Inspiring Children's Futures

Best Practices, Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Innovations in Supporting Children's Wellbeing During COVID-19: Insights from the Philippines

Summary of Findings

Inspiring Children's Futures

PROTECTION
PROVISION
PARTICIPATION
PREVENTION

For the wellbeing of our *children*

The International **COVID 4P Log Project**

LEARNING SERIES | **4** | **THE PHILIPPINES**

About the COVID 4P Log Project

COVID-19 has abruptly thrust the rights and wellbeing of children and families into greater risk around the world. The impact of COVID-19 on children continues to be vast. Risks posed to children's survival and development, to their special protections, education, health and access to food, for example, are being greatly compounded not only by COVID-19, but also by government responses.

With roughly a third of the global population estimated to be under age 18, children[1] account for a huge proportion of our population. Successful delivery of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (henceforth 'SDGs'), which relate to all ages, heavily relies on our ability to effectively and robustly respond to the distinct needs and rights of children. Even prior to COVID-19, our global task to achieve these global goals by 2030 seemed daunting. In the light of COVID-19, achieving the SDGs is even more challenging.

To effectively mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in the light of protecting children's wellbeing, and ultimately for our collective societal future, policy and practice responses must be distinctively designed to address children's wellbeing needs.

Policymakers, and those working with children, are at the heart of pandemic responses as they continue to support children's wellbeing, rise to many new challenges, and respond in new, innovative and, in some cases, unprecedented ways. To address the impact of COVID-19 on children in the long term, the COVID 4P Log Project sought to better understand the changing demands on these policies and practices across different cultures and contexts, in 22 countries and five continents.

The **Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures** is a joint initiative at the University of Strathclyde, Scotland, with a collective vision of ensuring that children and young people have what they need to reach their full potential, particularly those who face adversity.

We work in partnership with a wide range of partners nationally and internationally. Children's human rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals are the heart of our work.

1. The term 'children' is used throughout to describe all those under the age of 18 years, in line with the CRC's definition of a child. Where 'young person' is used in the Report, this is reflecting that specific age group only.

THE SMARTPHONE APP

The COVID 4P Log is an Android and iOS smartphone app, free-of-cost to app users, that collected the real-time, anonymous views and experiences of practitioners and policymakers who were working across the globe to support children's wellbeing in the light of COVID-19. In answering a series of questions, these volunteer respondents helped us to better understand the ways practitioners and policymakers were responding to these challenges.

During the last quarter of 2020, practitioners and policymakers were invited to download the app to log a 2-minute response to one main question every day, for eight weeks. The questions were both practice and policy-focused, and based on the '4P' children's human rights framework of Protection, Provision, Prevention, and Participation, in order to better understand the ways practitioners and policymakers around the world were protecting children, providing for their unique needs, enabling their participation in decisions that affect them, and preventing harm, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A total of 3339 responses from 247 respondents representing 22 countries were generated across the eight weeks of questions. 139 direct service providers, 66 service managers and 42 policymakers from NGOs, civil society organisations, governments and the private sector in Kenya, the Philippines, South Africa, Scotland, Sweden, the USA, India, Canada and 14 other countries participated in this project.

RESEARCH THEMES

The smartphone app explored respondents' views of several core areas:

1. Learning from the pandemic so far
2. Protection: Ending violence against children
3. Provision: Access to food, health, education
4. Collaborations, flexibility, transparency and trust: Applying evidence from past emergencies to COVID-19
5. Prevention: Children's social and emotional wellbeing
6. Special considerations: Justice, alternative care and disabilities
7. Participation: Responding to #COVIDUnder19 – children and young people's findings
8. Preparing to rebuild post-COVID

OUR KEY PARTNERS

Our 17 international Key Partners range from capacity-building organisations, to international advocacy NGOs and service delivery partnerships, to the UN and other inter-governmental agencies. Their support and close engagement enabled the **Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures** to gather these important insights through the COVID 4P Log smartpone app. Their mention here does not imply endorsement of these findings.

Dissemination Partners in the Philippines:

Action for the Care and Development of the Poor in the Philippines (ACAP), Samahan ng Mamamayan-Zone One Tondo,Inc. (SM-ZOTO), Break the Silence National Network, Inc., Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC Coalition), Mindanao Action Group for Children Rights (MAGCRP) now called the Alliance for Child Rights Mindanao, Child Rights Network (CRN), The Psychosocial Support and Children's Rights Resource Center (PST CRRC), Philippine Children's Ministries Network (PCMN), and Consuelo Foundation.

