

## NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS

The year 2012 is another challenging and a fulfilling year for the National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) as it strives to pursue its mandate of sustaining disability rights promotion. With the growing concerns of Filipinos with disabilities, it has intensified its coordination and advocacy efforts through progressive partnership and collaboration with various government agencies and non-government organizations of and for persons with disabilities in the country and its counterparts overseas as well. The Council likewise continues to fast track its coordination with these entities to promote implementation of local statutes and international disability mandates, amongst are the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** and the impending **Incheon Strategy to Make the “Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific** which serves as the framework for the 3rd Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022. Following are NCDA's major accomplishments in 2012.

### Non Handicapping Environment (NHE) Project

This project is a joint undertaking between NCDA and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which was funded by the latter and implemented in two (2) pioneering sites in the country, namely; the Municipalities of New Lucena in Iloilo Province and Opol in Misamis Oriental. Technical assistance was also provided to the project by the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD) through capacity building of local key stakeholders and persons with disabilities through the conduct of Disability Equality Training, NHE Forum, and Advocacy Campaigns through NHE Comics Distribution and Orientation, among others.



*Barrier-free and accessible structures for persons with disabilities such as ramps, hand/grab rails, and signages, among others, have become familiar sites in the NHE pilot areas.*

## Promotion of Statutory Laws and Events on Disability

Intensified efforts have been undertaken to promote among key stakeholders landmark disability laws of the country, amongst are: (1) Republic Act 7277, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities; (2) Republic Act 9442, the act amending RA 7277; (3) Republic Act 10070 better known as Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office (PDAO) Law; and (4) Batas Pambansa Blg. 344, better known as the Accessibility Law.

In an effort to intensify implementation of RA 10070, the Council conducted the first PDAO Congress in Manila with the purpose of consulting the appointed heads of PDAOs. Around 64 PDAO heads and 17 PWD Focal Persons in local government units were present during the dialogue which also threshed out the working relationships between them, the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers and other local stakeholders. Highlighting the Congress was the review and deliberations among the participants the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the said law.

On the other hand, campaigns for the issuances of PWD identification cards among local chief executives were also conducted in compliance to RA 9442. A total of 714 municipalities and 110 cities submitted their reports on PWD issuances totaling 192,675 issued IDs as of December 31, 2012.



*National Congress on Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office.*

Moreover, the Council has continuously collaborated with various government agencies, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and disabled people's organizations (DPOs) in the observance of disability-related events and observances, such as the Autism Consciousness Week in January, Rare Disease and Disorders Week in February, Women with Disabilities Day in March, White Cane Safety

Day in August, Cerebral Palsy Awareness and Protection (CPAP) Week in September, and Deaf Awareness Week in November. It also led the National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (NDPR) Week in July and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3. Each celebration was an opportunity to highlight issues relevant to each disability group and for the disability sector in general.



*Product exhibits during the 2012 National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation (NDPR) Week celebration on July 17-23 at the Occupational Safety and Health Center, Quezon City. The products on display were made by persons with disabilities.*



*Launching of Ped Xing (pedestrian crossing) with audio warning device for the blind during the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3 at the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) grounds in Makati City.*

### **Campaign on Inclusive Education**

With the goal of strengthening the capacity of the Department of Education (DepEd) and its partners in implementing inclusive education, NCDA top officials attended the “High Level Officials’ Benchmarking Workshop” in Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia to observe best practices in the

implementation of inclusive education in Australia. The importance of policies, support services and community engagement were highlighted during the workshop which took place in August. As their output, a draft document titled **“Philippine Policy Framework on Inclusive Education”** was developed.



*Participants to the High Level Officials’ Benchmarking Workshop on “Strengthening the Capability in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Philippines,” in Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.*

Furthermore, a Training of Trainers was held in the same University on September 3-14 that was attended by senior officers of the Council together with DepEd technical staff. The team prepared the **“Facilitators’ Guide on Inclusive Education”** that would be used as reference in the conduct of advocacy on inclusive education in the country.

As an off-shoot of these overseas trainings and as a commitment to the benefactors, i.e., the Australian Agency for International Development and QUT, a **“Stakeholders’ Orientation on Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in the Philippines”** was held on December 5 under the auspices of the Council. Key stakeholders of Inclusive Education program have participated. Similar undertakings followed that were conducted in Manila; Tanza, Cavite; Legazpi City, ALbay; Iloilo City, Iloilo Province; and Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur.



*The eight-man Philippine delegation who participated in the Public Sector Linkage Program on Building the Capacity to Strengthen the Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Philippines together with Australian mentors.*

Meanwhile, Senate Bill No. 3002, “**An Act Instituting Inclusive Education In All Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Schools**” was filed by Senator Edgardo Angara with inputs from NCDA and DepEd.

#### **Strengthening of NCDA Sub-Committees and Regional Committees on Disability Affairs**

As a mechanism for the development of policies, programs and projects and advocacy for disability inclusive programming, regular meetings of the following NCDA Sub-Committees were held, to wit: (1) Accessibility on Built Environment and Transportation; Training, Employment and Livelihood; (2) Auxiliary Social Services; (3) Health; (4) Information and Communications Technology; (5) Advocacy; (6) Education; and (7) International Disability Network were held to discuss and resolve issues affecting persons with disabilities. A joint meeting of all these Sub-Committees was also convened and held in September to refresh members on the terms of reference and updated accomplishments.

