characteristics of jailed child rapists. Molly (2008) studied incarcerated father-daughter incest offenders. Fr. Enriquez (2008) studied priests accused of sex offending. In all of these studies, the sexology was not included. That is, it was not determined whether the offender was a pedophile/hebephile. There are preferential sex offenders who target a particular population (such as age or gender) and there are situational sex offenders who simply use whoever is available at a given time. Instead of looking at any category of arousal, the studies focused on factors that impacted the move to act on that arousal. The studies did not attempt to place the respondents into any sexual arousal category, instead studying their personality traits and grooming methods. This lack of research has led many to believe that the Philippines does not have pedophiles; instead, we have only situational or circumstantial offenders.



Several important conclusions did come out of these studies.

Bacolod (2007) found that the “majority of the sex offenders in this study did not experience sexual molestation or any forms of sexual abuse during childhood (p170)”. This is important to note because of the general belief that adult sex offenders were victims of child sexual abuse. All the respondents appeared to have a great deal of self-pity and rationalized that they “were never given choices in life and in difficult circumstances beyond their control (p688)”. Fabe-Jegonia (2009) also found that the main psychological issues identified were persecutory ideas, denial and unrealism, disorganized thoughts and depression. That is, these men felt sorry for themselves and did not appear to accept responsibility for their behavior. Fabe-Jegonia noted also the theme of religion and forgiveness, which is something Molly (2009) also cited, yet does not state any sense of understanding of, or accepting responsibility for their behavior.

Enriquez and Sapala (2007) attempted to understand some possible link between childhood abuse and adult offending in general. They stated that physical punishment, while often not considered as abuse, could be a factor leading to criminal behavior. Physical punishment from parents could lead to a lack of needed nurturing relationships that are meant to build strong self-concept and emotional security. Neglect is also often considered circumstantial because of poverty rather than abuse, and neglect was an important factor in this study. The respondents related themes of anger and fear of abandonment, powerlessness, inadequacy and anxiety when confronted with the issue of accepting responsibility for their behavior.

To understand if there is a link between adult offending and childhood abuse a possible source of information would be to look at young offenders. For the purpose of this paper we sourced two important studies on the young offender, one that studied sex offenses and one that studied general offenses. There exist some similar themes in attitude and emotions between these adolescent boys and adult incarcerated offenders.

Again, the studies on young offenders, like the studies of adult sex offenders, did not look at the sexology. Instead, the studies examined the factors that led to offending and the general emotional health of the respondents. Leyned and Baldarrama (2005) stated that the reasons to abuse included sexual exposure, negative feelings, peer pressure and curiosity. Rosales (2012) stated that the reasons for the abusive behavior included boredom, pornography, a lack of supervision, peer pressure, curiosity, victim’s fault and *trip lang*. Most recently the National Situation Analysis on Children in Conflict with the Law (Juvenile Justice, 2017) reported on focus group discussions with children in conflict with the law in general. What appeared most often was the plea by the respondents for respect, open communication and attention from parents.

Based on the research from Leyned and Baldarrama (2005), Rosales (2012) and Juvenile Justice (2017), what appears to be the most important element either lacking or what the boys feel is lacking, is attention from parents. What, therefore, does our research show us about how we treat and attend to our boys?

#### Boys and abuse

Most boys who are abused or witness violence do not become offenders. However, it remains an important place to begin by looking at what research on boys and abuse does exist, with perhaps a particular study on neglect. Marcelino et.al (2000) documented the research and work on child abuse in the country from 1970-1997. This comprehensive work sets a base from which to highlight the development of our understanding and work in the field of child sexual abuse with a particular interest in the study of boys.

Marcelina et.al (2000) found that amongst the data available in the child abuse category, the issue of street children accounted for about 30%, child labor 24%, sexual exploitation nearly 13%, sexual abuse 8.5%, youth offenders a little over 3%, the girl-child 1%, neglect 1%, and emotional abuse in 0.5% of cases. The literature clearly noted that girls were more vulnerable to sexual abuse and molestation than boys. Most of the review of studies sought to understand the female victim but almost none to understand the boy as victim.

The document brought out insights into how we studied the issue 20 years ago that have changed. For example, the authors stated that "the literature says little about physical abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse and neglect, treating them as common occurrences... The absence of literature on pornography is glaring, and only a few articles treat pedophilia ... [C]hild abuse is often seen not as a distinct social phenomenon but as a feature of some other phenomenon such as child labor and child protection" (Marcelino, 2000, p25).

The 1996 World Report on Violence and Health published by the World Health Organization (WHO) noted that sexual violence against men and boys was a significant problem yet had been neglected in research. Rape and other forms of sexual coercion directed against men and boys took place in a variety of settings, including in the home, the workplace, schools, on the streets, in the military and during war, as well as in prisons and police custody. Most experts believed that official statistics vastly under-represented the number of male rape victims. There are a variety of reasons why male rape was underreported, including shame, guilt and fear of not being believed or of being denounced for what has occurred. Myths and strong prejudices surrounding male sexuality also prevented men from coming forward. That is, the conclusion is not that boys are abused less so much as the questions are not asked that would facilitate disclosures.

In 2000 the Child Protection Unit of the Philippine General Hospital together with the Department of Health (Madrid, 2000) presented data that began to close the research gap between the amount of abuse or violence experienced by males and females; that is, to begin to move away from the assumption that girls are more at-risk to be abused than boys. Table 1 shows that not only do boys and girls experience nearly the same amount of lifetime abuse, a significant difference is between boys and girls who experience forced sex with boys as higher than girls.

Adolescent (N=2704)	Total %	% Male (N=1348)	% Female (N=1356)
Lifetime abuse	85.9	86.6	85.2
History of child abuse			
Psychological	59.7	65.7	54.5
Physical	82.9	73.7	81.0
Sexual Molestation	11.9	12.8	11.2
Forced sex	1.8	3.5	0.2
Neglect	5.4	3.3	7.3

Table 1: Baseline Surveys for the National Objectives of Health, 2000

The Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (CPTCSA) did not agree with the early conclusions about violence against boys and so were pleased to note the more balanced view of child abuse by the 2000 CPU-PGH study. During the early years of CPTCSA, the agency did a study that followed a Filipino revised version of the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire (<http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/jvq/>). Questions ranged from someone stealing a pencil to witnessing war and murder of family members. One of the sections focused on sexual abuse, assault and exploitation with questions such as, "Since you started schooling, did a grown-up in your life do any of these things to you? Touch your private parts when you didn't want it, make you touch their private parts or force you to have sex?" These are not usual questions that we ask of students. In order to set a context and thus not traumatize children with at times difficult questions, the survey was given at the end of classes on personal safety (sexual abuse prevention) that CPTCSA conducted in public schools. The initial results of the study indicated that more than 50% of the students surveyed had experienced some form of sexual abuse. The study was never published because of the high numbers that the agency felt needed further examination.

CPTCSA continued to conduct the Filipino version of the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire (JVQ) in the schools where they taught personal safety. Their first published research appeared in 2012 using the same instrument and which supported the first CPTCSA-JVQ study.

More importantly, as related to this paper, the study found that boys experienced more sexual abuse, physical violence and neglect. According to Lompero (2012) the data suggests that, a) girls are more likely to experience emotional abuse, b) boys and girls are equally likely to experience peer or sibling assault, witness domestic violence, have a family member or friend murdered, witness assault without a weapon, and be raped, and c) boys are more likely to experience neglect, pornography, sexual assault by a peer or a known adult, sexual exposure, exposure to war or ethnic conflict, physical abuse by a caregiver, witness murder or assault with or without a weapon, be kidnapped and bullied. In other words, perhaps our boys are in fact more vulnerable to abuse and violence than our girls. Refer to Table 2: Questions related to child sexual abuse.

Question number	Grade 6		High school IV		Total average
	F Y%	M Y%	F Y%	M Y%	
21. Pornography	2.0	5.8	3.0	3.0	3.45
24. Statutory Rape and Sexual Misconduct	3.8	5.7	3.0	15.0	6.88
23. Verbal Sexual Harassment	6.9	10.1	7.0	8.0	8.0
15. Dating Violence	3.9	10.1	8.0	13.0	8.75
16. Nonsexual Genital	15.3	11.5	5.0	8.0	9.45
11. Sexual Assault by a Known Adult	7.6	11.0	7.0	16.0	10.4
19. Sexual Assault by Peer	13.4	22.5	11.0	14.0	15.25
10. Rape, Attempted or Completed	11.5	19.0	12.0	11.0	13.38
7. Nonspecific Sexual Assault	9.2	21.2	14.0	18.0	15.6
22. Flashing/Sexual Exposure	14.5	21.2	19.0	36.0	22.68

Table 2: Questions related to child sexual abuse: Percent distribution by sex, grade and total average (N689) YES responses (p14)

A possible variable that leaves boys more vulnerable to sexual abuse is the variable of neglect, often cited as due to poverty. This needs further study, especially in how neglect is defined and how this variable could impact economically stable households. One of the possible consequences of neglect of our boys is the higher number of boys living on the street than girls. Neglect can create both extreme passivity or a higher sense of self-reliance, which perhaps could be attributed to living on the streets or at least the boys with a sense of self-reliance would more likely choose to or be able to survive on the streets. Living on the streets

creates a different set of vulnerabilities than life with parents. Davis and Miles (2015) studied the vulnerabilities of street boys in the Manila area. It is not a gendered study in that it does not make comparisons with girls on the street, but it does bring forward a focus on boys as vulnerable.

Cuason (2009) noted the paucity of research on boy victims at the time of his paper. He cited possible reasons for this that could include, a) extensive use of the male perpetrator/female victim paradigm, b) social aversion to even consider male children as potential victims of child sexual abuse, c) socially constructed allocation of aggression to the male gender and the resultant unwillingness of males to acknowledge such an experience, even to themselves, d) inhibitions stemming from gender-based proscription of male self-reliance even as a boy confronts age, power, role, stature, size, and developmental discrepancies between himself and the perpetrator, e) the prohibition authority of social stigma associated with homosexuality, and f) the socially constructed notion that a young male's sexual encounter with an older female is positive and the consequent assumption that female perpetration is rare and unusual.

Despite research such as Lompero (2012) some studies continued to show that girls were more at-risk to be abused than boys. The reasons for under- or non-reporting by boys could be attributed to the reasons Cuason (2009) stated. It could also be that different questions were asked in different ways. Whatever the reason, Marquez, Cruz, and Bequillo (2014) used data from the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality survey that showed that "compared to males, females were significantly more vulnerable to nonconsensual sexual initiation (p.45)." Despite this, however, the authors did recognize and state that unwanted sexual experiences among boys was a concern, citing the higher risk of sexually transmitted diseases among males who have sex with males.

The recent 2016 Philippine National Baseline Study on Violence against Children agrees with the initial data collected from CPTCSA that boys are more at-risk to be physically and sexually abused than girls. Data showed that the "prevalence is higher among males (28.7%) than among females (20.1%). These data altogether implied that prevalence of sexual abuse in the Philippines is higher among males and among the older adolescents (p5)." What happened? Did the violence against boys rise? Or are we now merely asking different questions? What other variables in our boys' lives impact their vulnerability? This paper hopes to begin to answer these questions by collecting what research does exist about our boys in the Philippines to discover gaps that need to be bridged to proactively prevent them from becoming adult sexual offenders. But most important is that boys, simply because they are boys, need attention.

What does the research tell us about our boys?

#### Boys and public health

Common public health concerns include the use of alcohol and tobacco, especially among our youth. Marketing regulations require that advertising cigarettes and alcohol be accompanied with health warning. Alcohol use is age restricted. Therefore, it is important to note that according to Swahn (2013) boys are more at risk to consume alcohol and report drunkenness. Likewise, more boys are smoking (Aguillon & Roman, 2012). This data is important because it suggests that our boys have an increased health risk with their use of tobacco and alcohol as well as the issue of how they use their money. Social considerations need to also be studied given that it appears that tobacco and alcohol use is related to peer pressure and group activities.

#### Boys and school

Numerous studies link school success with life success. Mendezabal (2013) studied the relationship of a students' study habits and attitudes with their performance in licensure examinations. The study participants were assessed using the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes (SSHA) and compared with their performance (overall rating) in different licensure examinations. Results of the study showed that the participants with low licensure examination results tended to have unfavorable study habits that included inefficient time management, lack of planning and concentration in their studies, poor skills in reading, ineffective test taking techniques, and failure to inform their teachers of their difficulties with school work and ask for their help.

In light of the needed study skills and attitudes that tend to result in positive licensure examination results, a Department of Education (DepEd) and UNICEF (Global Initiative on Out-of-School Youth, 2015) response to the 2012 mega-study "All Children in School by 2015" cited the concern that schools are not meeting the needs of many of our boys. That is, boys are doing poorly in school especially as compared to their female counterparts. All outcome measures in any subject in all grades indicated not just the male disadvantage but also one that increases as the students grow older. The paper cited several factors to help explain why boys are doing poorly in school. On the demand side, the factors are boys' vulnerability in school readiness, low academic expectations of parents, and early economic viability of boys. On the supply side, there is lack of learning materials, passive classroom experience, gender bias and stereotyping, and low academic expectations of teachers. (p11)

The 2015 response to the 2012 mega-study recommended that DepEd invest more attention on the problem of gender disparities with a focus on the underachievement of boys. The authors recognized that while most of the previous recommendations they made in this report

had been addressed in some way, they noted that recommendations pertaining to affirmative action type interventions for boys had not been taken up (p128).

Of interest is that the DepEd and UNICEF Global Initiative on Out-of-School Youth (2015) study also stated the importance of the mother, and in this case, the education of the mother, without commenting on the same of the father. When mothers have less than an elementary education and often have to work for income, they neither have the luxury of time nor the capacity to support their children's education, especially through lessons at home. The authors suggested that this lack of education held by the mothers explains a similar lack of interest among children not in school.

A study by Torres (2011) added another voice agreeing that boys are not being best served by our system. His desk review analysis argued that despite the achievement of gender parity at the primary school level in the Philippines, many boys continued to be at-risk of exclusions from educational opportunities. The author stated data from 2008 that showed boys made up 56.9% of primary-aged out-of-school children and 63.7% of secondary-aged out-of-school children. Attendance appeared to be linked to wealth. 89.3% of pre-primary aged boys from the richest wealth quintile were enrolled in school, compared with just 44% from the poorest. Girls faced similar disparities by wealth, but were more likely to be enrolled than boys at all wealth indexes.

Torres (2011) found that the functional literacy rates of boys were lower than those of girls. Some 78.5% of out-of-school boys had simple literacy, compared with 83.3% of girls. For children in school at the time of the study, 65.4% of girls were functionally literate compared to 58.7% of boys (p3). Girls also outscored boys in the previous five years in all subjects in the National Achievement Test

Torres (2011) cited the Philippine country report that suggested that boys' underachievement in primary education is driven by parents' and teachers' low academic expectations for boys, the economic viability of working, passive classroom experience, gender bias and stereotyping (p16-17). Authors reviewed previously might suggest that the specific parent of importance would be the mother rather than the father. Finally, of note is that a majority of the countries in the Torres study had gender equality and empowerment mechanisms in place, which almost exclusively focused on girls and women.

#### Boys and physical punishment

Numerous studies exist on corporal punishment and its impact on our children which could inform the connection between punishment and adult offending. Physical punishment is discussed separately from the issue of abuse because of an oft distinction between punishment as discipline versus as abuse.

Three studies on physical punishment gendered their data. Lansford et al (2010) authored a mega-study of the relationship between gender and physical punishment in China, Colombia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand and the US. The study interviewed around 4,000 mothers, fathers and children aged 7-10. According to the data, in the Philippines 71% of girls and 77% of boys had experienced mild corporal punishment (spanking, hitting, or slapping with a bare hand; hitting or slapping on the hand, arm, or leg; shaking; or hitting with an object), and 9% of girls and 8% of boys had experienced severe corporal punishment (hitting or slapping the child on the face, head, or ears; beating the child repeatedly with an implement) by someone in their household in the past month. The data does not appear significantly different between males and females. Parents were asked if they felt that corporal punishment was necessary with the following results: for girls, 13% of mothers and 16% of fathers believed it was necessary; for boys, 20% of mothers and 15% of fathers.