PROTECTION
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Children's human rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are sometimes summarised as the four P's: Protection, Provision, Participation and Prevention. The COVID 4P Log uses this 4P conceptual framework to frame the questions we asked practitioners and policymakers. While the 4Ps are not all-encompassing, they offer an accessible lens through which to explore how practitioners and policymakers from different countries, sectors and organisations see children's human rights being realised.

We asked about good practices, and innovations despite the challenges, that ensured children's human rights were upheld across key aspects of children's lives, in particular those of children whose rights are most vulnerable to being violated. In this project, we explore how practitioners and policymakers are upholding the 4Ps, with the following foci:

PROTECTION

We explore children's rights to protection from exploitation, violence and other abuses, and to effective and child-friendly interventions if these occur. Our questions seek to understand what concrete and effective measures have been enacted to protect children from violence during the pandemic.

PROVISION

We explore children's rights to growth and development, including the right to food, health care and education, play and leisure, and provision of targeted assistance—including economic assistance—to families. We also ask about the special considerations for children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, in particular for children involved in justice systems, in alternative care, and with disabilities.

PARTICIPATION

We explore a child's right to express their views freely, and to have their views given due weight when decisions are made that affect them. Children's participation and intergenerational partnerships are essential ingredients for understanding the impact of COVID-19 on children's wellbeing.

PREVENTION

We explore children's rights to social and emotional wellbeing support. Isolation under COVID-19 has been a common reality for many, and social exclusion of children can undermine their wellbeing. Supporting children's social and emotional wellbeing, and that of their families, can prevent further harms.

Foreword

The past year was a difficult year. With the rapid and fatal spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, we all experienced various degrees of lockdowns, the loss and separation from loved ones, the near-collapse of our health systems, the downward spiral of the economy and livelihood security, deepening inequalities, and the disruption of education and progress on children's rights. On top of all of these, we also see the realities of shrinking civic spaces in the country exacerbated by the pandemic.

On the contrary, strength in solidarity is the other most important depiction of our lives under the coronavirus. In spite of all the drawbacks, we managed to rapidly adapt to the changing environment by modifying our ways of working and taking advantage of the new opportunities that emerged. We strengthened partnerships that we had built in the past years to be able to actively respond to the new crisis. We also found many ways of expressing dissent through various digital platforms and increased community-based mobilization efforts.

The use of new technologies and innovative approaches and applications such as COVID 4P Log project is very useful in hearing the views and experiences of adults, our co-advocates, who are working with and for children during the pandemic. I am thankful to all our dissemination partners in the Philippines who helped us spread the word and reach out to other organizations and communities to anonymously participate in the 8-week research: Action for the Care and Development of the Poor in the Philippines (ACAP), Samahan ng Mamamayan-Zone One Tondo,Inc. (SM-ZOTO), Break the Silence National Network, Inc., Civil Society Coalition on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC Coalition), Mindanao Action Group for Children Rights (MAGCRP) now called the Alliance for Child Rights Mindanao, Child Rights Network (CRN), The Psychosocial Support and Children's Rights Resource Center (PST CRRC), Philippine Children's Ministries Network (PCMN), and Consuelo Foundation.

It is my hope that the results of this report will be used to inform the ways of working of civil society organisations (CSOs), relevant policy makers in government offices, and the private sector towards the fulfilment of children's rights. I hope that this will help shape priorities and truly put children's rights at the center as we build back better. Also, as the Presidential elections approach, I also hope that the findings will help you make decisions about the candidates.

I would also like to add that we are happy to become part of a project that facilitates a feedback loop from children and young people to policymakers and practitioners and vice versa. It is an example of intergenerational dialogues and partnerships accomplished through non-traditional and innovative approaches that we would like to share with CSOs that we are working with in the region.

Surviving, and even thriving, during this time would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of child rights organizations. Again, on behalf of CRC Asia and the brilliant team at COVID 4P Log Project of the Inspiring Children's Futures at the University of Strathclyde led by Professor Jennifer Davidson, many thanks and let us take good care of ourselves and continue to look after one another.