With the clamor of the sector of persons with disabilities to have access to justice, a Sub-Committee on Anti-Discrimination and Access to Justice was created with the Department of Justice as Chair. The Sub-Committee is mandated primarily to assist persons with disabilities in filing cases against violation of disabilities laws, and furthermore, to act as legal counsels in the litigation/hearing of cases either as complainants/plaintiffs and/or respondents. Secretary Corazon Juliano-Soliman, NCDA Chairperson led the launching held in September 18, 2012 together with DOJ officials.

Likewise, the Regional Committees on Disability Affairs (RCDAs) were also convened quarterly to generate issues where policies can be developed. These meetings are being held to monitor the progress of program implementation of stakeholders and provide directions on inclusive program development for persons with disabilities. Majority of the RCDAs are chaired by DSWD Field Directors who act on concurrent capacity other than their regular functions.



*Launching of the NCDA's Sub-Committee on Access to Justice and Anti-Discrimination led by DSWD Secretary and NCDA Chairperson Corazon Juliano-Soliman together with DOJ officials.*

### **Support to NGO Initiatives**

NCDA is one of the primary movers that supports the Fully Aabled Nation (F.A.N.) Campaign for the Nationwide Registration of Voters with Disabilities, including the promotion of accessible polling places to ensure persons with disabilities' right to suffrage, in partnership with the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), The Asia Foundation, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), and other concerned government agencies and civil society organizations (CSOs). The project utilizes the links of NCDA with RCDA local member agencies and disabled people's organizations.

Through this campaign, the COMELEC has registered more than 344,000 voters with disabilities as of October 2012. It also paved the way to its issuance of a Resolution providing accessible polling places for persons with disabilities. The F.A.N. Campaign will ensure that registered PWDs can vote starting the 2013 mid-term elections and forthcoming elections in cognizance of their right to suffrage.

NCDA has also partnered with the Leonard Cheshire Disability Philippines Foundation, Inc. Young Voices Philippines (LCDPFI-YVP) for the launching of a national campaign dubbed as **“May PWD ID Ako, Kasali Ako, ”** a national advocacy program of LCDPFI which aims to involve 16 – 25 years old youth with disabilities in facilitating and monitoring number of PWDs having disability IDs in their own respective communities.

The national campaign was held in September this year in Iloilo City where Police Chief Superintendent Agrimero Cruz, Philippine National Police Regional Director in Region 6, was the Keynote Speaker. He committed to establish a “PWD Desk” where complaints for violations of laws against persons with disabilities can be filed. As a result, the PWD Desk was established and launched on December 7 located at the PNP Regional Office in Iloilo City. The LCDPFI-YVP program will be disseminated throughout the country and will be monitored via audio-video broadcasting, social networking like Facebook and Twitter, photo shoots and news writing.

#### **Formulation of the “Philippine Decade of Make the Rights Real” Plan of Action 2013-2022**

In preparation for the impending launch of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian and the Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities and to introduce the Incheon Strategy on Disability Inclusive Development, a two-day consultation and planning workshop attended by representatives of national government agencies and civil society organizations (CSOs) was conducted in October. A total of 41 participants have attended, which include 25 government agencies and 16 CSO/DPO representatives.

A government delegation was also organized by the Council where representatives of agencies have attended the **“High Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Asian and the Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012”** held in Incheon, South Korea from October 29-November 3, 2012. The delegation was headed by Undersecretary Parisya H. Taradji, Alternate NCDA Chairperson and NCDA together with the representatives of DepEd, DOTC, DOLE and three (3) non-government organizations, namely; KAMPI, Tahanang Walang Hagdanan and Philippine Chamber of Masseurs. As a member State of the UN Economic and Social Council of Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), the Philippine delegation joined the majority in adopting the Incheon Strategy Framework which guides the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

In adopting this regional mandate, the NCDA prepared a presidential proclamation providing 2013-2022 as the Philippine Decade of Make the Rights Real for Persons With Disabilities. Once this will be approved by the President, it will serve as the legal basis for government agencies to translate into action the goals and targets prescribed thereof for the next decade while the National Plan of Action for the Decade is still in the process and hopefully will be finalized and completed in the first quarter of 2013.



*Philippine delegation to the High Level Inter Governmental Meeting who participated in the adoption of for the Incheon Strategy on Disability Inclusive Development to prepare for the launching of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian and the Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, held in Incheon, Korea on October 29 – November 1, 2012 headed by DSWD Undersecretary Parisya H. Taradji, NCDA Alternate Chairperson.*

### **Attendance to the DSWD National Management Development Conference**

The Council actively participated in the DSWD's CY 2012 Mid-Year National Management Development Conference held in Koronadal, South Cotabato on June 27-30 to keep abreast with the thrusts and developments of its mother-agency, that is DSWD, to align its directions and efforts to the over-all goal of the Department. The NMDC served also as a venue for the Council to update its members, especially the Regional Directors for networking and collaboration various key stakeholders at the local levels to address the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities nationwide. The **"Persons with Disabilities Situationer"** highlighting the National Disability Situation and the five (5) core messages that serve as the anchor to implement the Council's programs and plans in the future. These include (1) participation in government, (2)



accessibility, (3) data base on persons with disabilities, (4) issuance of PWD IDs and establishment of Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office (PDAOs), and (5) rights-based approach and inclusive development.

Indeed, was a fruitful year for NCDAs owing to its collaborative leadership in steering societal awareness, concerns and actions in responding to the needs of persons with disabilities where it will continue to be its greatest challenge and commitment. Its look forward in 2013 in the furtherance of unifying the sector of persons with disabilities, capacitate them, and ensure their participation in governance to truly adhere to the precepts prescribed in the national laws and international mandates on disability.