The mega-data in the Lansford (2010) study is different from the findings of Lomperio (2012) who studied Filipino high school students. Lomperio collected her data using the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire ([www.unh.edu/ccrc/jvq](http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/jvq)). She did an odds ratio analysis from the completed questionnaire of 698 responses and ranked them. Lomperio calculated that boys are more at-risk for most forms of violence and abuse. The odds ratio is the ratio of the odds of an event occurring in one group to the odds of its occurring in another group. This study groups were male and female calculated:

$$\frac{\text{Female yes}}{\text{Female no}} \text{ divided by } \frac{\text{Male yes}}{\text{Male no}}$$

An odds ratio of 1 indicates that the condition or event under study is equally likely to occur in both groups. An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates that the condition or event is more likely to occur in the female group and less likely in the male group. An odds ratio less than 1 indicates that the condition or event is less likely to occur in the female group and more in the male group. The further away from 1 the more likely or less likely to occur for a specific group. Refer to Table 3. The shaded areas are variables that boys and girls are equally at risk. The variables above the shaded area indicate that boys are more vulnerable, the further away from 1 the more vulnerable. The variables below the shaded area indicate that girls are more vulnerable, the further away from 1 the more vulnerable. Based on Table 3, boys are most at-risk to custodial interference and girls to witness parent assault of a sibling. Of interest to this paper is question #8 (Since you started schooling, did a grown-up in your life hit, spank, beat, kick, or physically abuse you in some other way?) that measured at 0.54. This states that boys are more at risk to being physically punished than girls. In the general data, 42.5% of the children responded "yes" to this question and most of those responses were from boys.



Question	Odds Ratio
12. Custodial interference	0.17
24. Statutory rape and sexual misconduct	0.18
35. Exposure to war or ethnic conflict	0.23
30. Kidnapping	0.31
36. General environment	0.37
11. Sexual assault by a known adult	0.4
14. Gang or group assault	0.42
22. Flashing/Sexual exposure	0.42
32. Witness to murder	0.47
34. Exposure to random shooting, terrorism, or riots	0.48
5. Assault with a weapon	0.49
29. Burglary of family householed	0.49
10. Neglect	0.51
8. Physical abuse by caregiver	0.54
17. Bullying	0.55
6. Attempted assault	0.57
15. Dating violence	0.58
16. Nonsexual genital assault	0.61
4. Assault without a weapon	0.63
26. Witness to assault with a weapon	0.67
27. Vandalism	0.68
33. Bias attack	0.69
7. Nonspecific sexual assault	0.74
19. Sexual assault by peer	0.77
2. Personal theft	0.78
25. Witness to assault without a weapon	0.85
23. Verbal sexual harassment	0.87
21. Pornography	1.00
31. Murder of family member of friend	1.00
20. Rape, attempted or completed	1.1
13. Peer or sibling assault	1.17
1. Robbery	1.22
9. Emotional abuse	1.22
27. Witness to domestic violence	1.25
18. Emotional bullying	1.27
28. Witness to parent assault of sibling	1.4

Table 3: High School IV odds ratio ranking ascending (N200) (p18)

A study supporting Lompero (2012) is the Sanapo and Nakamura (2010) data, also studying Philippine children. Boys were more likely to be physically punished than girls, with 64.8% of boys experiencing beating compared to 40.9% of girls. The researchers surveyed 270 grade 6 students and found that 61.1% had experienced physical punish-

ment at home that included, in order of frequency, being pinched, beaten, slapped, kicked and punched. The rate of pinching was similar for boys and girls. The most common reasons for being physically punished were disobedience and *pasaway*. Of note is the possible consequence of the physical punishment from the perspective of the child. A third of the children said they “felt nothing” after being physically punished. Negative emotions that were stated by as many respondents included anger, loneliness, sadness and even hatred.

The most recent study to support the Lompero (2012) and Sanao and Nakamura (2010) data is the 2016 National Baseline Study on Violence against Children led by UNICEF. Again, data states clearly that boys are as vulnerable as girls in some settings and more vulnerable in the settings that would be indicative of neglect from parents.

Type of violence during childhood	Lifetime prevalence during childhood		
	Both	M	F
Physical neglect	10.1	11	9.1
Psychological neglect	25.5	25	26
Witnessing physical violence in the home	41.4	39.7	43
Witnessing psychological violence in the home	63.0	59.8	66.3
Overall child and youth physical violence	66.3	66.6	62.5
Overall child and youth psychological violence	62.8	65.2	60.4
Overall child and youth sexual violence	21.5	24.7	18.2
Severe physical violence	2.3	2.8	1.9
Severe psychological violence	7.9	7.9	8.0
Severe sexual violence during childhood	3.2	4.1	2.3
Peer violence / Bullying	65.0	70.5	59.8
Cyber violence	43.8	45.3	42.2
Collective violence	7.8	8.6	7.0

Table 4: Lifetime and current prevalence of various forms of violence during childhood (p3)

It should be noted, however, that while the intent of this section was to examine physical discipline, the Lompero (2012) study and 2016 Philippine National Baseline Study on Violence against Children label these as violence. That is, there is a clear line between discipline and violence.

How children perceive and thus respond to physical punishment was the topic of another mega-research conducted by Lansford et al (2005). The subjects in this study were mothers and their children. Interviews were conducted with 336 mother–child dyads (children’s ages ranged from 6 to 17 years) in China, India, Italy, Kenya, the Philippines, and Thailand. The authors noted that culture plays a role in this issue.

That is, when culture normalizes a certain behavior then that mitigates negative responses, or at least shapes it. The study revealed that physical discipline was less strongly associated with adverse child outcomes in conditions of greater perceived normativeness. However, the authors likewise stressed that regardless of cultural perception, a higher use of physical discipline was associated with more aggression and anxiety. These findings are of interest to this paper for two reasons: one is that only mothers were interviewed so once again an understanding of the father-son relationship remains a gap, and two, Lompero's (2012) study that indicated the high number of boys being physically mistreated points to a concern about how these boys are impacted by that treatment regardless of cultural normativeness.

Sanapo and Nakamura (2010) found that mothers were reported to inflict more physical punishment than fathers. Again, of note is that there appears more data about the mother-son relationship than the father-son relationship. Other points to consider from the data in this section is cultural normative factors that play a role in how physical punishment of our boys is interpreted by them and if, or how, that punishment shapes their world view and subsequent behaviors as adults. That is, is there a connection, as some research suggests, between childhood physical punishment or abuse and adult aggression?

#### Boys and employment

The issue of employment is complex, but there are certain factors that deserve introduction for this paper. If we look at employment of boys, then data about child labor would inform understanding. Child labor is linked to poverty and so the Philippines would be included in relevant data.

Torres (2011) stated that the number of out-of-school boys aged 5-15 years engaged in economic activity is twice that of same-aged girls. Of note, however is that, despite data that indicates more boys are child laborers, more focus appears to be on rescuing girls than boys. Referring to statistics prepared for the UNICEF (2009), except for 2003, all years from 2001-2007 indicated far more girls were rescued than boys. Sometimes as much as 3X more girls than boys were rescued. Table 5.

A second factor of interest in the conversation about boys and employment is related to general adult employment. "[F]emale employment has been growing faster than male employment reflecting in part the increasing demand for female workers in today's economy" (Miralao, 2004, p80). Consider this to the Torres (2011) study that stated the number of out-of-school boys aged 5-15 years engaged in economic activity is twice that of same-aged girls and the DepEd and UNICEF Global Initiative on Out-of-School Youth (2015) conclusion that recommendations to focus on boys in education were not met. Which data do we consider as more important on which to focus? Of note here is also, that there

appears to be a global focus on increasing female employment as a part of gender equality. While the degree of gender equality in the Philippines, relative to other countries, is debatable, the Philippines has an extensive, and impressive, institutional framework to promote gender equality (MacPhail, 2015). The question this focus asks is, “where are our boys in our plans for gender equality?”

Boys and prostitution

**Summary of the Number of Child Workers Rescued  
Sagip Batang Manggagawa  
Statistical Report on Rescue Operation, 2001-2007**

Year	No. of Rescue Operations	Number of Workers Rescued								
		Overall		Minors			Total	Adults		
		Total	Total	Male	Female	ND		Male	Female	ND
2001	70	311	201	49	134	18	110	15	89	6
2002	106	599	363	41	160	162	236	53	157	26
2003	87	531	406	215	191	0	125	30	95	0
2004	74	293	240	78	162	0	53	0	53	0
2005	63	187	151	41	110	0	36	5	31	0
2006	50	355	218	68	150	0	137	70	67	0
2007	57	167	144	61	83	0	23	11	12	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>2,443</b>	<b>1,723</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>32</b>

ND - no disaggregation

Table 5: Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities: The Case of the Philippines (p161)

Prostitution is certainly a form of employment, or at least a form of income, and so it follows the section on boys and employment. Edralin (2007) cited UNICEF studies that stated the Philippines ranked 4th among 9 nations with the most children in prostitution. The author stated that among the prostituted children “most are girls, but a significant number are boys (p25)”. While both genders were mentioned, it can nevertheless be assumed that the terms prostitution and pornography, even sex trafficking, refers mainly to females. This statement is inferred from Edralin’s conclusion that changes are needed or “child sexual abuse and low regard for women could linger on (p94)”. Where are the boys in that statement?

Two important research studies are relevant for this paper. Laguisma-Sison (2000) recognized that boys are also victims of prostitution. The research interviewed 12 boys. She found that these boys had “intense longing for nurturance from a parent-like figure (p43)”, felt emotionally and physically neglected and felt insecure about themselves and their future. Laguisma-Sison appeared to state some causation by citing Swedish research of Nyman and Svensson (1995) that boys abused by pedophiles were often those with little contact or relationship with their own father. That is, the 12 prostituted boys that she interviewed will have

been abused by pedophiles. While this paper does not seek to support the conclusion that being abused is a cause of male prostitution, what is important instead is the element of the lack of a relationship with their own father that this paper has noted in previous research reviewed.

The second study is one conducted by Davis (2013) who conducted an in-depth study on boys and young men in the sex industry. The work does not provide data such as the percentage of boys who work in the sex trade or suggest causation. The purpose of his paper was to increase the limited awareness about this population and help to develop services for these boys. The information garnered supports research that states the high level of physical abuse these boys experience and the lack of adequate education they receive on sexual health. The paper was not gendered so did not compare data with that of females in the sex trade.

To close this section the important point to note is that, while becoming a prostitute has often been considered a fate worse than death for females with a great deal of effort to save these women, an equal response should also be to save these boys and men.

#### Boys and mental health

Very little data on mental health is gendered. Although some are especially relevant given the variables garnered in the previously reviewed study. One variable is the mother-son relationship. Garcia (2003) studied adolescent boys and mental health impact based on parent identification. This study is of interest to this paper because of concerns in literature discussed previously that cite the importance of mothers that appear to avoid studying the relationship with father.

Garcia (2003) studied 9 boys aged 12-17 with two-parent families, middle-class, and in private school. She studied the factors that lead to identification with parents and how such identification in turn impacts emotional well-being as adolescents. Only the integrated findings are reported in this paper.

Results showed that all 9 adolescent males in the Garcia (2003) study referred for psychotherapy manifested strong emotional attachment to their mothers but only 5 of them appeared to have had an adequate bond with their fathers. The limited interaction that the adolescents had at the time of the study with both parents did not appear to impact the parental emotional bond. Instead, time spent between parent and participant when they were younger children was connected to their positive impression of each parent. Garcia noted that positive views of mothers persisted in spite of the present difficult situation while images of fathers were much less so under the same problematic circumstances.

Garcia (2003) noted other factors that contributed to an adolescent male's emotional instability. When a boy did not do well in school or exhibited negative behavior, personal and marital issues of parents

increased. An example of a negative response from parents is that the mother fearfully or unhappily withdraws from parenting and the angry father steps in to pressure the boy. The teenage son sees his father as aggravating his difficulties, a negative impression that is reinforced by the boy's perception that his mother is fearful of and troubled by his father. If the son is close to his father, this aggressive behavior could have a different negative impact as it offers a role model for male behavior. Another factor in the development of an adolescent male's emotional development could be that a close mother-son relationship may result in gender identity confusion.

In her study on the traumagenic dynamics of her child clients, Rabanilla (2011) found that all of her male clients who had been sexually abused by male offenders had sexual orientation issues that resulted from the abuse; that is, they worried that the sexual abuse meant that they were homosexual.

Cuason (2009) studied men who had been sexually abused to understand their perceptions of the abuse and the subsequent impact of the event. His data must be taken within the context of socio-cultural myths and beliefs about boy victimization in general; that is, that boys cannot be victims and sex with a man is homosexuality rather than victimization. This study is important given the number of boys who are sexually abused and that most offenders are male. Despite these perceptions, however, Cuason's paper suggests that the consequences of sexual violence on male victims are similar with female victims of sexual assault. Male victims are likely to suffer from a range of psychological consequences, both in the immediate period after the assault and over the longer term. These include guilt, anger, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, sexual dysfunction, somatic complaints, sleep disturbances, withdrawal from relationships and attempted suicide. In addition to these reactions, studies of adolescent males have also found an association between suffering rape and substance abuse, violent behavior, stealing and absenteeism from school.

#### Boys and suicide

At least 2 studies stated that suicide is more prevalent among boys than among girls. The 2014 global report on preventing suicide by the World Health Organization reported that the estimated number of suicides in the Philippines in 2012 was 2,558 (550 female, 2009 male). The report added that while females were more than twice as likely as males to have had suicidal thoughts, males were more likely to carry out a suicidal act than females.

Manalastas (2013) studied data from a national survey conducted by the Social Weather Station in 1996 and 2001 and found that sexual orientation appeared to be significantly associated with suicide risk. The study found that young Filipino gay and bisexual Filipino men at

disproportionally higher risk for suicide ideation than heterosexual peers. Several factors were involved in the suicide that included depression, a friend's suicide attempt, and victimization. Suicide, suicide attempts and suicide ideation are not surprising given Manalastas's (2005) previous study that found widespread negative attitudes towards gay men.

Sta. Maria et.al (2015) stated that one of the important reasons for suicide in the Philippines is romantic relationships, which could support the concern about suicide among gay men and boys. Other reasons cited for suicide or suicide ideation were low levels of closeness with parents or peers. The study was not gendered and none of the socio-demographic variables was associated with suicide ideation. Of interest to this paper, however, is the conclusion by the authors for the need for relationships in our children, especially children-at-risk.

#### Boys and circumcision

A common practice in the Philippines which does not appear to raise much interest for research is the annual *tuli*. One study suggested that many boys experienced PTSD because of this ritual. Ramos and Boyle (2000) found strong support for their hypothesis that ritually circumcised boys would exhibit evidence of PTSD. Their second hypothesis was also supported, that a larger number of boys undergoing ritual circumcision would exhibit PTSD as compared with those undergoing medical circumcision. A total of 1577 boys aged from 11 to 16 years were recruited from five different Batangas provincial schools. Of this total, 1072 were circumcised under medical procedures and 505 were subject to ritual circumcision. Almost 70% of the boys subjected to ritual circumcision (*tuli*) and 51% of those subjected to medical circumcision fulfilled the DSM-IV criteria for a diagnosis of PTSD.

Lee (2006) looked at male understanding about circumcision at a broader level. While he recognized the Ramos and Boyle (2000) study, he felt that it was necessary to look at the socio-cultural aspects of *tuli* rather than to focus on one aspect of the impact, PTSD. His study highlighted the links to masculinity and male identity as well as to the role played by the broader community.

Of interest to this paper is the perceived positive outcomes for being circumcised. The responses give some insight to what it means to be a male, and especially a sexual partner. Table 6: Perceived effect of circumcision.