Amihan Abueva
Regional Executive Director
Child Rights Coalition Asia

Report Summary:

Insights from the Philippines About Best Practices, Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Innovations in Supporting Children's Wellbeing During COVID-19

This report provides an overview of the findings gathered from the 48 respondents representing the Philippines in the last quarter of 2020. Key messages and illustrative quotes are offered in alignment with our main investigative streams – specifically:

- Effective practices and successes, challenges and lessons learned in responses to the pandemic so far;

- Best practices, challenges and innovations in protecting children from violence during the pandemic;

- Staff supervision, coping and wellbeing, including their impact on service delivery;

- Responses to children's restricted access to food, health care and schooling;

- Collaboration, transparency, flexibility and trust – learning from past emergencies;

- Children's socio-emotional wellbeing and resilience;

- Access to justice and special considerations;

- Rebuilding post-COVID-19.

This is a summary report. The full report is available at https://inspiringchildrensfutures.org/publications

This report aims to generate new insights, and spark new questions and ideas to inform, equip and strengthen policy, service and practices for and with children and their families.

This report is part of a series of Learning Reports documenting the COVID 4P Log App findings from responses across the eight weeks of questions. This COVID 4P Log Learning Report series aims to inform and equip those who seek to 'respond to children's distinct needs, and realise their full range of rights and opportunities, to achieve peaceful, just and inclusive societies for all'.[2]

2. Davidson, J.; Elsley, S.; Giraldi, M.; Goudie, A.; Hope, K.; Lyth, A.; Van Keirsbilck, B. (June 2019): Justice for Children, Justice for All: The Challenge to Achieve SDG16+ Call to Action. Glasgow: CELCIS - Inspiring Children's Futures, University of Strathclyde. https://www.justice.sdg16.plus/justiceforchildren

Spotlight Country: The Philippines

664 responses from 48 respondents

1. Manila
2. Quezon City
3. Antipolo
4. Davao City
5. Zamboanga
6. Rizal
7. Visayas
8. Pasay
9. Batangas
10. Valenzuela

19 DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS

19 SERVICE MANAGERS

10 POLICYMAKERS

The findings in this Learning Report are based on 664 responses from 48 respondents – including 19 direct service providers, 19 service managers and 10 policymakers (36 women; 11 men; 1 – other).
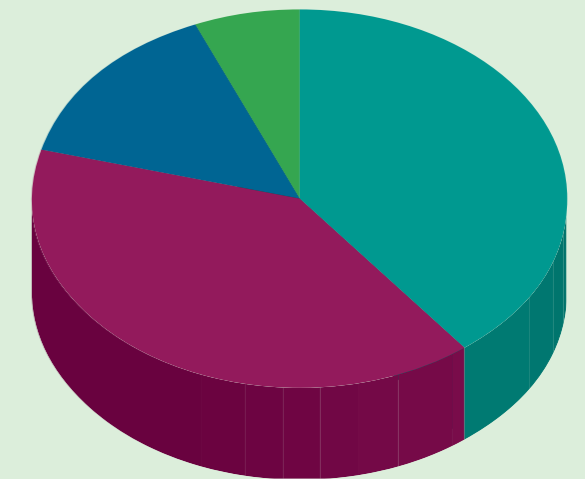
26 (54%) represented NGOs; 12 (25%) – civil society organisations (CSO); 8 (17%) – the government; 1 (2%) – the private sector; 1 (2%) – other.

