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## **INPUTS OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTION 51/12 ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**October 09, 2023**

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### **Introduction**

1. The Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (hereinafter the “Commission” or “CHRP”)<sup>1</sup> submits its written inputs to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the “*Human Rights Council resolution 51/12 on local government and human rights*” to be used for the organization of an expert meeting and for the preparation of a summary report to be presented at the fifty-sixth session of the Council.
2. For this submission, the Commission mainly highlights its activities as a national human rights institution (NHRI) in advocating for the promotion and protection of human rights in local governance. The Commission’s own documentation of independent monitoring activities and statements, which were subjected to the internal deliberations of the Commission En Banc, were referenced in this submission. Also taken into consideration are local and international reports from government, civil society, the media, and international non-governmental organizations.

### **A. What capacity building initiatives have been taken to implement/incorporate human rights in local administration?**

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<sup>1</sup>As the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) of the Philippines, the Commission on Human Rights has the mandate vested by the 1987 Philippine Constitution and the Paris Principles to promote and protect the full range of human rights including civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights. It has the responsibility to regularly report and monitor human rights situations and violations, and recommend steps in advancing the realization of human rights and dignity of all. The Commission has “A”-status accreditation from the Sub-Committee for Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

- I. Please provide information on institutional structures for coordination and harmonization of capacity building initiatives.*
3. In the flagship program of the Commission launched this year dubbed as “*Lakaran*” or “*Lakbay Karapatan Tungo sa Kamalayan*” (Caravan for Rights towards Awareness)<sup>2</sup>, which is a human rights education and promotion at the grassroots or community level, the Central Office officials including the Chairperson and the officials of the Commission’s regional offices conduct courtesy visits to key local government officials to establish rapport, advocate for establishment of Human Rights Action Centers and passage of Human Rights Ordinances and policies.
  4. *Lakaran* is part of the vision of the Commission to bring the CHR directly to the people and communities by setting up Barangay Human Rights Action Centers (BHRACs) in as many regional locations as possible.<sup>3</sup> This initiative aims to harness local partnerships in improving the human rights situation on the ground. The BHRACs will serve as a referral mechanism for alleged human rights violations that CHR may look into and investigate. The program also aims to deepen the knowledge and awareness of the people on human rights to enable them to actively participate in ensuring a just and fair society.<sup>4</sup>
  5. The CHR also implements Community-based Dialogues (CBD) on Human Rights Legislations by Local Government Units<sup>5</sup>. The objectives of holding CBDs on this topic are: (i) to present to local legislators and legal officers unique opportunities for crafting ordinances that have human rights impact in their respective localities; (ii) for resource persons to discuss and orient the participants on the laws and issuances that call for affirmative actions on the part of local government units pursuant to the State duty to fulfill human rights; and (iii) for resource persons also to share first-hand experience in human rights legislation, discuss the process as well as challenges in the implementation of their ordinances.

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<sup>2</sup>“*Lakaran*” or “*Lakbay Karapatan Tungo sa Kamalayan*” (Caravan for Rights towards Awareness) <https://www.facebook.com/chrgovph/posts/pfbid02r3ZQ2CBVfEwUP5SVSfjHXe7mJu4JmRJRHJYonsEnzskMyTxMEcaysMgijXDo7ZaZl>, last accessed Aug. 28, 2023

<sup>3</sup> The Barangay is the smallest political unit in the Philippines.

<sup>4</sup> CHR marks 36th anniversary with intensified programs and services; commits to uphold its independence and mandate, available at <https://chr.gov.ph/chr-marks-36th-anniversary-with-intensified-programs-and-services-commits-to-uphold-its-independence-and-mandate/>, last accessed September 14, 2023

<sup>5</sup> CHR V No. AM2015-108, “Community-Based Dialogue (CBD) Sessions on Human Rights Promotion and Protection between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police, Civil Society Organizations and Local Communities”