Responses (n=101)	Number	%
1. Friends had stopped teasing him as <i>supot</i> or uncircumcised.	55	54.5
2. It feels good knowing that one's penis is free of smegma.	30	29.7
3. Partners are pleased because the glans is exposed, hence sexual penetration is easy.	30	29.7
4. Now that his glans is exposed, he likes the sensation during sexual penetration, and thus easier for him to have orgasm.	14	13.8
5. He has grown tall, his voice changed, and his body is healthy.	11	10.9
6. He is now comfortable and confident knowing that his sexual partner would not laugh at him for being uncircumcised.	11	10.9
7. He has caused pregnancy and he now has children.	5	4.9
8. He frequently masturbates and desires intercourse.	5	4.9
9. It is now easy to find sexual partners.	3	2.9
10 He feels good that he followed a Christian tradition.	1	0.9

Table 6: Perceived effects of circumcision (p231)

### Boys and masculinity

The United Nations 2003 World Youth Report concluded its chapter 9 with the following statement: "The universal human rights principles adopted by the international community have set the norm for equality, requiring that girls and women be seen as unique individuals with rights and responsibilities similar to those of boys and men" (p297). Such statements appear to be an assumption that there are more services and attention placed on boys and men than on girls and women. Much work globally has been to focus on this perceived imbalance. For example, while there appears much research and direct services that focus on how girls deal with the tensions of gender, there is far less focus on understanding how boys deal with the tensions of gender in the modern world. An apparent concern is the traditionally patriarchal value that what men do is more important than what women do and thus are of higher value as persons. Therefore, because they are of more value, then it is not necessary for us to give them any additional value by providing them with services. So when women share employment roles and other activities, the perception is that women are moving "up", in which case what then appears is that men lose their higher position and status. We appear to not help our boys deal with this phenomena and often do not support them to handle this change.

If we intend to gender all our work that focuses equally on boys as it does on girls, then certainly we need to understand how our boys deal with the tensions of gender to balance the concept of male power, dominance and violence. "The women's movement, in its fight for gender equality, has expectedly taken issue with the continuing patriarchal relations in modern societies and with the violence perpetrated by men against women. By drawing attention to these issues (or by focusing on patriarchy) feminism and the women's movement have reinforced the so-



cial image/construction of men as not only exercising power over women, but as oppressing and victimizing women" (Miralao, 2004, p80). Miralao goes on to state emphatically that, in fact, most men are not violent and do not oppress women. The problem, she stated, is that while women are feeling and being empowered, we have "not really provided men with other alternatives to their traditional patriarchal and breadwinner roles in society (p.90)".

One of the elements of masculinity is understanding the rights and responsibilities of our boys and men. Lee (2004) cited views on this topic as stated by men in his study. Although the focus of the research was to better understand domestic violence, these perspectives do give us insight into real or perceived expectations we place on our boys. According to Lee (2004), Filipino men see themselves clearly as the head of the family in both power and responsibility and thus are meant to be the key decision-makers. One reason stated for this is the natural physical strength of men as compared to women. In this role they are then meant to be the role models in acceptable behavior, provide emotional and physical support, and certainly are meant to be the primary income earner. Respondents cited these expectations as based in religiosity and tradition.

Regarding relationships with women, Lee (2004) cited that respondents stated the need for their women partner/wife to conduct the household chores and other family tasks. They also expected that these women make themselves desirable and sexually available and that women must understand men's "weakness for sex, support men's plans and actions, be faithful, and avoid gossip and vices (p. 425)."

Respondents in Lee's (2004) study all indicated that they were familiar with domestic violence and had either witnessed it, were victims, or offenders. They also appeared to understand the effects of beating or verbally battering their wives. However, certain behaviors did not register as forms of mistreatment of wives, and these included extramarital affairs, abandonment of partners, not sharing wage income or ignoring when being spoken to.

Ofrenco and Monteil (2010) used positioning theory to frame intimate violence as a product of the assignment on rights and duties that arise in a couple's life that resulted in violence: "[T]he most widely-used explanatory variables have been abnormality or personality disorders, childhood experience of violence, substance or alcohol abuse, and unequal gendered power relations" (p138).

Ofrenco and Monteil (2010) outlined a psychological and feminist model to help explain positioning theory. As they stated, the psychological model explains individualistic pathology with little explanatory value. The feminist model explains the abuse of power studied in heterosexual relationships, yet power bases can shift so gender identities can be fluid. Positioning theory is a social constructionist paradigm that "... gives

primacy to the social process involved in the immediate relationship context" (p165).

Positioning theory could help explain the work of Turgo (2014), who described the concept of masculinity in the changing world of a fishing community, a traditionally gendered system that attached social and cultural meanings to roles and tasks. Masculinity was clearer to understand; the men did the physically difficult job of catching the fish and the women did the socially difficult task of selling the fish. However, when economics transformed communities, roles were forced to change, and perhaps the most difficult change was for the men. When traditionally what the men do is considered as more important than what the women do, and your place in the hierarchy is determined by the task you achieve, then certainly having to do something that women do would assume a demotion in the hierarchy. Turgo's chapter is an excellent insight into one community's meaning of masculinity and thus the sense of their gender. Among the insights is how the men, when joining the women to sell fish, had to take on characteristics of the female vendor to be successful. While this change was acceptable while in the presence of women, many male vendors would revert to their previous male characteristics in the presence of men.

Outside of communities, such as the fishing community, where gender role and tasks are not so clearly defined and observable, changing sexual identities are more complex, and the family will be at the core of this socialization issue. "[W]hile such traditional notions or ideas of what is male/masculine and what is female/feminine remain in the Philippines, it has become increasingly difficult to refer to any one kind or standard of masculinity or femininity given today's accelerated pace of social change and the increasing socioeconomic differentiation within societies" (Turgo, 2014, p79). And change is palatable in the Philippines. The question is, how are we helping our boys deal with this shift away from being male dominant to increased equality? And how are we helping our boys develop the nurturing relationships that they need?

#### Boys and family

The family plays an especially important role in the development of any child, including gender identity. Garo-Santiago et.al (2009) used focus group discussion with rural and urban adolescent to understand their identity in the context of the family. The study showed that to these respondents the family went beyond the immediate unit and even encompassed non-blood relatives. The themes they emphasized were "connection, support, and autonomy" while also meeting expectations from the family to be supportive and "embody values concerning family relationships and academic achievement" (p183). To all the respondents the family was extremely important, from which they developed their own values. The expectations were strong, but there was no indication in the

study that suggested whether the expectations were placed more on boys or girls.

The peer group, *barkadahan*, is another important component to the development of the Filipino adolescent. Norms and expectations include *pakikisama*, the value of self and others that includes trust of self and others (Lajom et.al., 2009). The *barkadahan*, thus, provides a great deal of safety and security. The study, however, does not differentiate between male and female so does not offer insight about boys in particular.

An important factor where family, abuse and violence intersect in the lives of our children is domestic violence. According to Lompero (2012) more boys than girls experienced or witnessed domestic violence. Hindin and Bultian (2006) studied the relationship between witnessing parental domestic violence and depressive symptoms in adolescents. Based on interviews with 2051 Filipino adolescents aged 17-19 their first finding was that symptoms of depression were not uncommon: 11% of the male respondents and 19% of the female respondents presented with symptoms of depression. Second, nearly half of the respondents had witnessed or experienced parental domestic violence. Finally, respondents who experienced some form of parental domestic violence reported more symptoms of depression that included wishing they were dead. The authors concluded that Filipino adolescents who have witnessed parental domestic violence are significantly more likely to report depressive symptoms.

Maxwell (2001) supported research on the impact of parental domestic violence on children and adolescents. Maxwell used Agnew's General Strain Theory to examine two types of familial strain: witnessing inter-parental violence and direct parent-to-child violence, specifically its impact on children's antisocial behaviors. A total of 961 grade school students were surveyed. Results showed that witnessing inter-parental violence was significantly associated with self-reported antisocial and delinquent activities. The study highlighted the importance of family dynamics and their relative impact on youth behavior.

Marquez (2008) examined the 2002 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Survey with a view to better understand how the family impacts sexual risk-taking of teenagers. She noted that parents tended to be more permissive of their boy children and that adolescent boys tended to have more risky sexual behaviors than girls. In addition, female adolescents scored higher in parent-child communication. This is of note given that studies shared previously in this paper pointed to the fact that boys appear to be more neglected than girls in families (Lompero, 2012). "Results of the multivariate analyses have established the protective influence of both family connectedness and parent-child communication as well as the promotive effect of parental permissiveness on risky sexual behaviors" (Marquez, 2008, p20).

Of interest to this paper is the points that Marquez (2008) made in her conclusions. One refers to the need for parents to be able to provide sex education to their children, something that so far most parents appear to have a great deal of difficulty achieving. Instead, most discussion parents have with their children is about avoiding certain sexual behaviors and focusing on gender role expectations. This secrecy lends itself to the possible increase in risky sexual behavior, something that may begin as curiosity and lead to abuse, either as victim or offender. Second, and more important perhaps, is the need for parents to build closer connectedness with their children beyond sex education that includes communication. Such a relationship could inhibit the degree of neglect of boys that researchers such as Lompero (2012) stated. A part of the conclusion in Marquez's report was that, "on account of males' higher proclivity towards sexual risk-taking, greater efforts should be extended to male adolescents (p22)".

In a more recent report, Marquez, Cruz and Bequillo (2014) studied the prevalence and patterns of nonconsensual sexual initiation among our youth based on the 2013 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality survey data. They concluded:

Findings revealing the home as the most common venue for sexual violence, much of which were reported to be inflicted by family members themselves, suggest the need to examine specific family contexts that predispose young people to sexual violence.

What conditions of the home make it more potent for youth risk rather than a safe haven for them to be nurtured and protected? What are the strategies needed to ensure the 'safety of the homes' against this particular violence behavior? (p56)

When such data is collected, it is important that the research be generated in light of related data that suggests boys are at the very least, if not more, as vulnerable as are girls to negative or abusive behavior.

#### Boys and society/culture

All of the above variables and factors are shaped by social expectations and the bigger concept of culture. Culture then becomes an important variable to study with how this intersects with abuse and boys. Ogena (2014) noted that cultural contexts define expected and allowable behavior of adolescents and thus exert a significant impact on adolescence. Culture will also determine how families, parents in particular, respond to behaviors. Treatment of adolescent boys and girls differ. A simple example of this is that, generally boys appear more likely than girls to be allowed to stay out late and girls' behavior to the opposite sex tends to be more restricted.

Lansford (2005) stated the importance of perception of a behavior that would determine its impact and perception is shaped by culture. History and culture certainly impact our perceptions and thus our behavior. Are behaviors the result of direct education or merely modeling without any internal understanding? Could this imply that there could be a contradiction between our verbal and modeling messages? That is, do we speak directly of this contradiction to our young people, especially our boys? Because, as Crisol (2001) stated, "social transformation can take place only when a previous practice is altered (p105)."

When we work for social transformation, all parties must be equally involved. Crisol (2014) stated that "...the very ways we interpret and act upon the notion of gender is founded on inequality (p106)" and the assumption is that this means to the extreme disadvantage to women. If men and boys are not participants in the social transformation, could the inequality that we aim to balance continue, but with different populations at the different poles?

### Synthesis

Crisol (2001) in her paper on gender and social transformation stated that "social transformation can take place only when a precise practice is altered (p108)". What could this precise altered practice be?

Research with a focus on boys informs us to some extent about what that altered practice could be. Of course it will not be so simple as to be merely one practice, but instead a variety of practices at different levels aimed at individuals, families, institutions and culture in general. We must define our specific outcomes: first, we want our boys to be treated with services that focus on them as boys and thus based on understanding where their needs lie, and second, we want to focus on preventing our boys from becoming sexual offenders as adults. While these two outcome goals do intersect, it is important that we look on our boys as human beings first and as potential offenders only a distant second.

Synthesizing the data about our boys in general shows us that boys are more at-risk than girls to use tobacco and alcohol (Swahn, 2013; Aguillon & Roman, 2012), two products considered as public health concerns. These products tend to be used with *barkada*, pointing to the issue of peer pressure and using the *barkada* for needed support and nurturance (Sta Maria, 2015). Boys are more at-risk than girls to commit suicide (Manalastas, 2013) even though more girls have suicide ideation. Reasons for suicide point to the need for romantic and other nurturance from family that are not met (Sta. Maria, 2015). Boys are not doing as well as girls in school (Torres, 2011; Mendezabal, 2013) and pressures about school are stated as one of the important issues for conflict in the family (Garcia, 2003) with data pointing to the mother-son relationship and little mention of the father-son relationship except when

the mother feels she has not been successful. Garcia (2003) pointed to the factors of not doing well in school as contributing to a boy's emotional instability. When the father has to step in to place pressure on a boy, he perceives the father as aggravating the problem, that the mother is fearful of the father, and if the boy had a good relationship with the father, perceived this aggressive behavior as a model (Garcia, 2003). A closer relationship with mother and little or no relationship with father is a concern for possible identity confusion (Garcia, 2003). More boys than girls witnessed or experienced domestic violence (Lompero, 2012) and those who experienced domestic violence reported more symptoms of depression that included wishing they were dead (Hindin & Bultian, 2006) and self-reported antisocial and delinquent activities (Maxwell, 2001).

Gendered data on physical punishment was mixed yet more data points to boys being more physically disciplined than girls (Lompero, 2012; Sanapo & Nakamura, 2010) and that discipline tends to be inflicted more by mother than father (Sanapa & Nakamura, 2010). Girls scored higher in parent-child communication than boys (Marquez, 2008). While Lansford (2010) stated that discipline is perceived based on culture which could lead some to believe that discipline is thus mitigated, he did stress that regardless of cultural perception a higher use of physical discipline was associated with more aggression and anxiety, anger, loneliness, sadness and hatred (Sanapo & Nakamura, 2010). While more boys than girls live on the street, more effort is spent on rescuing girls than boys (UNICEF, 2009). While no prevalence data exists, studies point to the ignored issue of boys in prostitution (Davis 2013; Laguisma-Sison, 2000) that discussed the importance of the father-son relationship. More boys drop out of school (Torres, 2011) yet a great deal of effort and celebration is placed on finding employment opportunities for females (Miralao, 2004). Boys tend to practice riskier sexual behavior than girls yet parents tend to avoid teaching sex and sexuality to their children, instead choosing to focus on which behaviors to avoid and what are the gender role expectations (Marquez, 2008). Regarding masculinity, although circumcision practices, especially public ritualistic circumcision could lead to PTSD (Ramos & Boyle, 2000), circumcision appears an important part of defining masculinity for our boys (Lee, 2006) that include physical appearance of the penis as well as ability to penetrate a woman. Finally, research indicates that boys are more abused than girls in general; specifically boys are more neglected than girls, suffer more physical violence than girls, and are even more sexually abused than girls (Lompero, 2012; PNBVAC, 2016).

Based on the data from literature alone it is clear that we are failing our boys. A better understanding of masculinity might also support this conclusion and might help with the next question about whether this data can inform us about our boys who sexually misbehave. According to young sex offenders, factors that led to offending included sexual expo-

sure/pornography, negative feelings, peer pressure, boredom, lack of supervision, victim's fault and curiosity (Rosales, 2012; Leyned & Baldar-rama, 2005). The most compelling voices of the general young offender was the plea for respect, open communication and attention from parents (Juvenile Justice, 2017). These statements by the young offender intersect with the data that shows boys are more neglected, tend to have weak relationships with father, experience expectations around sexuality without sex education or support, and have poor communication skills with their parents. The young sex offender also tended to blame others for their behavior, especially the victim or even the adult who did not provide supervision.

Taking the next step from a boy to an adult male sex offender, is there anything in the data that could inform us? It needs to be pointed out first, however, that these variables do not focus on the sexology of the person; instead, they focus on the mental health and social skills of that person. But this remains important data, albeit incomplete. The similarities between the young sex offender and the adult sex offender is a tendency for self-pity and to look elsewhere for blame.

"What about us?" If our boys are feeling neglected or having to prove their masculinity without guidance or support, especially from their father, the data shows that they might have a good reason for these feelings. The boy who voices "what about me" is not so different from the adult sex offender's self-pity, which requires the search to blame anything or anyone but the self because the self cannot withstand that responsibility. With this in mind, what will our precise altered practice be to work with our boys in order to achieve social transformation to not only help all our boys, but to proactively prevent child sexual abuse or offending in general.

What next?