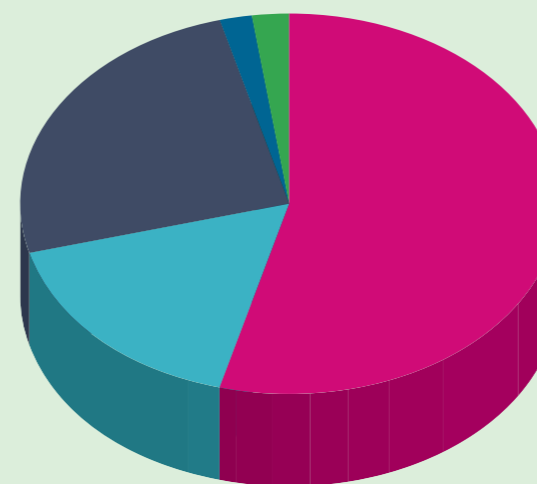27 (56%) of all respondents in this report supervised staff.
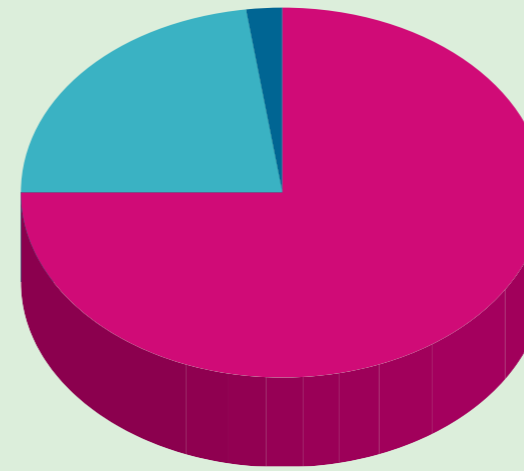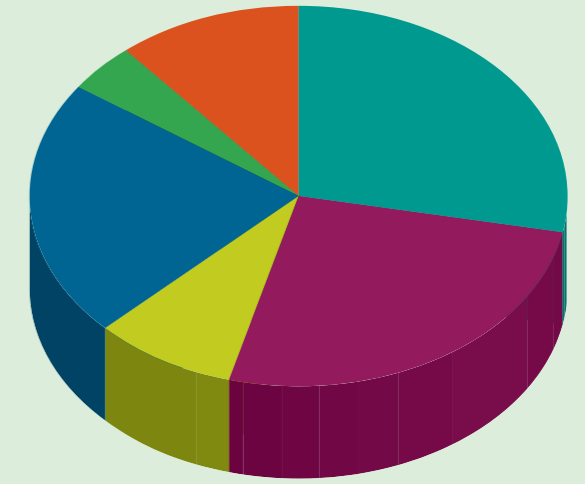
Respondents by Gender

■ Women		36
■ Men		11
■ Other		1

Respondents by Role

■ Direct Service Provider		19
■ Service Manager		19
■ Policymaker – NGO or CSO		7
■ Policymaker – Government		3

Organisation Type

■ Non-Government Organisation		26
■ Civil Society Organisation		12
■ Government		8
■ Private Sector		1
■ Other		1

Years of Experience

■ 0–5		13
■ 6–10		12
■ 11–15		4
■ 16–20		10
■ 21–25		2
■ 26–30		0
■ 30+		5

The respondents represented a wide range of sectors and areas of work – including advocacy and child rights; education; prevention from violence; community-based services; working with children with disabilities; working with urban poor communities; child and youth care; mental health; juvenile justice; and several others.

Their self-described roles included Program Manager, Registered Social Worker, Deputy Director, Professor, Educator, Public School Teacher, Country Coordinator (of an organisation), Regular Government Employee, Educator, Consultant, Community Facilitator, Project Director, Psychologist, and other.

Reflections:
Pressing Issues, Systemic Barriers and Creative and Committed Responses to Ensure Child Protection, Participation and Justice

Successes and Lessons Learned in Humanitarian Responses

Several respondents shared they had started providing humanitarian support (such as distribution of relief support) although they had not been trained in that type of work. This was a learning experience. Some respondents shared 'how unprepared development and policy advocacy groups are in humanitarian work', and how humanitarian support should be embedded within their work. Sometimes, child-friendly leisure and informational materials were added to relief packs. This was not always done, and packs sometimes included only the basic necessities.

Shrinking Civic Spaces

The shrinking civic spaces during the pandemic posed barriers to child protection, advocacy and activism, including social protests. Those restrictions, coupled with the ineffectiveness of governmental policies and systems put in place, hindered actions and mechanisms to protect and safeguard children.

Compounding Impact of School Closures, Economic Crises, Inequalities and Insufficient Funding

Issues relating to school closures, child monitoring and engagement, job loss and financial struggles were frequently reported. Several respondents shared they had programmes in place to engage parents on issues such as positive parenting and protection from abuse. However, access to digital technologies was a barrier. Respondents also shared parents were unprepared to best manage children's online study. Some respondents believed the expectations about parents' learning support were unreasonable. Financial assistance did not reach all families in need.

Swifter and More Equitable Governmental Responses Were Needed

Distribution of relief packages was one of the main strategies enacted during the pandemic to support children, including those who were most economically disadvantaged. However, there were inequities and delays in this type of support. Social amelioration programmes in the form of cash grants for the poorest were reported. The need was expressed to design programmes so that they were equitable and met the needs of those who are most vulnerable.

Creativity and Innovation

Many respondents highlighted the value of an innovative and creative approach to support children during the pandemic. Respondents also placed value on sharing innovations with partners, and being part of innovative organisations and creative discussions. A wide range of innovative practices were shared as examples of efforts to protect children from violence and promote their wellbeing. Some of those were positive parenting training; involvement of young people in child rights advocacy; administering justice online; engaging with children via virtual communication; and others.