6. It is an effective mechanism to raise the level of public awareness and enhance understanding of human rights issues through the conduct of dialogue among stakeholders to collectively discuss and strengthen collaborative efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights.
7. From 2017 to 2019, the Commission focused on the institutionalization and localization of the CBDs. Institutionalization efforts were directed at the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, and the CHRP, while localization efforts were implemented to deal with the focus areas at the local level. One of the key features of this program is the expansion of the focus areas to include economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) issues, noting that there are civil and political rights violations whose roots originally stemmed from ESCR-related concerns such as mining, agrarian/land rights, water rights, labor, and environment. From 2020 to 2022, further localization efforts were undertaken to sustain the gains of the project by strengthening the capacities of the Core Groups in the focus areas, identifying and addressing/resolving issues and concerns toward human rights promotion and protection, and enhancing active/effective participation in local development bodies.

*II. Please provide information on the involvement of civil society, the private sector, academia, etc. in capacity building initiatives.*

4. Art. XIII, Sec. 18 of the Philippine Constitution<sup>6</sup> mandates the CHRP to: (3) provide appropriate legal measures for the protection of human rights of all persons within the Philippines, as well as Filipinos residing abroad, and provide for preventive measures and legal aid services to the underprivileged whose human rights have been violated or need protection; (5) establish a continuing program of research, education, and information to enhance respect for the primacy of human rights; (7) monitor the Philippine Government's compliance with international treaty obligations on human rights; and (9) request the assistance of any department, bureau, office, or agency in the performance of its functions.
5. The Commission together with the European Union and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) initiated the "GOJUST - Human Rights"<sup>7</sup>, which is the fourth component of a comprehensive program financed by the European Union entitled "GOJUST. Strengthening of Governance in the

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<sup>6</sup> Philippine 1987 Constitution, available at <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/1987-constitution/>, last accessed September 21, 2023

<sup>7</sup> CHR "GOJUST-Human Rights" Project, available at [http://aecid.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020\\_04\\_29\\_Ficha-GOJUST-DDHH\\_En.pdf](http://aecid.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020_04_29_Ficha-GOJUST-DDHH_En.pdf), last accessed September 21, 2023

Judicial Sector”. One of the outcomes of this project is “reinforce human rights promotion and protection role of CSOs”.<sup>8</sup>

6. The Commission conducts consultations with representatives of vulnerable sectors, human rights groups, civil society organizations and academe on matters that need to be addressed and requests for their inputs to be incorporated in the capacity building initiatives. The CSOs for instance were consulted on the contents of the model Human Rights Ordinances. Civil society stakeholders are also consulted on their observations on the implementation and impact of the initiatives of the Commission.
7. To strengthen the visibility of the Commission in the regions, it has also turned to online platforms. An example of its initiatives in this regard is the establishment of The Human Rights Institute<sup>9</sup>, which is an accredited Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Provider, as part of its commitment to strengthen human rights education in the Philippines. Last February 5, 2023, the Human Rights Institute was granted authority by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) through the CPD Council of Professional Teachers, as an accredited CPD Provider.<sup>10</sup> Through this milestone, future seminars, fora, and training of the Human Rights Institute can be enrolled as CPD units which can benefit professional teachers, and other allied professionals to renew their professional registration. These education-related activities are free of charge to ensure inclusion and accessibility, especially to marginalized sectors.

*III. Please provide information on any monitoring or evaluation mechanisms assessing the effectiveness of capacity building initiatives and their impact on the promotion and protection of human rights at the local level.*

5. The Commission through the Regional Offices conducts monitoring on the effectiveness of its capacity-building initiatives at the sub-national level. The capacity building can be said to be effective if the local governments adopts the proposed human rights policies and ordinances, provides the necessary funding and logistics and actually implements them. Affected stakeholders are also consulted on the initiatives and how it can be improved.

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<sup>8</sup> Id

<sup>9</sup> The Human Rights Institute, available at <https://www.facebook.com/humanrightsinstituteph/>, last accessed September 21, 2023

<sup>10</sup> with accreditation number PTR-2023-403

The capacity building helps in the understanding of human rights issues and the gaps in human rights promotion and protection vis-à-vis the relationship of the security sectors with various community sectors. It endeavors to be a venue for the exchange of insights among government and non-government sectors to boost cooperative efforts towards a common objective of improving the promotion and protection of human rights in the region.