This paper sought to find Philippine research to synthesize what we know so far in order to design studies to further our understanding to strategically and proactively prevent child sexual abuse as well as placing a needed focus on boys in general. Both published and unpublished research was reviewed that could help understand the elements that impact the development of boys in the Philippines with a particular interest in anything that could lead the boy to go over the bridge from sexual arousal to sexual offense but with the clear concern that boys need to be nurtured and protected as much as we do the same for our girls. Our next steps must be with a focus on boys as children, not as future offenders, that includes helping fathers engage appropriately with their sons, understand positive masculinity, increase positive communication skills at all levels, and generally supervise and nurture our boys.

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*A Baseline Study on the Vulnerabilities of Street-Involved Boys to Sexual Exploitation in Manila, Philippines*

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Abstract

This report presents outcomes and key discussion from research conducted among street-involved boys in Manila, Philippines. The research provides a baseline of information and an initial analysis of their key needs, vulnerabilities, and potential resiliencies and aims to initiate a more nuanced and informed discussion on a male vulnerability of street involved youth in the Philippines for social service providers, policy makers, child-protection advocates, and social researchers.

The study partnered with social workers from three local NGOs in Manila to conduct 51 in-depth, structured interviews with street-involved boys presently living and/or working on the streets of Manila during the time that the study was conducted. The ages of respondents in the study ranged from 10-19 years of age, with a mean age of 14. The interviews focused on a number of key areas of their lives including: demographics, social and family relationships, financial security, sexual history, instances of violence and sexual abuse, health, emotional wellbeing, and future plans. This broad range of data was used to assess present and potential vulnerabilities to various forms of violence with a particular focus on sexual exploitation and abuse.

The research uncovered significant and pressing vulnerabilities among street-involved boys toward sexual and physical violence and finds such forms of violence to be a common, and sometimes frequent, reality of life for street-involved boys in Manila. The majority of boys, 65% (33 boys), disclosed experiences of at least some form of sexual violence on the streets or within their communities. This includes, 49% who reported being shown pornography by adults in their communities or in the areas in which they live and work, 47% who cited sexual touching by adults and 27% who cited instances in which adults had committed sexual acts with them that went beyond just touching. Physical violence, including some brutal accounts were commonly reported that came from police officers, parents, and peers within their communities. This research attempts to define and add nuance to the often little-known needs

and vulnerabilities of street-involved boys in Manila and provides recommendations for program development, future research, and continued vigilance against the sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable groups of children in the Philippines.

### Introduction

Over the past two decades, sexual exploitation and abuse has received increasing attention in political and international development circles in the Philippines, recognizing the grave risks it poses to the safety, development, and wellbeing of children (Institute of Medicine & National Research Council, 2013). While these developments have been important, they have largely focused on the experiences of women and girls despite increasing evidence demonstrating a significant vulnerability to sexual violence among boys and young men (Ramiro, 2005; UNICEF, 2016). While this is a pressing issue, the sexual exploitation of men and boys is often little understood and commonly goes ignored. A key reason for this is that social and cultural norms often assume men and boys to be inherently strong and/or invulnerable to sexual exploitation. Due to the general lack of awareness of the vulnerability of males to sexual abuse and exploitation, the efforts of organizations and individuals who desire to provide for the needs of male victims often go under-supported.

Even more invisible are the needs of street-involved males, who are commonly excluded from census data and large-scale surveys, which draw data from children in schools and living in registered houses (Stark, 2015). Exact figures for street-involved groups are difficult to calculate as these populations are frequently on the move, often unregistered, and frequently exist outside of formal societal structures. Street-involved children are mainly found in urban settings, in living situations commonly imbricated in issues related to unsafe migration, human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, drug use, and violence (Coren E, Hossain R, Pardo Pardo J, Veras MMS et al, 2013).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had adopted the following definition for street-children: "Any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, and so on, has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, directed, and supervised by responsible adults." (Williams, 1993).

This definition is developed further by separating such groups into three categories (Plan International):

- Street-living children: These are children sleeping in public places without their families.
- Street-working children: These are children who work on the streets during the day but return to their families at night.

- Children of families on the street: These are children living with their families on the street.

While these categorizations may be helpful, in reality, street-involved children are not a homogenous group and generalizing their experiences can be challenging. Additionally, it is also now recognized that such categories are largely socially constructed and even the label of street child may be perceived as somewhat discriminatory and/or stigmatizing (OHCHR, 2011). In this respect, the term “street children” denies the diversity of children’s experiences, is somewhat victimizing and stigmatizing, and may remove the focus on other marginalized children (Panter-Brick, 2002). New emerging terms as ‘street-active’, ‘street-connected’ or ‘street-involved’ children are increasingly used, and refer to a broader definition of “children for whom the street is a reference point and has a central role in their lives (Thomas de Benitez, 2007).”

One of street children’s main assets is their ability to work and gain income. Most street children are working in the informal sector in a wide range of occupations such as, begging, washing windshields, scavenging, rag picking, street-vending etc. At times, street-involved children may manage multiple and diverse jobs throughout a single day in response to shifting demands from morning until night (Thomas de Benítez, 2011). Income is, for the most part, earned on a daily basis and highly fluctuates.

Street-connected youth are also at high-risk to be exploited and trafficked. This includes trafficking for forced labor or commercial sexual exploitation and being forced to beg, work or engage in criminal activity. This reality is often facilitated by a lack of close family ties. Additionally, being of young age and isolation lead them to be an easy prey for all kinds of influence, manipulation, and abuse, whether by relatives, strangers from their villages of provenance or by street gang members. Sex is an important aspect of the experiences of street-involved boys that engage in “survival sex, commercial sex, comfort sex, casual sex and romantic relationships, with multiple partners (girlfriends, street girls, ‘benefactors’ transvestites, prostitutes and gay men) from both within and outside the street world” (Beazley, 2003). Additionally, street children are commonly exposed to risks of violence from older street children, and such violence can become their norm (Nada & El Daw, 2010).

Urban poverty: broader than a lack of income

A high proportion of the urban poor live in temporary housing, “slums” or informal settlements, and residents often bear the harsh brunt of diverse dimensions of poverty. Income is commonly used as the central measure of poverty, mainly through the World Bank’s definition and poverty line of \$1 a day. Relying solely on this indicator is problematic as this measure is essentially based on what is needed for bare survival. Focusing on the “minimum food basket” needed to survive fails to take in

account differences between countries, provinces, and towns within the same country, as well as attaining a certain quality of life. The measure also overlooks that a key characteristic of urban poverty is the high cost of non-food items and that access to most basic services in the cities of the Global South is generally monetized. For urban poor living in informal settlements, the provision of basic services and infrastructure is often weak or non-existent and financial resources can quickly be depleted by basic aspects of daily life such as housing, education, health services, social obligations, transportation, clean water, and sanitation (Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2013).

Davis and Miles, in a 2014 study exploring the experiences of street-involved boys (8-18 years old) in Sihanoukville, Cambodia found 38% of street-involved instances of sexual touching from adults and 26% disclosed forms of abuse that went beyond just touching, often citing forced and coercive sex, and being offered food, money, or gifts in exchange for providing sexual services to adults (Davis & Miles, 2014). These rates were significantly higher than the international average of 17% and 5 times higher than a 2014 UNICEF study which reported that only 5% of boys in Cambodia experienced sexual abuse between the ages of 13 and 18 years (UNICEF, 2014).

#### Substance abuse

The abuse of industrial solvent as inhalants, such as toluene-based glue, is commonly seen among street-involved children throughout the world, due to their affordability and widespread availability (Wittig et al, 1997). Inhalants abuse, along with alcohol and other illicit drugs, are commonly used by street-involved children as a means of escaping from their harsh reality and often as a means of relieving the sensation of hunger (Pagare et al., 2004; Pogoy & de Guia, 2008).

#### The context of Metro-Manila

The city of Manila has become notorious for street-involved children. Despite this reality, research into their needs and vulnerabilities is sparse, and commonly cited statistical information on prevalence and vulnerability is often outdated. A commonly cited source on the prevalence of street-involved children in the Philippines is a 2002 book from the Social Development Research Center at De La Salle University, in Manila. At the time, the study estimated the population of street-involved children in the Philippines to be 3% of the total population of children aged 0-17 years of age in the Philippines (Lamberte, 2002). While a significant majority (70%) of street-involved children in Lamberte's study were found to be male, literature available in the Philippines commonly ignores male vulnerability and underscores only the vulnerabilities of females, calling for increased social support for women and girls. At times, the assumptions of male resilience and female vulnerability are not given



basis in evidence. Teresita Silva, in a 2003 country report, cited that even though a minority of total street children (30%) are girls, their “gender and situation” make them more vulnerable than boys who are “better able to protect themselves” (Silva, 2003). However the author gave no evidence to support these claims for male resilience on the streets.

In recent years, the city of Manila has received an increasing amount of criticism for its undertaking of rescue operations targeted at street-involved children. Initially, these operations were created in response to the high prevalence of street-involved children. However, recent submissions to the UN High Council on Human Rights by the Asian Legal Resource Center cited significant and systemic issues of torture and violence against children under these programs (Asian Legal Resource Center, 2014). A central part of this submission was regarding the Reception and Action Centre (RAC) in Manila, which they stated was a custodial and rehabilitation center, where children in conflict with the law, street children and orphans were detained (2014). These rescue operations are often indiscriminate, failing to make distinction between children in conflict with the law and children in need of special care or protection and fail to consider the individual needs and circumstances of the children involved. Further, children are cited to experience severe violations to their basic human rights during detainment, including issues of overcrowding, lack of caretakers, and abuse by both caretakers and other children (Nugroho & Parker, 2008).

#### Neglect and vulnerabilities to CSEC

The commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) has gained much-needed attention in the United States and around the globe. However, most of this discussion has centered on young women and adolescent girls. What little attention that has been afforded to boys often identifies them as exploiters, pimps and buyers of sex or as active and willing participants in sex work, not as victims or survivors of exploitation (ECPAT, 2010). As a result of this general lack of information and awareness about the reality of male vulnerability, social service providers are often ill-equipped to meet the needs of male victims of violence, sexual abuse, and exploitation. A recent report from the US Department of State noted, “around the world, the identification and provision of adequate social services for male victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking has remained a continuous challenge” (US Department of State).

Asia, along with Central and South America, is cited to have the highest rates of child sexual exploitation in the world (UNICEF, 2001; Ward, 2004). In Cambodia, the commercial sexual exploitation of children is understood to occur within one of two categories. The first of these is establishment-based sexual exploitation, which often occurs in brothels, beer gardens, KTV, and massage establishments (APLE, 2006). Secondly, there is street-based or opportunistic sexual exploitation, which is

usually facilitated personally by a sex offender or an intermediary, who often approaches children directly on the streets, or in other public areas for the purpose of starting a relationship with the child which will ultimately lead to sexual abuse (2006).

Financial need and forms of emotional and physical neglect can make street-involved children uniquely vulnerable to various kinds of violence and exploitation, particularly CSEC. In Manila, street-involved boys are reported to be significantly less likely to have had any contact with their immediate families compared with street-involved girls (80% compared to 63%) and lower educational attainment in comparison with females, creating a unique vulnerability to exploitation and violence. Sobritchea (1998) cited that, among male victims of sexual abuse in the Philippines, 75.2% of these cases are believed to be caused by parental neglect, compared with 43.8% among female victims (1998: 277). Similarly, the most common forms of abuse for males is reported to be neglect and abandonment (39.4%) followed by abuse from youth offenders (28.1%) and physical abuse (15.3%) (Silva, 2002). Merrill, et al (2010) found that Filipino street-involved children who do not live at home were 83% (1.83 times) more likely to be involved in street prostitution, 74% (1.74 times) more likely to exhibit substance abuse, 52% (1.52 times) more likely to feel isolated, and nearly twice as likely to have had suicidal ideations within the past year, compared with children who lived at home (Merrill, et al, 2010). Further, males have been found to be twice as likely to have no formal education (28.2%) in comparison with females (11.6%) (Sobritchea, 1998).

Further, the sexual abuse of boys is a reality that is similarly left unspoken in the Philippines. As in other parts of Southeast Asia, boys are often presumed to be innately tough and able to protect themselves. Despite research (UNICEF, 2016) continuing to find notably high rates of sexual violence against men and boys, in many case significantly higher than rates found among females, much of the literature on sexual abuse in the Philippines assumes sexual abuse to be largely a female issue. These assumptions are often based upon case referral statistics from the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). In the 2011 statistics from the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development, of the department's 1,401 cases of sexual abuse, only 29 of these cases (2%) were cases of abuse against males, while 1,372 (98%) were females. In stark contrast to Government statistics, a 2016 UNICEF nationally-representative study on the prevalence of violence against children found a notably higher prevalence of sexual violence among males. The study involved 3,866 children and youth and found 24.7% of males and 18.2% of females to have experienced sexual abuse in their lifetimes.

## Methodology

This study employed both purposive and snowballing data sampling methodologies. The lead researcher worked with key social workers from Bahay Tuluyan, Kanlungan Sa ErMa, and Onesimo Bulilit Foundation to identify and map locations in each of the organization's respective areas of service, where street-involved boys were known to congregate, live, and work. Respondents for the study were typically met either on the street within the service areas of each respective organization or within drop-in centers operated by each of the three implementing organizations. Due to concerns for the safety and privacy of the respondents, all participants encountered on the street were invited to a drop-in or child development center, after agreeing to participate in an interview. Additionally, after completing an interview boys were asked if they were aware of other boys who might also be willing to participate in the study. This method of gaining respondents (known as chain-referral or snowballing) allowed the research team to follow social networks of young boys working throughout the Manila area.

Throughout the months of July and August of 2014, social workers from these three organizations held structured interviews with 51 street-involved (street-living and/or street-working) boys from the Manila area. Of these 51 boys, 21 interviews (41%) were conducted by social workers and/or teachers from Onesimo Bulilit Foundation, 16 interviews (31%) were conducted by social workers from Kanlungan Sa ErMa Foundation, and 14 interviews (27%) were conducted by social workers from Bahay Tuluyan. While the street-involved boys in this study worked in a variety of areas throughout the Manila area and often at a wide variety of times throughout the day and night, all interviews were conducted during the daytime, within drop-in or child development centers.

The questionnaire used for this study was quite large and was comprised of 86 questions (excluding numerous subquestions). Questions were a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions covering a variety of topics surrounding the life and context of street-involved boys including, demographics, social relationships, personal and family finances, social and emotional feelings, stigma and discrimination, sexual abuse, commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC), sexual health, violence, income generation, and future planning. The questions used for this study were adapted from previous research instruments used to gather a holistic baseline of information from street-involved children in Sihanoukville, Cambodia as well as similar instruments used to explore the vulnerabilities of young male entertainment workers in Cambodia, The Philippines, and Thailand. In adapting the questionnaire for Filipino boys in Manila, the lead researcher worked with child rights specialists to ensure that questions were appropriate to be asked to young boys and consulted with social practitioners in Manila to ensure that questions were also appropriate for the Philippine cultural context. Additionally, the

final draft of the questionnaire was scrutinized by focus groups of social workers from each of the three implementing organizations in Manila. These reviewers critiqued the questionnaire and suggested additional questions based upon their specific knowledge of the street-involved boys in the Manila area.

All interviews in this study were conducted in the Filipino (Tagalog) language by social workers from three organizations operating in the Manila area: Bahay Tuluyan, Kanlungan Sa ErMa, and Onesimo Bulilit Foundation. Each of these organizations specializes in working with street-involved children and already has built rapport within each of their respective communities in which they provide their services. Interviewers were trained in the study's methods and given ethical training for research with vulnerable people groups using the 2009 UNIAP Ethical Guidelines for Human-Trafficking Research. Social workers provided each respondent with information concerning: the research and its purpose; assurance of anonymity and confidentiality; information regarding the personal and sensitive nature of the interview, questions to be asked; and the boy's right to choose not to answer any question, stop the survey, and/or withdraw from the study at any time. In order to make provision for younger boys, surveys were designed to be age-contingent. After careful consideration of the needs and context of younger street-involved boys, survey questions were structured in such a way so that certain sections could be skipped for street-involved boys under the age of 12. However, if a child under the age of 12 disclosed sexual intercourse or sexual abuse, and was comfortable talking about the subject, interviewers were instructed to continue through the full set of questions as they would with a child over the age of 12, at their (and the child's) discretion.