Reflections:
Pressing Issues, Systemic Barriers and Creative and Committed Responses to Ensure Child Protection, Participation and Justice

Collaborations Between Organisations and Institutions: Positive Examples and Persisting Barriers

Examples of positive collaborations were reported. They had resulted in coordinated actions such as relief distribution, medical assistance, online service delivery, and awareness-raising programmes. Barriers to collaboration were also reported such as the lack of collaboration by government agencies, bureaucratic hurdles, corruption and the lack of resources to support need. Several respondents noted the communication by the government about COVID-19 had not been transparent and clear enough.

Listening, Reflecting, Learning

Understanding the needs of all children, including children with disabilities, and children living in remote rural areas, as well as coming up with 'creative and customised' approaches were highlighted as important.

Respondents' self-reflection and its relationship to service delivery were other prominent themes. Respondents highlighted the importance of their own learning to optimise policy and service responses during the pandemic:

- Learning to do different types of work such as emergency response work and online discussions on mental health; enhancing one's communication skills
- Learning from children and parents; learning how to better engage children in discussions
- Learning from their own 'misses' and successes ('trial and error learning')

Mobilising the Community. Involving Peers

Examples of peer support among children were mentioned such as peer-to-peer counselling. The responses also contained examples of involving youth in disseminating information on child abuse; in advocacy; in tutoring and counselling.

In the community, peer-to-peer education, community kitchens, community council responses, and other unspecified community programmes helped strengthen local systems and responses.

Agile Responses to Protect Children's and Families' Social and Emotional Wellbeing

The negative impact of stress on parents, children and providers was discussed in a number of contexts. Online learning at home was stressful for both children and parents. Children needed additional support, engagement and monitoring during online study. Not enough efforts had been directed to promoting children's stress management and coping skills.

In terms of mental health and psychosocial support, some respondents reported informational materials on psychological wellbeing had been disseminated, and wellbeing webinars – organised. The importance of engaging children in recreational activities at home and online was highlighted. Support to parents was highlighted as important, and respondents reported guiding parents on positive parenting and child protection by organising webinars and support groups.

Communication with Children and Media Use

During the pandemic, accessible information was delivered to children via printed materials added to relief packs; translations into multiple languages; and child-friendly press conferences.

Children becoming more engaged and using social media to express their views and feelings and report abuse – was highlighted by several respondents as an example of good practice and adaptation during the pandemic.

Concerns about children's safety online were also raised. Protecting children from online abuse and educating families on dangers and best practices were stressed.

Key Messages:
Learning from the Pandemic So Far

A total of 44 respondents logged answers to the Week 1 survey questions. The survey items concerned effective practices and successes in supporting children's wellbeing in both respondents' sectors and organisations, and within their own practice. Questions were also posed about the biggest challenges faced, lessons learned and recommended actions for upholding children's rights and promoting their wellbeing.

Effective Responses Within Sectors

In the Philippines, effective sectoral responses to the need to support children's wellbeing during COVID-19 included:

- Making services more accessible – for example, adapting services to be delivered online;
- Responding to child protection issues at the community level;
- Attending to the needs of children – including girls, children with disabilities and children in street situations, and other children living in poor urban communities;
- Engaging in policy advocacy;
- Drafting policies to protect children;
- Asking children about their views and experiences;
- Awareness-raising about child protection and mental health issues; and
- Cash transfers and the delivery of food packs.

Drivers of Effective Sectoral Responses

- The key drivers to those positive responses were the collaboration with local government units, NGOs and communities; advocacy and lobbying; fund-raising; regular communication and information sharing; and supportive management.
- Civil workers' dedication and commitment, and the inclusive approach to emergency responses, were also reported as important.

Effective Responses Within Organisations and Own Practice

- In their own work, respondents used online tools to engage children and parents, and maintain a safe environment; contributed to legislative advocacy and public discussions via webinars; administered justice online; and ran income generation programmes.
- Several respondents reported amplifying children's voices and ensuring they informed COVID-19 policy recommendations.
- Some respondents also had to shift to delivering relief and emergency response work.
- Respondents highlighted the importance of their own learning to optimise policy and service responses during the pandemic:
- Learning to do different types of work such as emergency response work and online discussions on mental health;
- Learning from children and parents;
- Learning from their own 'misses' and successes.

