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LEGAL SERVICES
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Administrative Order No. 12
Series of 2004

GUIDELINES ON THE PROVISION OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL AND BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES TO DISPLACED CHILDREN IN DISASTER SITUATION

I. RATIONALE

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The Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone areas of the world. It is vulnerable in varying degrees to hazards in the form of typhoon, floods, landslides, volcanic eruption, storm surges, sea level changes, etc. Also, the country suffers from manmade disasters and armed conflicts. These pose damaging social and psychological effects on families especially on children brought about by violence, forced displacement, destruction or loss of properties and lives.

DSWD records show that at the height of the armed conflict in Central Mindanao in CY 2000, a total of 318, 246 children were affected and internally displaced. The displacement normally causes mental and physical stress to affected children. Hence, they must be protected to enable them to adjust and cope with their situation and to help them recover from their traumatic ordeal.

Various government agencies such as DSWD, DOH, DepEd and other line agencies are mandated to protect and provide appropriate assistance to these children who are vulnerable to illnesses and hazards during disaster. Hence, these guidelines are designed to guide the provision of assistance and services to children who are victims of disaster.

II. LEGAL BASIS

1. International Commitments:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Art. 39 provides for the protection of children who are victims of armed conflict.

- Protocol II of the Geneva Convention of 1949 provides protection of the civilian population particularly children against dangers arising from the military operations .

2. Relevant Laws

- PD 603 otherwise known as " The Child and Youth Welfare Code"
- RA 7610 as amended " Laws on the Special Protection of Filipino Children and their Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR)"
- PD 1566 dated 11 June 1978 " Strengthening the Philippine Disaster Control Capability and Establishing the National Program on Community Disaster Preparedness".
- EO 15 Series of 1998 - " Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the Department of Social Welfare and Development "

III. Project Description

The project will respond to the needs of the children who are victims of insurgencies and either natural or manmade disasters, specially those in evacuation centers. This will help them rebuild or restore their lives which have been disrupted due to the armed conflict and other calamities. While at the evacuation center, a social worker from the DSWD Field Office or from the local government is responsible in the provision of the needed services.

The children will be provided with developmental and social activities, e.g. plays, group sessions, counseling and the like, to be able to help them recover from trauma and bring them back to their normal psychosocial functioning .

Provision of psycho-social intervention is also necessary to enable these children maintain a friendly outward social disposition free from feeling of animosities and revenge. This will prevent them from alienation with other children when they will be integrated to their respective communities.

IV. Objectives

- To protect the children and ensure that their best interest and welfare shall be the paramount considerations in all actions concerning them by implementing appropriate and efficient delivery of basic services through private or public social welfare agencies / institutions.
- To strengthen the capacities of the local government units and community based structures in the delivery of basic social services and emergency response and relief to the families, especially to children during and after a disaster.
- To mobilize support from other sector and private entities in the conduct of activities for displaced children.

V. Definition of Terms

1. **Child** - is a person below eighteen (18) years of age or those older but are unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of physical or mental disability or condition.
2. **Displaced children** - are children forcibly moved from their place of origin to a safer place as a result of armed conflict, situation of violence, violation of human rights and natural or manmade disasters.
3. **Disaster** – a natural or man-made event that results to the serious disruption of the functioning of a community causing widespread human, material, financial and environmental losses which exceed the ability of the community to cope using its own resources.
4. **Armed conflict** – refers to any conflict between two organized groups which involves the actual use of armed force and results to disruption of normal social, economic, political and cultural activities in a specific geographical area.

5. **Relief** – refers to the immediate activities undertaken following a disaster that seeks to satisfy the immediate and basic needs of victims such as food, clothing , shelter, medical care and emotional security which may last for a number of days or weeks after the disaster. The provision of direct psycho-social and other support services falls within these activities.
6. **Rehabilitation** –refers to the process by which the affected communities/areas or damaged public infrastructures are restored to their normal level or their actual condition prior to the occurrence of the disaster or calamity. It is the process of providing the population particularly children with critical incident stress debriefing, psychological, spiritual and recreational requirements, social intervention to displaced children and their families to enable them to return to normal condition/functioning.
7. **Trauma** - behavioral state resulting from mental or emotional stress or physical injury.

VI. Task and Responsibilities

A. Pre Disaster Phase :

1) Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office :

- Inventory of programs and services of social welfare institutions and agencies and establishments which could provide assistance to victims of disasters;
- Ensure availability of transportation and other resources during relief operation; and
- Conduct vulnerability and hazard assessment in high risk areas.

2) Municipal/City Social Welfare and Development Office:

- Identify areas / barangays that are vulnerable to conflict/ disaster areas;
- Initiate the creation of Emergency Response/ Management Team up to the barangay level;
- Ensure the establishment and identification of safe evacuation centers in the locality;
- Organize / reactivate the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children in the local level with the following involvements:
 - Prepare children's profile in all risk/vulnerable barangays. Vital data shall include basic demographic information namely: names, ages, addresses and socio – economic profile (health, education, skills, physical condition and others).
 - Orient barangay officials on the preparation and submission of reports to MSWDO within three (3) hours of any disaster.
 - Refer children/families to C/ MSWDO for special social services as necessary.
- Establish/organize community disaster preparedness team/volunteers from city, municipal and barangay level to:
 - Look after the welfare of the children in the evacuation centers.
 - Assist in the relief services and ensure that the children should be the first to receive relief assistance.