#### Limitations

In this survey, we chose to believe the information given by our respondents to be accurate accounts of their experiences on the streets. However, it is understood that some street-involved children may be accustomed to giving inaccurate information as a means of survival. To counter some of these potential inaccuracies, a few considerations had been made. During training, interviewers were trained to take careful note of the body language of respondents in order to be aware of instances in which children may have felt uncomfortable in answering questions accurately. Throughout the data collection process, interviewers were encouraged to provide annotations on each survey indicating any variables in which they perceived respondent's statements to be unreliable. Secondly, survey questions in the research instrument were constructed with internal redundancies to check for consistency throughout the whole of each interview. During the data cleaning and initial analysis, any variables that were held in significant question were removed from

the data sampling. This resulted in a lower n-value on some questions, but greater accuracy in the final dataset.

The research team felt it was important for interviews to be conducted by local social workers or child protection workers that were already known and trusted within the child's community. While this may be useful for establishing rapport and creating a safe space for respondents to speak about their experiences, this may also have posed a challenge to data accuracy. It is possible that some children could have felt uncomfortable in disclosing some information, due to fears that it may have changed the way the social worker perceived the child. While this is possible, in many cases it was found that prior knowledge of social workers aided in the comfort level of the boys and aided the disclosure of information.

In some cases, it is possible for sexual violence to become normalized as a part of a boy's life. This is often a coping strategy in children who have experienced considerable amounts of violence on a regular basis. Normalization such as this could have caused some boys to have understood some forms of sexual abuse as a normal part of their life and thus be less likely to label such instances as abuse or something that needs to be reported. While great care was taken in considering each child's understanding of sexual violence, it is possible (and even likely) that some experiences of sexual violence remained undisclosed due to such normalization.

## Results

### Demographics

The ages of respondents in this study ranged 9 years, the youngest being 10 and the oldest being 19 years of age, with an average age of 14. The majority reported that they were not currently attending any form of schooling, with only 42% (20 people) citing enrollment in school. Nearly two-thirds, 65% (31 people) indicated that they were native to the Metro-Manila area, while only 35% (17 people) indicated migrating, primarily from rural or provincial areas. Reasons for coming into street-involvement were diverse and included tumultuous family relationships, death of loved ones, and various economic hardships.

### Shelter, community, and family life

Only a minority of street-involved boys (41%) cited living in some form of constructed shelter. The remaining majority (59%) cited sleeping either directly on the streets or in various forms of temporary coverings made of cardboard or plastic scraps. Those citing to live in constructed shelters described a wide variety of both formal and informal structures including: wood (20%), cement (9%) and stone (9%), as well as 1 boy citing to live inside of a burnt-out building and another boy citing to live on the roof of a squatter building. Among respondents living outside of con-

structed shelters, the majority (39%) said that they lived directly on the streets and indicated no other form of shelter or covering, while 2 boys (4%) cited living under a bridge. Some respondents indicated sleeping on the street, but cited using tents or other forms of temporary coverings for protection at night. Among these were 5 (11%) respondents who lived in tents and 1 respondent who lived in a shelter made of cardboard. Additionally, 1 boy indicated living with his family in the back of a jeepney. More than half (58%) cited that they did not feel safe within their communities, and gave a variety of reasons including the witness or experience of various kinds of violence. Notably, 4 boys (17%) cited not feeling safe in their communities due to fears of being taken by street-child rescue operations conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) under the Philippine Government.

The families of street-involved boys were found to be considerably large with respondents citing an average of 6 siblings. The majority, 30 respondents (59%) indicated living with family members. Nine people (18%) indicated living with distant relatives or non-immediate family members and 8 people (16%) indicated living with friends. To a lesser extent, 2 people (4%) indicated living with other non-relatives (these were 2 boys who had been informally adopted by members of their community). Lastly, 1 boy cited living alone, and another cited living with his partner. Those not presently living with family members (41%) commonly cited tumultuous, unstable, or neglectful family relationships as the reasons they did not stay with their families. The majority of boys (78%) indicated that they liked living with the people in their current living arrangement, giving reasons such as "we are family", "I'm happy with them", "they love me" or "they care for me". Conversely, 11 boys (22%) stated that they did not like living with the people in their current living arrangement and commonly cited neglect, abandonment, drug use at home, and lack of food. For 40% of respondents (20 people), their main caretaker was cited to be their mother and 7 people (14%) cited being taken care of by both of their parents. Beyond this, 5 people (10%) cited being taken care of by adoptive parents (informal or unofficial adoptions). Four people (8%) cited being taken care of by a grandparent, 3 (6%) cited being taken care of by a sibling, and 3 (6%) cited being taken care of by a non-immediate family member. To a lesser extent, 1 boy mentioned being taken care of by his father and 1 mentioned that a friend took care of him.

#### Street work

Street-involved boys in Manila were found to engage in a diverse number of income-generating activities. Begging constituted the largest portion of these activities, which were reported by 18 boys (36%) of the sampling. Beyond this, 7 boys (14%) of the sampling reported selling various items for income; this included the selling of flowers, cigarettes, plastic bags, and vegetables. Other income-generating activities included

assisting street-side vendors or other street-involved people (4 boys, 8%), calling for jeepney passengers (4 boys, 8%), washing cars (3 boys, 6%), guiding cars into street-side parking places (3 boys, 6%), and trash picking (3 boys, 6%), among other activities. Respondents cited working an average of 7 hours a day on the streets. The mean age at which respondents cited they had begun street work was 10 years of age, with the youngest beginning at the age of 2 and the oldest beginning at the age of 17. The shortest amount of time spent in street-work was just few weeks, and the longest was 15 years.

#### Sexual abuse

Conversations on personal experiences of sexual violence began by asking boys if there had been any adults who had asked them to do things that they did not want to do. This was intentionally a broad question and did not specifically define anything sexual so as to allow respondents to warm-up to talking about more sensitive and personal issues. The majority of those responding to this question, 65% (11 boys), defined a variety of sexual acts that adults had asked them to do. Beyond this, 18% (3 boys) cited adults forcing them to steal and 12% (2 boys) cited adults forcing them to take drugs.

Respondents were then asked specifically about instances in which an adult had touched them (or asked to be touched by them) in the genital area. Nearly half of respondents, 47% (24 boys), cited instances in which such kinds of touching had occurred. The majority of this group, 72% (13 boys) indicated that this happened between 1 and 5 times. To a lesser extent, 17% (3 boys) cited that this had happened to them more than 10 times and 11% (2 boys) cited that this happened "all the time" or "regularly". The average age at which respondents cited first being sexually touched by an adult was 11 years of age, the youngest citing to being sexually touched at the age of 3, and the oldest at the age of 17.

Respondents were then asked if these experiences of abuse had ever gone further than just sexual touching. 17% (13 boys) cited that their abuse had gone beyond just sexual touching. Boys within this group defined a variety of abusive acts including: oral sex (4 boys), kissing (2 boys), intercourse (1 boy), physical abuse (1 boy), and 5 respondents who chose not to define what had happened in addition to the sexual touching.

Beyond experience of direct sexual abuse from an adult, respondents were asked to describe instances in which they may have been asked by an adult to have sex with another child. Of the 41 boys responding to this question, 10% cited instances in which this had happened. One respondent, age 14, cited an experience in which a particular older youth had instructed him to have sex with a female friend. This particular boy, throughout his interview, discussed a variety of instances involving this particular older youth showing the younger boy porno-

graphic materials, stealing the boys earnings on the streets, and physical abuse, among others. Most research focusing on the vulnerabilities of young children, focuses only on adults as the perpetrators of sexual violence, while research such as this may be useful, further research is needed to understand particular dynamics involved in cases such as these when children abuse other children sexually, physically, and otherwise.

#### Commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC)

More than one-fourth of respondents, 27% (13 boys), described instances in which they had been sexually abused in exchange for money, food, or gifts. Respondents indicated receiving a variety of non-monetary items in exchange for sex or sexual services. One respondent indicated receiving a toy in exchange for such services. One respondent, age 16, recounted the following, which happened to him a year prior: "[He gave me] a big Toblerone. I went to the Rainbow Hotel with him. He had me take off all my clothes, and he took off his as well. We showered together and he put my penis into his mouth."

The average age at which respondents indicated having first been sexually exploited on the streets was between 13 and 14 years of age. The youngest said he was 9 and the oldest 17 years when they were first exploited.

#### Pornography

Pornography can be used as a means of sexualizing or grooming children for further sexual abuse. Understanding this, interviewers asked respondents about instances in which adults on the streets or in their communities had shown them pornographic pictures or videos. Of the 45 boys responding to this question, nearly half of boys, 49% (22 boys) cited instances in which adults had shown them such kinds of pictures or videos.

In addition to the vulnerabilities of children being shown pornography, interviewers also explored instances in which children had been asked by an adult to be filmed or photographed for such pornographic materials. Of the 44 boys responding to this question, 3 boys cited instances in which they had been photographed or videoed for pornographic materials. One boy, age 18, described an experience when he was sleeping on the streets and was awoken by an adult who had inserted his hands into the boys shorts and had been videoing the incident. In another case, a boy, age 17, described a man within his community who had asked to take nude photographs of the boy and his brother.

#### Physical violence

Violence from parents was most commonly indicated among respondents with 85% (41 boys) citing various forms of physical abuse



from parents. These instances commonly involved either violence resulting from the use of alcohol or extreme forms of corporal punishment, many of which resulted from the abuse of alcohol. One boy, age 12, cited attempting to intervene with his mother's drinking. He cited, "Mom fought with me because she had been drinking. I asked her to stop and [told her that] she had a problem. She grabbed me by the neck and choked me." Another boy, age 16, cited abuse from his father that involved him being hung upside-down from a tree near their home and being punched (*suntok*).

Violence from police was also indicated among the majority of boys. Nearly three-fourths of respondents, 72% (33 boys) cited having witnessed the physical abuse of another child by a police officer. A comparatively high majority of boys, 57% (25 boys) also cited having personally experienced physical abuse/violence from police officers; many indicating extreme and violent forms of abuse, which commonly included being kicked in the face and stomach and being tasered. Several respondents cited receiving violence from police for sleeping on the streets. One boy, age 18, cited fears of being killed (*salvaged*): "I woke up late on the street so they kicked me in the face. I was confused. It also happened to me before that I was kicked in the side. I thought I was going to be killed." Other children indicated extreme levels of abuse after being taken into police custody. One boy, age 15, cited, "[The police] beat me in the head and arm with their batons. They also beat me in the legs with a 1-inch thick piece of wood. Inside the prison, they kicked me using their hard shoes." Another cited, "[The police] beat me up here at the police office. Suddenly, they grabbed me and tasered me because I had done something wrong." Two children specifically cited violence in relation to government child rescue operations conducted under the authority of the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). One child, age 11, cited police officers using force and dragging him during such rescue operations.

Physical violence coming from other children was also found to be common among street-involved boys. 81% (31 boys) cited witnessing another child using physical violence against another child. To a similar extent, 77% (36 boys) cited personally being the victim of physical violence from another child. In one case, a 12-year-old boy cited having a .38 caliber pistol pointed at him by another youth.

#### Sexual violence

Respondents were asked about instances in which they had witnessed or experienced sexual violence committed by parents or guardians, teachers, police officers, employers, or other children. A strong majority of respondents 69% (31 boys) reported some level of sexual violence from at least 1 of the 5 defined figures. This is significantly higher than the 47% of respondents, earlier in the survey, who cited being sexually touched on the genitals by an adult.

Over half of respondents 52% (24 boys), cited witnessing a youth being abused by another youth, while 25% (11 boys) cited having personal experiences of such abuse. The second highest rates of sexual abuse (witness and experience) were reported to have come from parents or guardians. 28% of respondents (13 boys) cited witnessing the sexual abuse of another child by a parent or guardian. To a much lesser extent, 7% (3 boys), cited having a personal experience of sexual abuse by a parent or guardian. Three boys cited witnessing teachers committing sexual violence against another child or children, and 5% (2 boys) cited personal experiences of such abuse. Additionally, 7% (3 children) cited witnessing sexual violence committed by an employer, and 5% (2 children) cited personal experiences of such violence.

Seven children (16%) cited witnessing police committing sexual abuse against another child. While there were no respondents who reported having personally experienced sexual violence from a police officer, these findings are significant, particularly considering the notably high levels of physical violence, both witnessed and experienced, by boys working on the streets.

### Receiving help

Previous research has indicated that male survivors of sexual violence are very unlikely to ever ask for help or even disclose that the abuse ever happened, and, those who do disclose are often unlikely to receive adequate help (if any is available) following their disclosure (Holmes, et al., 1997). Given this understanding, respondents who disclosed sexual violence were asked if they had asked for help following the experience of violence. Those who cited having asked for help were asked in what way (if any) they received help.

A number of questions were asked to evaluate the boy's access to persons and their families or people in their communities who they could go to if they were angry or upset. The majority, 74% (20 boys), indicated that they did have someone that they could go to. While 7 boys (26%) cited that they had no one. Among those who cited having someone that they could go to, the majority of boys (56%) cited having a friend that they go to, 16% cited their mother, 6% cited a caretaker, and another 6% cited a social worker. To a much lesser extent, "father", "mother and father", "other relative", "sibling", and "my teacher" were mentioned each by 1 respondent.

Among the 31 people (69%) who disclosed receiving some level of sexual violence, only 6 people (12%) had ever asked anyone for help. Five out of the 6 people who asked for help described the level of help that they were given. Among these, 2 cited that the people that they told about the abuse did not want to give them help. One boy, age 14, who asked friends for help, cited, "they didn't help, instead they shamed me." Another boy, age 13, asking for help from a teacher, noted that "[the teacher] didn't want to give help, and I didn't want to say anything more."

Only 2 boys cited receiving any form of appropriate help from the people to whom they disclosed the abuse. One cited that the person to whom he disclosed the abuse talked to the abuser, another cited that the person to whom he disclosed the abuse searched for the perpetrator in order to file a case but did not mention if the perpetrator was ever found. Lastly, 1 boy indicated disclosing abuse to an older brother, who then responded with revenge against the perpetrator. This child, age 14, cited that, "Another youth had made me take off all my clothes. After this, I told my older brother about it, and he stabbed (the perpetrator)."

### Feelings

In addition to the witness and experience of violence, interviewers asked respondents to take a few moments to reflect on their own personal thoughts and feelings over the past 12 months. In particular, respondents were asked about experiencing feelings of shame, guilt, self-blame, wanting to blame someone else, low self-esteem, feeling that they needed to be punished, feelings of isolation, numbness, as well as suicidal ideations.

In terms of feelings, the most notable theme found among respondents were low valuations of themselves. Most notable were 87% (33 boys) who cited feelings of shame associated with their life on the streets. Following this, 68% (25 boys) cited feelings of self blame, and 67% (24 boys) cited feeling that they deserved punishment. For a number of respondents, feelings of shame and self blame were tied with their work on the streets. For others, these feelings were tied with experiences of abuse. One boy, age 17, cited, "I'm being shamed while I'm being beaten up, being yelled at and making a scene for other people to hear it." Another boy, age 13, indicated feelings of shame associated with a particular instance of violence. This boy questioned himself as to why he allowed the abuse to occur.

Beyond this, 59%, just over half of respondents (19 boys) cited feelings of guilt, and another half of respondents (18 boys) cited feelings of low self-esteem. To a lesser extent, 38% cited feelings of isolation, 37% cited blaming someone else, and 31% cited suicidal ideations.

### Substance abuse

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the use of intoxicating substances. This survey relied heavily on self-reporting of alcohol consumption. Alcohol usage was found to be very common among street-involved boys with 50% of all respondents (25 boys) citing usage. While drinking seemed to be commonplace, respondents did not report frequent usage of alcohol. Among those who cited usage, 35% (14 boys) cited drinking alcohol "once in a while" and 25% (10 boys) cited drinking only "sometimes".