Facilitators of Adaptive Organisational Practices

Among the key facilitators of those adaptive practices were:

- Community mobilisation;
- Support leadership and administration;
- Concerted efforts by like-minded individuals;
- Links with regional and international bodies;
- Flexibility within organisations; and
- Understanding children's unique needs.

Key Messages:
Learning from the Pandemic So Far

Major Challenges to Supporting Children's Wellbeing

- Significant challenges to supporting children's wellbeing during COVID-19 were also faced. Movement restrictions; the lack of connectivity for some children; the lack of resource to meet the need; coordination issues; and misinformation and inconsistent guidelines all created difficulties with meeting children's needs and protecting their rights.

- Difficulties were also experienced with adapting services for delivery online; consistently monitoring children at home; and ensuring children's rights are prioritised. For example, some respondents believed priority-setting and budget allocation did not reflect children's needs and rights.

- As a result, concerns were voiced about children's access to quality care and essential services; exposure to violence and abuse online; mental health; and their ability to attend online classes.

Priority Areas for Improving Children's Wellbeing

Respondents identified several priority areas for better supporting children:

- More effective collaboration with national and local bodies to provide immediate services for children
- More efficient assessment of child abuse and more prompt responses by authorities
- Mobilisation of informal support networks in the community
- More fund-raising
- Learning how to better engage children and other stakeholders in discussions, and consult them about key activities
- Massive information campaigns on child safety
- Better understanding of the needs of children with disabilities, children in street situations, girls, children living in poor urban regions, and all others
- Offering mobile and tele-health services in remote and poorer regions
- More effective budget allocation to reflect need
- Improved skills in humanitarian support

Protection: Ending Violence Against Children

A total of 13 respondents answered questions in Week 2 of the survey regarding their views and experiences of protecting children from violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Respondents were asked to reflect upon good practices and outcomes, innovations and challenges.

Good Practices in Child Protection

- A number of good practice examples and principles in protecting children from violence during COVID-19 were shared. Those included using hotlines and social media to report cases of abuse; offering webinars on parenting; carrying out online consultations with children; peer-to-peer counselling among children; and multidisciplinary child protection units in hospitals.

'Use of social media to report abuses, neglect and exploitation against children'

Service Manager, NGO, Philippines

'Online Consultation with children [...] conducting child friendly activities online'

Direct Service Provider, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'The youth are now involved in disseminating information on child abuse and where/who to report cases that they know of. They advocate messages online with their peers.'

Service Manager, NGO, Philippines

Challenges to Child Protection

- Exposure to abuse and neglect in the home; the lack of access to devices and connectivity; the poor implementation of programmes and services; as well as community awareness were cited as barriers to child protection.

- Ineffective child protection laws and mechanisms and the lack of trust in public services, in addition to the shrinking civic spaces during the pandemic, created further barriers to activism and child protection.

'The provision of hotlines might not be enough as many times children tend to report late or not at all, what the children need are services within their reach.'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'The challenge is really the effectiveness of the government policies and services in place that are supposed to protect children. Until now, the best services are still being provided by private NGO service providers. There is also no trust in the police and public social work provision'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

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Provision: Access to Food, Health Care, Education

17 respondents offered their views of the extent to which children within their care had experienced restricted access to food, basic necessities, health care and education during the pandemic, as well as of what had been done to increase children's access to those essential rights. Those questions were asked in Week 3 of the survey.

Systemic and Structural Barriers

- Job loss and poverty; lockdown measures; delays and inequalities in governmental support and responses; and inequalities in children's access to online education were all cited among the biggest challenges to ensuring children's basic needs were met during COVID-19.

Changed Practices

- Respondents had changed their practices in a number of ways to meet those challenges – including:
- Started providing humanitarian support (for example, delivered goods to houses)
- Influenced policies
- Listened to children's concerns
- Made experimental advocacy materials

Innovations

- Urban gardening and other livelihood projects; relief distribution and cash transfers were implemented to mitigate children's restricted access to food.
- Several effective responses to meet children's basic needs were cited such as economic assistance (for example, livelihood support and cash transfers); telemedicine; paid leave for parents; and supplying children with educational materials as part of the relief distribution.

Insufficient Resources

- However, several respondents indicated that the resources were not enough to meet the need, and that services were not well planned and sustainable.