- Detect severely traumatized children needing therapeutic interventions.
 - Assist in the supplemental feeding and other services such as day care activities.
 - Maintain order and cleanliness in the evacuation centers.
- Provide capability building to Barangay Disaster Coordinating Councils on Family and Community Disaster Preparedness

3) DSWD Field Office

- Provide technical assistance to P/C/MSWDOs to ensure community mobilization/capability building of volunteers on disaster preparedness in the local level.
- Ensure that Provincial/City/Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council are established and functional .
- Stockpile sufficient food and non-food relief goods for use in case of emergency / disaster.
- Provide LGUs with a prescribed disaster forms to facilitate reporting and submission to FO of the following data:
 - Profile/masterlist of high risk areas
 - Children profile per high risk barangay
 - Stockpile and relief distribution forms
 - Evacuation centers profile(location, capacity, facilities available, contact persons/volunteer)
 - Evacuee registration form (masterlist of families who have taken refuge in the center including evacuees who have special needs, death in the center, actions taken/recommendations)
- Conduct of capability building/training to P/C/MSWDOs / community preparedness team on the following :

- Disaster Preparedness
- Effective Parenting (Enhanced PES)
- Productivity Skills Training
- Care Giving to Children
- Stress Debriefing

B. Disaster Phase :

1) Conduct of Rapid Assessment :

- The Local Relief and Rehab Committee in coordination with the local DCC shall undertake rapid assessment of the disaster area. They will determine number of displaced children and their respective needs for purposes of immediate response and obtain real time information.

2) Relief Operations :

1. The City/Municipal Social Welfare Development Office and trained volunteers concerned shall:
 - Identify children evacuees who have special needs namely:
 - those who are separated from their parents/guardians;
 - those who are ill/sick;
 - those who are disabled (physically and mentally); and
 - newly born babies/infants
 - Identify number of children per day care service
 - Conduct of supplemental feeding to 0 – 6 year old evacuee children.
 - Conduct of supervised neighborhood play to children not in evacuation center.

- Setting up of day care service to provide early childhood care and development activities for affected children.
- Conduct of play therapy to 7 – 14 year old Children.

2. The DSWD Field Office shall ensure that the following activities are conducted and observed:

- Establishment of an Evacuee Registration Desk (ERD) in all evacuation centers which will conduct the registration and masterlisting of families who have taken refuge therein especially of children.
- Children should be the first to receive relief assistance in times of disaster.
- Provision of food requirements and other basic necessities while the displaced children are housed in the evacuation centers / temporary shelters.
- Provision of augmentation support to the LGUs in times of mass evacuation.
- Establishment of committee for the welfare of children involving participation of line agencies and NGOs/POs to ensure systematic provision of basic services to the children.

3. The local DCC shall ensure that concerned line agencies and NGOs conduct the following activities:

- Ensure availability of a medical team to include a Psychologist . (DOH)
- Those children suffering from 2nd and 3rd degree malnutrition shall be given the priority treatment and

- Provide water system and install toilets in every evacuation center.
- Create a venue for psycho-social intervention for children. (Conduct of day care cum critical incident stress debriefing to all children).
- Facilitate the provision of socio-cultural and spiritual activities for children and families.

C. Post Disaster Phase

1) Assessment of Rehabilitation Requirements :

- C/MSWDOs shall closely coordinate with DSWD FOs for any fund requirements.
- C/MSWDO shall prepare and submit a terminal report to the DSWD FO.
- The local DCCs shall determine the immediate needs of children and their families in preparation for their return to their respective places of origin / or resettlement sites.
- The DSWD FOs / National shall ensure that children requiring long term intervention will be given appropriate services.
- The DSWD FO shall provide technical assistance to MSWDO in preparation and validation of rehabilitation plans for children and families
- The DSWD National shall ensure augmentation support in the rehabilitation process for the children.

- The DSWD FO shall evaluate with the Disaster Preparedness Team the problems encountered during the pre and during disaster phases in terms of coordination, logistics, capabilities, resources of the MSWDOs/LGUs and the FO and the recommendations for improvement.
- The DSWD FO shall assess the facilitating factors during the different phases of the disaster period

VII. Reporting and Monitoring

A. Monitoring

- 1) The PSWDOs, C/MSWDOs and the DSWD FOs shall monitor the following:
 - Document cases of deaths, sickness, level of nutrition and educational and psychological activities of children inside and outside the evacuation centers.
 - Recommend appropriate action for children needing special care.



B. Reporting

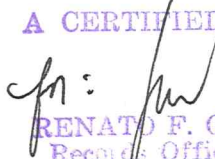
1. The PSWDOs/CSWDOs/ MSWDOs shall furnish the DSWD FOs or the Local Relief and Rehabilitation Committee with a copy of the damaged and needs assessment report/ list within 24 hours .
2. The DSWD FOs shall furnish DSWD Central Office copy of the report within three (3) hours after receipt from the P/C/MSWDOs.
3. The DSWD FO shall prepare the terminal report and submit same to central office upon consolidation/finalization of report received from P/C/MSWDO concerned.

VIII. Effectivity

This Department Order takes effect immediately and revokes all other previous orders and issuances contrary to it.

Issued in Quezon City, this 27th day of February 2004.


CORAZON JULIANO- SOLIMAN
Secretary


A CERTIFIED COPY:

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Records Officer III