Well over one-third, 38% of respondents (18 boys) cited using

illegal drugs. Among these, 72% (13 boys) cited huffing solvents, 44% (8 boys) cited smoking marijuana, and 22% (4 boys) cited using crack cocaine. Those citing drug usage were asked why they used drugs. Most commonly, respondents cited friends or peer pressure 65% of the time (11 boys). Beyond this, 12% (2 boys) cited using drugs as a means of dealing with emotions. Another 12% (2 boys) cited using drugs as a product of huffing glue. To a lesser extent, 1 person cited using drugs due to an addiction, and another 1 person cited using drugs because someone forced him.

These findings are particularly meaningful considering the current “drug war” waged by the Duterte Administration, which has killed thousands of people, the majority of whom are low-income males, including at least 29 children shot during police raids from July to November 2016, according to the Children’s Legal Rights and Development Center (CLRDC). Further, the Duterte administration is currently supporting a bill (House Bill 922), which aims to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 15 to 9 years. The bill intends to prevent what it understands as the “pampering of youthful offenders who commit crimes knowing they can get away with it” (Baldwin & Marshall, 2017), a motion which will likely disproportionately affect boys, if enacted (2017).

### Discussion

#### Sexual abuse / Sexual exploitation

Considering all forms of sexual abuse, including disclosures of adults showing boys pornographic images, as many as 65% of street-involved boys (33 of the 51 boys interviewed) in Metro-Manila disclosed some form of sexual abuse. Most commonly, 49% of the street involved-boys reported being shown pornography by adults (22 boys) in their communities or in the areas in which they worked. 47% (24 boys) interviewed reported sexual touching and 27% (13 boys) reported further instances of sexual abuse that went beyond just touching. If instances of sexual touching and instances of further sexual abuse are taken together, 51% of street-involved boys (26 boys) disclosed experiencing some form of sexual abuse through physical contact, excluding instances of being shown pornographic images by adults. In addition to this, 27% (13 boys) indicated instances of commercial sexual exploitation (sex in exchange for items such as food, money, protection, or gifts). Lastly, 18% (3 boys) of those responding to this question cited instances in which they were filmed for what they believed to be pornographic purposes.

The age of consent in the Philippines is 12, which is the lowest age of consent in Asia. This means that under Philippine law, a child cannot consent to any form of sexual contact with an adult before the age of 12. However, Philippine law forbids sexual contact with a minor (under the age of 18) if the child has consented to the sexual act in exchange for money, gain, or any other kind of remuneration. In this study, sexual

abuse was understood as a sexual act committed against a child, which includes inappropriate touching and further sexual acts in a situation in which a child does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent, or for which the child is not yet developmentally prepared (UNCRC, 6). On the other hand, sexual exploitation (a form of abuse) is understood as a form of coercion and violence (UNCRC, 7). Within this study, money, food, and gifts were found to be used as a means of coercion for a child to consent to sexual abuse, which is defined as exploitation.

While it may not be possible to provide detailed, quantitative analysis of these themes of violence, a few broad themes were clear among reported instances of sexual violence against street-involved boys stated following.

#### Sexual exploitation from people on the streets

A number of the reported instances of child sexual exploitation seem to come from opportunistic encounters within areas of the city locally known as areas where children can be found for sex. While only 26% of street-involved boys cited being provided with food, money, or other forms of remuneration for sexual services, 76% of the boys interviewed cited that they were aware of children who were asked by adults to provide sexual services. Remuneration for sexual services varied from case-to-case and was often in the form of simple items for survival such as food or small amounts of money.

An example of this kind of sexual violence is a 16 year old who sold flowers along the street. Initially Felix (alias) came into street-work when he and his mother left his father who had been physically and verbally abusive. Although he remained in contact with his mother, Felix at that time lived independently on the streets along with a group of his friends, sleeping in a small structure made of cardboard and cement. It is through these friends that Felix noted that he learned to look for a living. The money that he earned largely went to pay for food, cigarettes, clothing, and solvents for huffing. He described a particular area of the city to which he and other youth in the area could go to meet with foreigners looking for sexual services. Felix said that he was 15 the first time that he was approached by an adult for sex. He was taken to a nearby hotel where he was asked to perform a number of sexual acts, which he said he did not want to do. He was given a candy bar in exchange for the acts that he performed.

While most of the encounters described to take place in these areas seemed to be largely opportunistic, and used as a means of survival for some street-involved youth, a few of these instances seemed to suggest that child sex brokers or pimps could also be involved. More focused and qualitative research is needed.

#### Vulnerabilities to sexual violence associated with sleeping on the streets

In other cases, respondents commonly cited instances of sexual

abuse which occurred as they were sleeping on the streets. Descriptions of these experiences were often diverse, and seemed to be largely opportunistic in nature. In most of these instances, the experiences occurred through the night as respondents were exposed, sleeping without a tent or other form of shelter. In one instance, a boy recalled a recent experience in which the adult inserted his hands into the boy's shorts whilst he was asleep and was filming the act. In addition to the vulnerabilities to sexual abuse associated with sleeping on the streets, numerous respondents cited experiences of often brutal physical violence by police, when they are caught sleeping on the streets past a certain time of the morning. These instances will be explored further in the next section of this report.

#### Sexual exploitation by people met online

While exploitation through online means was not specifically addressed in the research instrument, qualitative data seems to indicate that social networking platforms do serve as a means of sexual exploitation in at least a few cases among those interviewed. Throughout the dataset, there are sporadic points which indicated social networking services, such as Facebook, to be both in high demand and a strong potential venue for sexual exploitation among street-involved children. However, large gaps in this baseline data prevent any conclusive findings. Apart from this, it is known that computer use at internet cafés was cited as a top expense for 9 boys or one-in-six (18%) of those interviewed. Additionally, anecdotal information from service providers cited the usage of social networking platforms, such as Facebook, to be almost ubiquitous among street-involved boys in the Metro-Manila area. Significant and more focused research on the vulnerability of children to sexual abuse and exploitation through social media, as well as the role played by the inexpensive internet cafés located all throughout the metro-Manila area is needed. While it is not clear from these limited data points, a survey of 3,000 Filipino children found one-in-five children, 20%, ages 7-12 and 40% of children aged 13-16 years cited chatting with strangers online. Further, 10% of children indicated knowing another child who had been asked to strip naked online in exchange for money or phone credit (Stairway Foundation, 2015).

As internet access in the Philippines expands and continues to become more affordable, research should explore the extent to which internet cafes and social media are used as venues for sexual exploitation and/or areas where children may be groomed for abuse and/or exploitation with pornography. More understanding is needed to bring further understanding to this as a potential vulnerability for Filipino youth.

#### Sexually harmful behavior from other youth

While most discussions on violence against children focused on

adults as perpetrators, it may be important to note the various forms of violence against children that are committed by other children. Within this study, experiences of sexually harmful behavior from other youth was an ongoing theme of violence disclosed by street-involved boys, cited by 25% (11 boys) interviewed.

For some youth, experiences of sexual violence from other youth were more common than others. In one case, a 14-year-old boy described another youth within the community who he said continually treated him badly. The respondent cited that this youth showed him pornographic pictures and videos, which in one instance had led to the respondent being forced to have sex with another child in the respondent's community. In a separate instance, the respondent told of another youth in his community who had forced him to remove all of his clothing.

Beyond sexually harmful behavior, experiences of other forms of physical violence from other youth were a common theme among most boys interviewed. While one-in-four boys reported experiences of sexual violence from other youth in their communities, more than 3-in-4 boys (77%) reported physical violence from other youth. In one instance, a 12-year old respondent cited having a .38 caliber pistol pointed at him by another youth. Other boys cited being bullied or commanded to do various tasks for other youth, and then reported being kicked or punched if/when they did not comply with the commands.

Within this context, one factor possibly contributing to this vulnerability (among others) is the seeming lack of supervision by adults in their communities. Nearly all street-involved boys in the Metro-Manila area indicated that they either work with peers (78%) or alone (14.5%) and few seem to have parents or other adults providing any form of supervision.

#### Physical violence

Nearly all street-involved boys reported physical violence. Most commonly mentioned was physical violence from parents, cited by 85% (41 boys) of the group. Following parents, 77% (35 boys) of the group cited bullying and other forms of physical violence from other youth in their communities. Quite notably, 57% (25 boys) of the group cited significant, and often brutal forms of violence from police officers. Narratives of these forms of violence often included punching, being dragged, as well as being kicked in the head and stomach. Lastly, 43% (20 boys) of the group cited violence from teachers. This often included narratives of being hit by teachers and having erasers thrown at them in classrooms.

#### Recommendations

Children have the rights to a family, a home, health, an education and freedom from violence and discrimination. Given this context and the limited literature available on sexual exploitation and abuse of street-involved children, more research with these groups could help to better

understand how government and non-government groups can better work to protect these children and ensure that their rights are protected, including those stated following.

#### Individualized care.

The study found the needs and vulnerabilities of street-involved boys in Manila to be very diverse. While physical violence, sexual violence, family poverty, lack of education, and other related issues of vulnerability were common themes among interviews with street-involved boys, as a whole, the occurrence and severity of all of these factors varied greatly. Given this, it is important for practitioners to realize that one set of responses cannot be a catch all solution (or solutions) to mitigate the vulnerabilities to exploitation and violence among street-involved groups. Rather, street-involved children and their families should be offered individualized care and support for their needs.

#### Advocacy and education.

National statistics on sexual abuse do not adequately reflect the prevalence or severity of the issue, indicating significant gaps in knowledge and social services. It is important that advocacy initiatives, training, and social work education use language that normalizes the reality of male vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation. DSWD should increase their efforts to represent and serve both males and females. As a part of this, it may be necessary to develop better reporting mechanisms for victims of sexual abuse. It is important that both males and females are given opportunities to talk about violence (particularly sexual violence) and their vulnerability as persons. In addition to girls, boys and young men must be provided with safe spaces in which they can be heard, empowered, and educated on their rights as children.

This is something that needs to be extended to all levels of Philippine society, particularly with regard to sexual abuse and exploitation. This includes the sensitization of law enforcement, families and service providers, who may not believe or take seriously accounts of sexual violence against boys and men as they would violence against women and girls. Additionally this sensitization should be extended to males themselves, challenging gender norms and allowing space for males to express their own vulnerabilities without removing or challenging their masculine identities.

#### Child-centered research and programming.

Current research and social programming in the Philippines is commonly implemented with a top-down approach, with social practitioners and educated experts serving as the prime sources of information and authority on the needs of vulnerable street-involved groups. Children are often left at the receiving end of social services and often



have little-to-no input in the development of programming to meet their needs, or even the definition of what their needs actually are. Similarly, it is often consultants and public health experts who undertake research, developing questions that they have deemed to be most important to explore vulnerability factors in a child's life. While adult input is needed, it is similarly important that researchers and practitioners allow children to serve as the experts of their own realities, utilizing their experiences and understandings of their own environments to develop better and more child-centered social programs and research methodologies.

As a part of this, there is a need for the development (and utilization) of strong educational resources for awareness and prevention of sexual abuse/exploitation, such as, the resources at [www.goodtouch-badtouchflipchart.org](http://www.goodtouch-badtouchflipchart.org) and additional training developed by the Stairway Foundation's, *Good Boy*. Beyond this, there is a need for better advocacy and vigilance for children within their communities. It is important for parents and other adults to understand that boys are equally at risk of abuse as girls and that they are in need of protection. Community centers, youth clubs, and churches should introduce education about sex, appropriate loving relationships, sexual abuse, and the dangers of pornography, and work to provide a safe and non-condemning place for children and young adults to discuss about sex and sexuality and accessing pornography. Another tool is [www.asianyouthagainstporn.org](http://www.asianyouthagainstporn.org).

#### Male-inclusive legislative and structural protections

The Philippine government has been very active in passing legislation aimed at the protection of females, as well as numerous institutional reforms and new programs to prevent violence against women and children. While these reforms are important, boys and men are commonly denied the structural and legislative protections that are readily afforded to women and girls. It is important that such structural and legislative foci do not imply that men and boys are not vulnerable to exploitation and violence, but rather exist to ensure that all people, regardless of gender have adequate protections and services accessible to meet their needs.

#### Public awareness and stigma reduction

Public awareness campaigns within communities and through media are needed that communicate the humanity, dignity, and personhood of street-involved children (both boys and girls). Rather than viewing street-involved children as shameful nuisances or public eyesores, it is important that media, NGOs and other socially involved agencies work to educate both the public and politicians on the deeper, systemic social and economic realities that underpin the issue of street-involved children.

Children in this study indicated a high interest in arts, music, dance, and sports. It may be important to utilize these interests and resources to both develop the self-identities, expression, and confidences

of street-involved children, as well as improving their perception within the public eye. Some of these ideas could be accomplished through community initiatives such as mobile theater, sports programs, art training programs, and other community development activities geared toward raising the awareness (and perception) of street-involved groups.

#### Psycho-social support for street-involved children and families

A strong majority of respondents cited experiencing physical violence within their families, including some cruel and unusual forms of violence such as, choking and being hung upside-down from a tree and beaten. Qualitative data from respondents, as well as anecdotal information indicated alcoholism to be at least one factor that served as a driving force for violence within families. Additionally, half of the street-involved boys interviewed indicated alcohol use (25 boys), and more than one-third indicated abuse of other substances (18 boys), which included inhaling solvents (77%), marijuana (44%), and crack cocaine (22%). Given this context, it is important that such vulnerable communities be provided with increased opportunities for counseling and psycho-social support from social workers, including increased support for alcoholism and drug rehabilitation for street-involved children and their families.

#### Research on online vulnerabilities to sexual exploitation and violence

Qualitative data and further anecdotal information gathered during the course of this study indicates social media platforms, such as Facebook, to be both in high-demand among street-involved groups and also a prime potential outlet for sexual exploitation. Beyond data gathered in this study, other research is beginning to show that the vulnerability of children to sexual exploitation online to be a rapidly growing issue in the Philippines (Jansson, 2014). A project in 2013 by Terre des Hommes-Netherlands spent 10 weeks in 19 different chat rooms, using an avatar to pose as a prepubescent Filipina. During this period, more than 20,000 adults from 71 countries solicited sex from the researchers, who they believed to be a child (Terre des Hommes-Netherlands, 2014). This underscores the need for more focused research on the vulnerability of children to sexual abuse and exploitation through social media, and exploring the role played by the internet cafés located throughout the metro area.

#### Research on sexually harmful behaviors among children and youth

Regarding violence, peers were commonly indicated as the perpetrators of both sexual and physical instances of violence. 77% of boys cited experiencing some form of physical violence from peers within their community and 44% cited various forms of sexual violence. Anecdotal information from social workers and caretakers indicated sexually harmful behaviors among youth to be quite commonplace, particularly within in-

stitutional care facilities. While sexually harmful behaviors among youth seem to be commonplace, few resources are available for caretakers and social practitioners to understand and meet the developmental needs of children who harm others. Further exploratory and qualitative research may be needed to explore the phenomenon of sexually harmful behaviors of children within the Philippines.

Research on violence committed by law enforcement in the Philippines

Well over half of the street-involved boys in this study, 57%, indicated experiencing physical violence from law enforcement officials, including some extreme and brutal instances. More research would be useful exploring the extent and prevalence of such instances of violence, including a review of child-protection training that officers have received, its content, application, and general efficacy. Results from such research could serve as an informative baseline to aid the development of appropriate training for not only female but also male police officers in non-violent discipline and communication as well as understanding youth who have been traumatized.

Further research exploring sexual violence against men and boys in the Philippines

This study found that sexual violence against males in Manila to be a significant, but largely undocumented and often misunderstood issue in the country. This study uncovered 65% of the street-involved boys, out of a sampling of 55, who disclosed some form of sexual violence. According to national statistics in the Philippines from DSWD, only 29 boys received services for sexual abuse, nationwide, for the year 2011. This indicates a significant gap in services. Further research on the experience of sexual violence among men and boys in the Philippines, as well as an exploration of the capacities of NGOs and national services to meet their needs is strongly recommended.