Inequities in the Access to Essential Services

- Serious concerns were also expressed about children's restricted access to schooling during the pandemic. Children without sufficient access to online technologies experienced inequities in the access to education. Respondents believed poorer access to schooling negatively impacted children's mental health and social and cognitive development.
- Respondents also reported that the education system was under-prepared and that sectoral responses were not based on needs. This negatively affected both children's and parents' wellbeing.

Restricted Access to Health Care

- Children's access to health care was also severely restricted during COVID-19. Movement restrictions, overwhelmed services, inadequate medical supplies, limited information and infection risks and fears were cited as major barriers. As a result, many children did not get medical attention, especially children with chronic health conditions.

Recommended Actions for More Effective Responses

- To better address children's needs, respondents stressed the importance of supportive LGUs; equitably designed programmes for children in vulnerable circumstances; allocating sufficient funds; better communication between LGUs, community leaders and households; and being creative in engaging children and their families.

Collaborations, Flexibility, Transparency and Trust

10 respondents addressed questions about what positive collaborations had occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic; whether flexible responses had been implemented at national and local levels; and to what extent communication had been transparent and reliable. Those questions were sent in Week 4 of the survey.

Collaboration

- Examples of positive collaborations were reported. They had resulted in coordinated actions such as relief distribution, medical assistance, online service delivery, and awareness-raising programmes.

Barriers to Collaboration

- Barriers to collaboration were also reported such as the lack of collaboration by government agencies, bureaucratic hurdles, corruption and the lack of resources to support need. Several respondents noted the communication by the government about COVID-19 had not been transparent and clear enough.

'There has been confusing communications from those tasked to implement measures about the pandemic. Data on COVID-19 cases as well are confusing and late.'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

Information Dissemination

- During the pandemic, accessible information was delivered to children via printed materials added to relief packs; translations into multiple languages; and child-friendly press conferences.

'Some countries conducted child friendly press conferences which are helpful to children. Other child rights groups, including child-led once, are at the forefront of making sure that the language is understandable to children. They make sure that the information is translated into different languages, including languages of minority and ethnic groups'

Policymaker, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

Prevention: Children's Social and Emotional Wellbeing

In week 5 of the survey, 8 respondents shared their views of how children's socio-emotional wellbeing and resilience had been supported during the pandemic.

Practices to Promote Children's Socio-Emotional Wellbeing During COVID-19

- Some respondents reported informational materials on psychological wellbeing had been disseminated, and wellbeing webinars – organised. The importance of engaging children in recreational activities at home and online was highlighted.

'We have collaborated with groups of psychologists and educators to develop information materials helping people to recognize that psychological and mental health are important, and disseminated numbers where people and children can call for advice, and we got some support from a telecommunications company to provide load so that the psychologists can call those requesting counseling. In addition, webinars have been organized by local community organizations to provide expert advice on how to deal better with stress and avoid depression and excessive anxiety'

Policymaker, NGO, Philippines

'I use cellphone for counseling. I also use for sharing information sometimes I accept calls because somebody just need someone to listen to him/her.'

Policymaker, NGO, Philippines

Low Priority Given to Children's Mental and Socio-Emotional Wellbeing

- Concerns were shared about the insufficient support and attention dedicated to children's social and emotional wellbeing during the pandemic.

'There is already a growing recognition about the impact of COVID-19 to the Social and emotional well-being of children but the service is available and the measures in place is still lacking'

Policymaker, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

Access to Justice and Alternative Care.
Children's Participation.
Preparing to Rebuild Post–COVID-19

Very few responses from only 7 respondents were received in Weeks 6, 7 and 8 of the survey. Those weeks were concerned with children's access to justice; children's participation; and preparing to rebuild after COVID-19, respectively.

Justice and Alternative Care

- Court delays were reported. Examples of delivering justice online were provided.

'Only emergency or urgent motions areentertained for online filing and that has provedto be disadvantageous especially for children inconflict with the law needing judicial action.'

Policymaker, NGO, Philippines

'Online filing, pleadings, hearings for specialcases and some reading of court decisions viaonline.'

Policymaker, NGO, Philippines

'They can use or adopt online hearing,announcement can be done in thorough text orcall. Or with the help of Barangay officials.'

Service Manager, NGO, Philippines

Children's Participation and Right to Play

- Examples of engaging and consulting with children were offered. The importance of developing guidelines for online safety was stressed. Several respondents believed children's right to play should have been given more consideration.

'Some children were mobilized online fordialogues through community partners andwith some support like communication and foodallowance'

Policymaker, NGO, Philippines

'Popularize children's right to play among adults'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

Rebuilding Post-COVID-19

- The importance of prioritising children's access to mental health care was highlighted, in addition to lobbying for government funding:

'We are lobbying for government funding to children's rights at the national and sub-nationallevels'

Policymaker, NGO, Philippines

'Their input as stakeholders in accessing mentalhealth services is requested.'

Direct Service Provider, Government, Philippines

Effective Practices and Lessons Learned in Supporting Children's Wellbeing During COVID-19

'Mobilizing our community leaders and staff as response team, clustering of areas, baselining of affected families and resource generation.'

Direct Service Provider, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'We are trying our best to learn from children, from other people, organizations, and also from our targets and misses in the application of childrens participation. These inputs into our continuing work with other stakeholders.'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'In our past experiences during emergencies, we observed that most relief packs address to the needs of the entire family like rice, canned goods, although these are basic necessities, too, we felt that children's needs during these times are most often neglected or not prioritized. Thus, we tried to fill-in this gap.'

Service Manager, NGO, Philippines

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'Third, this may be particular to our context and in countries all around the world, social movements are also challenged due to the shrinking civic spaces, sadly, socially and now even physically. Social protests are now difficult to mount and even when we express ourselves in social media, it may not also be safe. This time also endangers our lives as activists and the future of activism.'

Direct Service Provider, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'Because even though they are children, they still have the right to be heard and to be given the chance to air out what they wanted the adults to do for them..'

Policymaker, Government, Philippines

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Perspectives on Protecting Children from Violence During COVID-19

'I've experienced that some local government units and some NGOs at the local level are ensuring that systems and policies (i.e. ordinance, iec) are in placed to fully protect and safeguard the children. [...] Although this aspect is more of at the response level, it's somehow lessen the potential effect of violence to the children since they ensure that the system is in place.'

Direct Service Provider, NGO, Philippines

'Poor implementation of programs and services, quarantine guidelines, community awareness, data, politics and economics, and very dependent at the national government'

Direct Service Provider, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'The provision of hotlines might not be enough as many times children tend to report late or not at all, what the children need are services within their reach.'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

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Human Rights Violations and Inequities in Accessing Essential Goods and Services During COVID-19

'For poor and below the poverty line families who were also employed under the informal economy that was primarily hit by the pandemic, the overall income and the ability to buy food was greatly affected. The local government support was available but with some delays and inequities. The food packages contain only a limited number of food and are usually instant meals that are usually unhealthy.'

Service Manager, Civil Society Organisation, Philippines

'Some children died not getting any medical attention'

Service Manager, NGO, Philippines

'For education, it's the access on it considering that classes are being done online... Some children do not have access on gadgets and internet connection for them to study...'

Policymaker, Government, Philippines

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A Note of Caution

While the survey generated useful insights into the respondents' work in relation to children, young people and families, the findings should be interpreted with caution due to a number of factors.

- The numbers of respondents are modest, so the findings may not be representative of the experiences and challenges faced in those countries or sectors.

- The survey engaged practitioners and policymakers only. The findings may not reflect children's or their caregivers' views.

- The findings reported here have been produced by the COVID 4P Log research team and, due to the anonymised format of the smartphone app survey, the findings cannot be shared with the respondents for commentary or review.

- The findings are derived from a short-form survey and lack context. Respondents' engagement with the survey varied, which may have affected the completeness of the data.

- We are aware some respondents had difficulties with engaging with the app due to workload pressures and technical issues, which might have affected their response rates.

About this Report

This Learning Report has been produced by the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures at the University of Strathclyde, Scotland, UK. Inspiring Children's Futures, with its many partners, has a strong track record of multi-level, multi-sector global engagement, policy development and practice improvement.

This Learning Report is part of a series of reports on the findings of the COVID 4P Log smartphone app. Together, the reports from this series form the second of a three-part 'Inspiring Children's Futures in Light of COVID 4P Log smartphone app survey.

This programme is gathering evidence on protecting children's wellbeing in past epidemics; informing better policies and practices throughout the COVID-19 pandemic; and influencing change in the long shadow that COVID-19 will cast over the recovery phases ahead.

With our partners, we are strengthening global, national and local approaches to ensure that we are collectively delivering on the Justice for Children, Justice for All SDG 16+ Call to Action to "respond to children's distinct needs, and realise their full range of rights and opportunities, to achieve peaceful, just and inclusive societies for all".

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Inspiring Children's Futures support(s) the Sustainable Development Goals