While girls have long been viewed as victims, boys are victimized as well. It is vital that churches, NGOs and government groups adopt a holistic and balanced understanding of human vulnerability. Rather than approaching issues of sexual exploitation and violence from a gender-based perspective (read: female-based perspective), it may be more helpful to understand and communicate these as human issues that encompass males, females and even the variety of gender identities in between. It is important that we understand children, regardless of gender, as whole persons with their own individual sets of unique vulnerabilities and resiliencies. Without the development of such a nuanced and human-centered understanding of human vulnerability (as opposed to gender-centered), significant groups of vulnerable persons are at risk to remain just as they are - hidden in plain sight.

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excerpts from the report written for the  
Human Rights Council Working Group  
on the Universal Periodic Review Twenty-seventh session  
1–12 May 2017

Summary of stakeholders' submissions - the Philippines  
Report of the Office of the United Nations High  
Commissioner for Human Rights

#### I. Background

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to Human Rights Council (CHRC) resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, taking into consideration the periodicity of the universal periodic review. It is a summary of 53 stakeholders' submissions<sup>2</sup> to the universal periodic review, presented in a summarized manner owing to word-limit constraints.

II. Information provided by the accredited national human rights institution in full compliance with the Paris Principles

2. CHRP stated that the Philippines had not ratified ICPPED, OP-CRPD, OP-ICESCR, OP-CRC-IC, and the ILO Convention 169 on the Indigenous and Tribal People's Convention, as well as the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

3. CHRP referred to relevant supported recommendations, and stated that the charter to strengthen the Commission and to enable it to fully perform its constitutional task of protecting and promoting human rights had been "languishing in the legislative mill", which had put into question the Government's commitment to nurture the independence and fiscal autonomy of CHRP.

4. CHRP stated that President Rodrigo Duterte as well as the Speaker of the House of Representatives had announced the inclusion of the restoration of the death penalty on the legislative agenda of the 17th Congress, which was contrary to the obligations of the Philippines as a state party to ICCPR-OP2.



5. CHRP expressed concern about statements that had been made by President Rodrigo Duterte and seconded by the Chief of the Philippine National Police that may have emboldened some members of the security sector and vigilantes to kill with impunity. CHRP stated that right to life may have been severely compromised by the Government's war against drugs; and that extrajudicial killings have recently exacerbated.

6. CHRP stated that torture was still being perpetrated by the police. The bill creating a national preventative mechanism for torture remained pending before Congress.

7. CHRP stated that the law on reproductive health had not been uniformly implemented and expressed alarm at the withdrawal of contraceptives in the City of Sirosogon. Furthermore, there had been challenges in the delivery of reproductive health services due to religious and cultural resistance.

8. CHRP expressed concern about the plight of internally displaced persons and urged the authorities to adopt a rights-based approach to development and permanent resettlement.

9. CHRP stated that the Government had appeared to have reversed its position on the Paris Agreement.

### III. Information provided by other stakeholders

#### A. Scope of international obligations and cooperation with international human rights mechanisms and bodies

10. JS1 recommended the ratification of ICPPED. It recalled that at the Universal Periodic Review of the Philippines in 2012 (2012 Review), eight states (Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Japan, France, Chile, Spain, and Iraq) had made recommendations to that effect and also similar recommendations had been made by Slovenia and Mexico at the earlier review in 2008, all of which had not been supported. This was a departure from the official statement that had been delivered by the Philippines during its candidature to the Human Rights Council in 2007 in which a voluntary pledge had been made to strengthen domestic support for the ratification of ICPPED and CRPD.

11. JS2 recommended ratification of ILO Convention No. 169.

12. CMA called for the ratification of ILO Conventions 181 and 29.

13. CTUHR called for the ratification of OP-ICESCR as recommended by Portugal, Germany and Palestine.

14. Referring to a relevant noted recommendation from the 2012 Review, JS14 called for the full cooperation with the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council.

15. JS2 recommended that the Philippines issue a standing invitation to the Special Procedures and working groups of the Human Rights Council.

16. JS1 referred to a request by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to visit the Philippines and recommended that the Government grant this request.

B. National human rights framework

17. Karapatan stated that there was a lack of effective and substantive implementation of the international and domestic human rights framework adopted by the Government.

18. NCCP referred to relevant supported recommendations and stated that the national human rights action plan had never been publicized and had not been fully observed by the state security forces.

19. AI stated that CHRP faced difficulties in fulfilling its mandate due to capacity and operational challenges, including insufficient budget.

20. JS4 recommended strengthening the role of CHRP to include investigating human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

21. JS8 stated that the sovereignty of the Philippines was compromised with the “Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement” which allowed a third country to maintain military bases in the Philippines.

C. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law

1. Cross-cutting issues

Equality and non-discrimination

22. JS4 stated that the 1987 Constitution did not explicitly mention sexual orientation and gender identity as grounds for protection, making subsequent policies and programmes non-responsive to the various forms of discrimination against LGBTIQ persons.

23. JS13 stated that transgender persons will continue to suffer discrimination as long as there was no law or policy enabling them to change their name and civil status.

24. JS4 stated that the Reproductive Health Law and its corresponding programmes did not cater for the reproductive health needs of lesbian, transgender and intersex persons, who experienced discrimination due to the non-recognition of same-sex partnerships.

25. JS11 stated that there had been a rise in the on-line abuse of the LGBTIQ community which had taken the form of hate speech, harassment and bullying. JS4 stated that hate crimes had been treated as “ordinary” crimes and recommended the adoption of legislation specifically criminalizing hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity.<sup>40</sup> JS6 stated that bullying of children were on the rise.

26. JS13 called for the prosecution of alleged violations of the rights of LGBT persons, which were fuels by conservative religious beliefs.

## Development and environment

27. IBON stated that despite years of rapid economic growth in the Philippines, the wealth and profits of a few have increased while the largest part of the population did not have a decent livelihood, with poverty remaining deep and widespread.

28. JS2 stated that mining-related human rights violations have dramatically increased since the 2012 Review. Mining projects often caused widespread damage to the environment. Pursuant to the Mining Act of 1995, mining companies had extensive rights to cut timber and on the use of water, which compromised the social and economic rights of the indigenous communities.

## Human rights and counter-terrorism

29. CRCN-P called for an end to the counter-insurgency programme referred to as “Operation Plan Bayanihan” which had claimed the lives of many children. Karapatan stated that the military operations conducted under this programme resulted in the massive displacement of communities in rural areas.

## 2. Civil and political rights

### Right to life, liberty and security of person

30. JS19 noted that the death penalty had been abolished in 2006 and stated that on 1 July 2016 a bill had been introduced before the 17th Congress to restore the death penalty.

31. AHCR noted the restrictive definition of extrajudicial killings in the Administrative Order No. 35 issued in 2013, and recommended the enactment of legislation defining extrajudicial killings in line with internationally recognized standards.

32. NCCP referred to supported recommendations on extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances and stated that the massive law and order campaign targeting those allegedly involved in illegal drug related activities had resulted in an alarming numbers of deaths by the police and by unknown individuals. Those deaths had not been adequately investigated, the appropriateness of the police conduct had not been determined, and unknown assailants had not been apprehended.

33. JS10 referred to the relevant supported recommendations from the 2008 Review and 2012 Review,<sup>52</sup> and expressed concerns over the Government’s failure to implement those recommendations. AI also referred to relevant supported recommendations and stated that it continued to receive reports of unlawful killings by both state and non-state actors.

34. AHRC stated that progress in resolving cases of extrajudicial killings had been slow due to impunity and lack of accountability of the authorities allegedly responsible for such killings.

35. JS2 stated that President Rodrigo Duterte had issued the police with an explicit shoot-to-kill order in relation to persons allegedly involved in the drug trade and recommended retracting that order.

36. TCC stated that President Rodrigo Duterte had publically condoned and encouraged extrajudicial killings of alleged criminals by promising pardons for any law enforcement officials convicted of killing anyone resisting arrest. JS12 stated that such statements constituted incitement to kill.

37. JS1 stated that President Rodrigo Duterte's programme to curb drug-related crimes was reminiscent of the methods of the Davao Death Squads that operated in Davao City where he had served as Mayor.

38. PCPR stated that the almost three-thousand people killed under this so-called "war on drugs" was a manifestation of the State's disregard for the right to life. HRW stated that President Rodrigo Duterte had ignored calls for an official probe into those killings and had instead praised the killings as proof of the success of his anti-drug campaign and had urged the police to seize the momentum. The Chief of the Philippine National Police, Director-General Ronald dela Rosa, had rejected calls for an investigation saying that it was "legal harassment," and that it "dampens the morale" of police officers. The Solicitor General Jose Calida, had also defended the legality of the killings.

39. JS1 stated that at the 2012 Review, the Philippines had supported all recommendations relating to "broad actions" towards ending enforced disappearance while recommendations relating to concrete actions had been noted.

40. AI referred to relevant supported recommendations, and noted the enactment of the Anti-Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances Act in 2012, but stated that there had not been any convictions under the Act.<sup>65</sup> JS1 commended the enactment of the Act, but stated that it had not been effectively implemented.

41. JS1 stated that the majority of the cases of enforced disappearance had been politically motivated. It recommended including enforced disappearance on the agenda of the peace process involving the Government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

42. JS17 stated that torture had remained pervasive and the continued use of secret detention had remained a key obstacle to exposing this crime. The alleged perpetrators had been police officers, the security forces, prison officials, local executive officers, paramilitary groups and local peace keepers. While the supported recommendations provided a roadmap for combating torture, there was limited action towards their implementation and the efforts undertaken were insufficient to have a positive impact.

43. JS17 stated that the Anti-Torture Act had not been diligently implemented.

44. AI stated that a national preventive mechanism, as required under OP-CAT, had not been established in accordance with a commitment made during the 2012 Review.

45. JS17 stated that most torture victims had not received rehabilitation due to the lack of political willingness to take responsibility for and adequately fund the Comprehensive Program for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and their Families.

46. The NCCP stated that the prison system had been subjected to unacceptable overcrowding, which has been further aggravated by the 'war on drugs'. Prisons were no longer able to ensure the health and safety of prisoners or meet minimal standards under international law.

47. Referring to a relevant supported recommendation,<sup>74</sup> JS2 stated that even though the number of private armed groups had fallen from 107 in 2010 to 81 in 2013, this number has since risen to 85 leading up to the May 2016 elections, which did not include armed groups legitimized as Civilian Volunteer Organizations, Special CAFGU Active Auxiliary units, or "force multipliers"

Administration of justice, including impunity, and the rule of law

48. NCCP referred to relevant supported recommendations on reforming the judicial system and stated that the judicial system remained open to manipulation, and was exceedingly slow in delivering justice.

49. JS3 stated that the long court process exacerbated by the postponement of hearings, and the absence of judges, prosecutors and attorneys had often lead to pro-longed trauma for child victims of sexual abuse. The child-friendly procedures including the rules on the examination of child witnesses had not been implemented and only a few courts had used the video conferencing technology that allowed for the testimony of children to be taken outside the court room. Many prosecutors and judges had not received the training prescribed by the Family Courts Acts of 1997.

50. JS6 stated that bills seeking to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility from fifteen to nine years had been filed during the 17th Congress. It opposed the lowering of the minimum age of criminal responsibility.

51. JS12 stated that local town, village and law enforcement officials had compiled lists of alleged drug users and suppliers and those persons had been made to confess to either being a drug user or a drug supplier, which had violated their right to due process.

52. Salinlahi stated that the Government had failed to implement the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act by not providing rehabilitation to youth offenders by a multi-disciplinary team.

53. JS2 stated that impunity for severe human rights violations had continued even though at the 2012 Review, the Philippines had

supported several recommendations to address that issue.<sup>84</sup> HRW also referred to those recommendations and stated that widespread impunity had continued for members of the security forces allegedly responsible for serious human rights violations.

54. IFI-RPRD stated that the already entrenched culture of impunity had been reinforced by sloppy investigations into alleged abuses committed during police operations and the apparent tolerance of vigilante groups in the war on illegal drugs.

55. NUPL referred to the supported recommendation to inter alia bring to justice perpetrators of human rights violations, including Major General Jovito Palparan Jr. and Joel Reyes, and stated that the Government had openly shown its acquiescence to the alleged actions of Palparan and had flaunted its refusal to comply with its commitments made during the 2012 Review.

56. AI stated that although the Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Act provided for extensive protection, its implementation had been weak, and had not meet the urgent requirements of witnesses.

Fundamental freedoms and the right to participate in public  
and political life

57. ADF stated that despite constitutional protection, the persecution of by “Islamic extremists” had continued.

58. JC stated that there had been concerns over the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law, which would expand sharia jurisdiction to cover civil, commercial, and criminal law, in addition to the family law. Although sharia law only applied to Muslims, the Christian community within the autonomous region was concerned that its members could be forced to adhere to Sharia law.

59. UCCP stated that the UCCP Northeast Southern Tagalog Conference had reported persistent surveillance, and cited specific cases of surveillance and intimidation.

60. JS11 stated that the definition of cybersex in the Cybercrime Prevention Act is “overly broad and vague” and empowered law enforcement personnel to use their own standards of morality.

61. JS5 stated that the revised Penal Code (articles 353-355), which criminalizes libel and slander and the 2012 Cybercrime Prevention Act which criminalises online libel, had been repeatedly used to stifle freedom of expression and to harass independent journalists.

62. NCCP stated that the rhetoric especially by President Duterte, which painted the press as unpatriotic and against the national interest, made journalists vulnerable to human rights violations.

63. JS14 stated that despite the acceptance of two recommendations relating to the protection of journalists and human rights defenders, extrajudicial killing remained the gravest threat facing human rights defenders. JS2 stated that since the 2012 Review, at least 147 hu-

man rights defenders and 23 journalists had been killed. FLD stated that there were real fears that targeted attacks against human rights defenders will increase under the current administration.

64. FLD stated that fabricated charge of libel had been repeatedly used against human rights defenders, particularly since the amendment of the relevant law which shifted the burden of proof on the accused. JS2 stated that some human rights defenders had faced “trumped-up” charges based on falsified evidence. Karapatan stated that leaders of people’s organizations in Negros, Cagayan Valley, Davao City, and Sarangani had been falsely charged with criminal offenses such as kidnapping and trafficking.

65. JS5 stated that progressive legislation proposed in 2013 – the Human Rights Defenders Bill or House Bill 1472, was yet to be adopted.

66. JS5 stated that the registration process to form associations remained unduly onerous and subjected to overly strict bureaucratic controls.

67. JS5 stated that there have been several reported cases of excessive use of force by law enforcement agencies when dispersing peaceful assemblies.

68. TCC stated that violence was prevalent during the election period and on electionday; and that “vote-buying” was widespread. 109 Practical barriers<sup>110</sup> restricted Indigenous Peoples from registering to vote and from voting.

#### Prohibition of all forms of slavery

69. JS6 stated that the facilities and services to address the needs of victims of human trafficking remained inadequate. It made recommendations including that the Philippines implement the commitments it had made at the 2012 Review,<sup>114</sup> and increase the budget for the shelters.

70. CMA called for criminal justice reforms to ensure expeditious investigations and trials for alleged perpetrators of human trafficking, and for a broadened public information campaign on the rehabilitation programme for women victims.

71. JS21 stated there remained a lack of political will to fully implement the AntiTrafficking in Person Act, which had also been hindered by corruption.

72. JS11 stated that the use of children in cybersex had continued unabated despite the passage of the Anti-Child Pornography Act in 2009, the conducting of police raids and the arrests of alleged perpetrators.

73. JS22 stated that interception of communication through wiretapping is permitted when authorised by a court order. The Grievance Committee as envisaged by the Human Security Act with a mandate to investigate complaints had not been established. Also, reports by the Joint Oversight Committee, which had the power to question law enforcement authorities on the interception of communication, had not been published.

74. JS22 stated that in the 2014 case of *Disini v. The Secretary of Justice* the court had ruled that Section 12 of the Cybercrime Prevention Act had threatened the constitutional rights to privacy and struck-down the provision. However the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the law, which had been promulgated in August 2015, had effectively reinstated the struck down provision.

### 3. Economic, social and cultural rights

#### Right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work

75. DJP stated that the Herrera Law (RA 6715) made provision for workers to be hired by man-power agencies or third parties who were then sent to companies requiring their labour. The workers were not considered as employees of those companies and were poorly paid, received no benefits and had no union rights.

76. COURAGE stated that the majority of the 1.3 million government employees had received a salary less than the Constitutionally-mandated "family living wage".

77. CTUHR stated that one out of every 3 employees held flexible employment, which violated the right to security and tenure.

78. CTUHR stated that in the manufacturing sector a "quota system" existed which drove workers to work beyond their physical capacity in order to meet the quota and earn the minimum wage.<sup>127</sup> In 2012, the Government issued the DOLE Department Order 11812 that implemented a two-tiered wage system, which reduced the wage.

79. CTUHR stated that corporations were exploiting Republic Act 7686, Dual Training Act of 1994 by employing students and youth workers as trainees to do the jobs of regular workers and paying them 75 percent of prescribed minimum wage and not providing insurance.

80. JS8 stated that many big companies had offered work on a contractual basis where employees had been employed for five months per year had not received social protection, health insurance and other benefits. Employers had rarely complied with labour safety standards.

81. JS8 stated that the thousands of women who had worked as farm workers on big plantations had received wages much lower than their male counter-parts.

82. CTUHR stated that unsafe and unhealthful conditions characterized workplaces as companies' compliance to occupational safety and health standards were made voluntary.



83. CMA stated that the Philippines had deployed more than a million workers abroad. Staff working in the Philippine missions abroad must know how to respond to the needs of those workers.

84. MIGRANTE stated that the concerned embassies did little or nothing to secure the rights of 35 overseas Filipinos workers who had either been convicted or were on trial for crimes in third countries.

85. CTUHR stated that a climate of violence and intimidation against trade unions had persisted.

#### Right to social security

86. JS1 called for adequate and effective support for the families of disappeared persons, which included livelihood assistance.

#### Right to an adequate standard of living

87. JS8 referred to relevant supported recommendations and stated that the Conditional Cash Transfer Programme, the Government's flagship anti-poverty programme had failed to make a dent on the poverty crisis. JS8 stated that poverty aggravated the low social and economic status of women.

88. KMP stated that the country was subservient to the policies of the World Trade Organisation which had resulted in an increased dependence on food importation, an abandonment of state subsidies for food production and an allocation of vast tracts of land for production of crops for export.

89. JS6 stated that the malnutrition among children remained a great concern. Referring to relevant recommendations from the 2012 Review, JS6 recommended that the Philippines enact of the "First 1000 Days Bill" to ensure effective nutrition programmes.

90. DJP cited cases of forced eviction<sup>147</sup> and called on the Government to refrain from such practices and to focus on developing the existing urban communities.

91. JS8 stated that seven out of ten farmers remained landless. It recommended providing land to all qualified tenant farmers with attention to households headed by women.

92. KMP stated that the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program and its Reforms which ended in 2014 had been a failure leaving farming and fishing the poorest sectors in the country. KMP called for a new redistributive land reform programme based on social justice.

#### Right to health

93. AI referred to relevant supported recommendations, and stated that the Philippines had taken positive steps, including adopting the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act, the Domestic Workers Act and the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. However, the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act had suffered

from inconsistent implementation across the country, and there was no mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Act.

94. AI stated that repealing the provisions of the the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act which the Supreme Court had ruled to be unconstitutional, would be inconsistent with the international obligations of the Philippines, including Article 12 of CEDAW and Article 12 of ICESCR. JS20 stated that the Act required the consent of male spouses in order for women to access reproductive health procedures and prohibited minors from availing of modern methods of family planning without parental consent, both of which defeated the purpose of addressing teenage pregnancy and empowering women to uphold their sexual and reproductive health rights.

95. JS6 stated that the high incidence of teenage pregnancy was attributed to the lack of access to age-appropriate and comprehensive sexual education, as well as to a lack of adolescent-friendly reproductive health services. JS6 stated that at the 2012 Review, the Philippines had committed to ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health, education and counselling and recommended removing the legal barriers to full access to sexual and reproductive health services for girls and boys.

96. JS7 stated that despite legislative guarantees of contraceptive information and services, there were two executive orders in Manila which banned modern contraceptives in all public health care facilities.

97. AI stated that due to the ban on abortion, clandestine abortions remained widespread, resulting in maternal mortality and morbidity and disability of women. JS7 recommended decriminalizing abortion and ensuring that women and girls have access to humane, non-judgmental and quality post-abortion care.

98. ADF stated that the right to life of the unborn was constitutionally protected and abortion was illegal.<sup>164</sup> It called for continued protection for the unborn and assistance for pregnant women.

99. JS8 stated that health and medical services had remained inaccessible for many poor women. Public hospitals had continued to be ill-equipped and understaffed. JS13 called for emergency obstetric facilities for all women including rural, indigenous and Muslim women.

100. HRW stated that there had been a sharp rise in HIV infections as a consequence of government policies, compounded by the resistance of the Catholic Church and other entities to sexual health education and the use of condoms. JS13 attributed the increase of HIV infections to a "lack of access to sexuality education". There was also a lack of postexposure prophylaxis and there were no protocols in relation to rape victims.

#### Right to education

101. IBON stated that although tuition-free education was provided at the primary and secondary levels in public schools, the high non-tuition expenses denied millions of children their right to a decent education.

102. JS6 stated that children in marginalized communities, such as those in informal urban settlements and relocation sites, hazard-prone areas and indigenous communities experienced many barriers to education. The relocation sites had no schools and children had to walk long distances to the nearest school. Class rooms were heavily congested. The education system was not culturally sensitive resulting in the marginalization of indigenous persons.

103. ERI expressed concern at the high rates of children who had not gone to school and who had dropped out of school.

104. ERI stated that although there are some schools located in indigenous communities, most of the facilities were improvised compared to other Government public schools.

105. GG called for the creation of a national action plan for human rights education.

#### 4 Rights of specific persons or groups

##### Women

106. JS20 stated that women were kept systematically and historically disadvantaged. Sexist and patriarchal views, values, and practices were deeply entrenched in the culture of the society, which were reinforced by different influential institutions.

107. JS20 stated that women had always been at the bottom of development priorities. From 2006 to 2012, poverty incidence among women had been pegged at 26 percent, clearly indicating absence of economic progress among most women.

108. GABRIELA stated that the counter-insurgency programme, "Oplan Bayanihan", resulted in massive human rights violations and heinous cases of violence against women, particularly in indigenous, rural and urban poor communities.

109. JS11 stated that the internet had become a tool for violence against women in the form of pornography, amongst others.

##### Children

110. JS6 referred to supported recommendations on corporal punishment from the 2012 Review, and recommended the passage of the the "Anti-Corporal Punishment/Positive Discipline Act" in the 17th Congress and the promotion of positive forms of discipline for children.

111. JS3 stated that the Philippines had not acted on supported recommendations in relation to child abuse, particularly sexual abuse.

112. JS3 referred to the Anti-Rape Law of 1997 (RA8353) and recommended removing a subsequent marriage to extinguish any criminal action and more serious penalties for perpetrators who were persons of trust or authority over the children.

113. Salinlahi stated that an increasing number of children had been forced into child pornography and other related commercial sexual activities. JS3 recommended including topics on the prevention of child abuse in the school curriculum.

114. JS6 stated that the high level of engagement of children in cyberspace, along with weak regulation of cyberspace use and content, had made them highly vulnerable to online violence. The Philippines had been considered a major global source for the child cybersex industry.

115. JS6 stated that the conflict in Mindanao had caused frequent displacement and evacuation creating the fear among children of being separated from their families. JS6 recommended enacting the law on the rights of children in armed conflict, as a follow up to the commitments that had been made in the 2012 Review.

116. CRCN-P stated that 18 children had been falsely identified as child soldiers and illegally detained and subjected to torture, harassment and intimidation.

#### Persons with disabilities

117. JS20 stated that women and girls with disability were more vulnerable to all forms of human rights violations. Gender-based violence had been perpetrated more often against women and girls with disabilities than those without. One in every three deaf women had been sexually harassed or raped.

#### Minorities and indigenous peoples

118. RMP-NMR stated that legislation including the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act had allowed the legal displacement of the Lumad from their territories. This Act had several loop-holes that have been used against the indigenous peoples.

119. TCC stated that the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act provided for mandatory representation for Indigenous Peoples in policy-making bodies and local legislative councils. Although national guidelines had been enacted in 2009 to create mechanisms to give effect to this representation, no such mechanisms had been created.

120. JS10 stated that the Mining Act of 1995 which provided inter alia for the eviction of indigenous communities violated the collective rights of indigenous people.

121. JS2 stated that free, prior, and informed consent as required by the Indigenous People's Rights Act was frequently not obtained by the mining companies. Indigenous human rights defenders who lead community processes demanding mining companies seek such consent had faced harassment, threats, and attacks.

122. While noting the politically motivated killings of the Indigenous Peoples, particularly the Lumads of Mindanao and the Igorots of the Cordillera, JS10 stated that the killings of Indigenous Peoples and the continuing threats to their leaders have resulted in conflicts, fear and mistrust among the indigenous communities which weakened the Indigenous Peoples' movement for respect and recognition of their collective rights.

123. JS10 stated that the individual and collective rights of the Indigenous Peoples were violated by the "militarization of their territories". The military were permanently based within those territories and conducted operations including unwarranted searches of homes, imposition of food blockages and curfews.

124. NCCP stated that the activities of the military and the para-military groups have brought immense suffering to the Lumad communities of eastern Mindanao, which included the raiding of schools and villages, extrajudicial killings, and the displacement of thousands of Indigenous People.

125. JS2 stated that attacks against independent indigenous schools in Mindanao perpetrated by the military and paramilitary groups intensified in 2015.

126. ERI stated that Indigenous children lacked equal access to education.<sup>208</sup> The school curriculum was not culturally responsive and appropriate for indigenous children.

127. JS18 stated that there was a lack of support for indigenous education schools and a lack of teacher training courses on indigenous education at the universities.

128. JS16 stated that the lack of land had remained a problem for the Bangsamoro, with the majority of the population still landless. It also stated that in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao about 70 percent of the people lived below the poverty line, and had been denied basic services, such as health and education.

129. JS20 stated that the indigenous women's lack of economic power in a patriarchal society had contributed to their subjugation by their spouses.

130. JS20 stated that indigenous women had been adversely affected by the "No Home Birthing Policy" as they had no access to birthing facilities.

Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons

131. JS9 stated that the conditions at the Bagong Diwa Immigration Detention Centre in Bicutan were appalling, particularly as the living space was insufficient, the food was of a poor quality and insufficient quantity and there was no medical assistance.

5. Specific regions or territories

132. PCPR commended the Government for pursuing formal peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and for opening the door for informal talks both with Moro National Liberation Front and Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

133. JS16 stated that despite the signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro in October 2012 and the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro in March 2014, the Moro communities continued to be repeatedly attacked and displaced by military operations.

*For the full report, including list of stakeholders and references, go to [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org).*

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## BOOK REVIEW

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Ladrigo-Ignacio, L. & Tronco, A (2016). *Transforming Lives: Mental Health Care of the Community*. Philippine Psychiatric Association. Manila. 158 pages.

The author, Dr. Lourdes Ladrigo-Ignacio said, "We have seen personal and collective (community) transformations become a reality. We have witnessed not only the recovery of persons with mental disorders, but their transformation as functioning productive individuals now engaged by their families to live in the mainstream of the life of their community." Dr. Anselmo T. Tronco shares this optimistic view of mental health with Dr. Ladrigo-Ignacio. Given enough knowledge and openness to the facets of mental health, the community is a vital support and hope in transforming the lives of people with mental health problems.

The book implies that mental health problems are not only talked about within the confines of a psychiatric ward or a counseling room or clinic but that it should be openly discussed in the community. That mental health is not just an individual issue but a concern of the family and the community. Further, that the family and the community have a role in the healing or recovery of people experiencing crisis or adverse situations in their lives. The challenge, however, is the community's acceptance and response to mental health.

*Transforming Lives* is primarily a reference book/guide for general health workers in communities. It provides primary health care workers information on how to identify (signs and symptoms) a person with mental health problems through a series of examination and assessment skills. The book describes in detail the various mental health problems or disorders including depression, acute stress reactions, psychosis, and unexplained physical complaints. It further guides health workers on how to manage the problems/disorders giving attention on the support and influence of the patient's family and the community on the healing process of the person. The presentation of flowcharts and summary of steps is also helpful.

It is apparent, though, that the discussion on mental health in the book revolves around disaster situations. Some chapters or sections start with cases of individuals with social, psychological or economic crises (that are not caused by environmental disaster) but the discussion lacks reference to these cases and rather shifts towards the context of disaster situations. Although the basic concepts can be easily grasped, it could have been more meaningful if the non-disaster-related cases were examined/analyzed.

As a final note, the book helps health workers understand the concepts and dimensions of mental health but it should be done in conjunction with a training to have a deeper comprehension towards better skills. Special training should be given to barangay health workers who may have little education or medical experience. The challenge too is the readiness and acceptance of the local government to look at mental health as integrated with the general health services in the community. Nonetheless, as the authors conclude, there is optimism in the road to recovery - that mental health and the lives of people with mental health disorders can be addressed if there is interconnectedness among the individual, the family, and the community.

Emily A. Palma  
Justice Palma Foundation



## GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

The Philippines Journal of Child Sexual Abuse provides a multidisciplinary forum on all aspects of child sexual abuse. The Journal will have the two distinct parts of the dialogue on critical pluralism of child sexual abuse in the Philippines: research-based academic manuscripts and evidence-based practical manuscripts. The purpose of the journal is to enhance our understanding of child sexual abuse in the Philippines.

Types of contributions:

1. **Original, theoretical and empirical contributions:** type written in English, double-spaced, margins of at least one inch on all sides; number manuscript pages consecutively throughout the paper; clear of all errors; maximum 8,000 words (excluding references) in 12 Arial font; professional format of your university (such as APA6, <http://www2.yk.psu.edu/learncenter/apa-july-09.pdf>); accompanied by a statement that it has not been published or sent with hopes to be published elsewhere; permission has been obtained to reproduce copyrighted materials from other sources. All accepted manuscripts and parts within (such as artwork) become the property of the publisher. Submit a cover page with the manuscript, indicating only the article title, and summarized in an abstract of not more than 100 words; avoid abbreviations, diagrams, and reference to the text in the abstract.

2. **Articles on clinical or community practice:** such as case studies, process and program descriptions, outcome studies, original clinical practice ideas for debate and argument; typewritten in English or Tagalog, double-spaced, margins of at least one inch on all sides, numbered manuscript pages consecutively throughout the paper; clear of all errors; maximum 4,000 words (excluding references) in 12 Arial font. The article must have a clear purpose, be evidence-based and practical, state the framework, and conclusion for learning; accompanied by a statement that it has not been published or sent with hopes to be published elsewhere; permission has been obtained to reproduce copyrighted materials from other sources. All accepted manuscripts and parts within (such as artwork) become the property of the publisher. Submit a cover page with the manuscript, indicating only the article title, and summarized in an abstract of not more than 100 words; avoid abbreviations, diagrams, and reference to the text in the abstract.

3. **Brief communication:** shorter articles, commentaries.

4. **Invited reviews:** the editors will commission reviews on specific topics, including book reviews.
5. **Letters to the editor:** letters and responses pertaining to articles published in the Philippines Journal of Child Sexual Abuse or on issues relevant to the field and to the point, should be prepared in the same style as other manuscripts.
6. **Announcements/Notices:** events of national or international multidisciplinary interests are subject to editorial approval and must be submitted at least 6 months before they are to appear.

Review process - All articles will go through a peer-review process by the editors or reviewers chosen by the editorial board using the following criteria:

1. significance of the contribution
2. appropriateness of the literature review
3. clarity of research problem/framework, methodological rigor, quality of analysis and adherence to APA format (academic manuscripts)
4. quality of the possible discussion and interpretation of the results
5. quality of the overall writing

Authors will be given feedback and manuscripts with potential to publish will be returned for reworking or retyping to conform to requirements.

The author will receive a copy of the journal that includes the article.

Submissions should be sent via the internet to Dr. Lois Engelbrecht, [ljengelbrecht@hotmail.com](mailto:ljengelbrecht@hotmail.com)

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