6. The Commission also publishes Human Rights Situation Reports<sup>11</sup> to provide an overview of the current state of human rights in the country or region. It uses these reports to assess the human rights situation, identify challenges, and make recommendations for improvement. The reports can also serve as a tool to raise awareness, monitor progress, and advocate for the protection and promotion of human rights.
7. The Commission established the Human Rights Observatory (HRO)<sup>12</sup> in the Philippines. The HRO is a monitoring and evaluation system for tracking the state's implementation of its human rights obligations through consolidating relevant documents, including laws, bills, ordinances, treaties as well as documentation of Supreme Court cases, human rights violation cases reported to the Commission, and situational reports. It uses a human rights-based approach to data analysis as it aims to make valuable contributions, such as aiding discourse on human rights, fostering advocacy, or developing policy recommendations for duty bearers.

The HRO currently focuses on the following disadvantaged, vulnerable or marginalized groups of Filipino society: indigenous peoples (Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights Observatory); women, LGBTQI persons, and persons with diverse SOGIE (Gender-Based Violence Observatory); overseas Filipino workers and members of their families (Migrants' Rights Observatory); populations affected by climate change and natural disasters (Climate Change Observatory); and persons with disabilities (Philippine Observatory on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities). The rights of children, older persons, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the situation in relation to extrajudicial killings (EJKs) in the Philippines may eventually be included as future observatories, as well.

**B. What are the capacity building gaps and needs of local governments in relation to implementing/incorporating human rights at the local level? / D.**

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<sup>11</sup> CHR Reports, available at <https://chr.gov.ph/reports/>, last accessed September 21, 2023

<sup>12</sup> Human Rights Observatory, available at <https://chr-observatories.uwazi.io/>, last accessed September 21, 2023

**What are the main challenges in your country in the promotion and protection of human rights at the local level?**

6. The Local Government Units may initiate and enact ordinances and policies on human rights, which are not in the priority list of the national government.<sup>13</sup> This may result in the lack of necessary institutional structures, mechanisms, and resources to effectively implement human rights at the local level.
7. Local government officials and staff may have limited awareness and understanding of human rights principles. There is a need for capacity building programs to enhance their knowledge and understanding of human rights, including international human rights standards and local laws.

**C. What measures are needed to further strengthen the capacity of local governments to implement/incorporate human rights at the local level?**

7. To further strengthen the capacity of local governments to implement and incorporate human rights at the local level, local government officials and employees should receive training on human rights, including understanding the principles, standards, and practices. This can help them develop a human rights mindset and approach in their work.
8. Local governments should also promote and facilitate public participation in decision-making processes. This can be done through public consultations, community dialogues, and involvement of marginalized groups. Ensuring meaningful participation of all sections of society will help in identifying and addressing human rights concerns.
9. The Commission have the ongoing Community-Based Dialogue (CBD) Project<sup>14</sup> which aims to discuss current prevailing human rights issues in the country. The CBD has been an effective mechanism to raise the level of public awareness and enhance understanding of human rights issues through the conduct of dialogue among stakeholders to collectively discuss and strengthen collaborative efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights. This mechanism aims to enhance the relationship of the security sector (the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the

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<sup>13</sup> Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines Region III “Human Rights Regional Situationer January-June 2022, pg 178

<sup>14</sup> CBD Region VI Core Group Strengthening and Institutionalizing Session Held in Iloilo, available at <https://southeastasia.hss.de/news/detail/cbd-region-vi-core-group-strengthening-and-institutionalizing-session-held-in-iloilo-news4477/>, last accessed September 14, 2023

Philippine National Police) and local communities and civil society organizations to promote human rights.

**D. Please provide examples, good practices, challenges, and recommendations with regard to the above-mentioned issues.**

10. Article XIII, Section 18 (5) of the 1987 Philippine Constitution and Section 3 of Executive Order No. 163 empower the CHRP to establish a continuing program of research, education, and information to enhance respect for the primacy of human rights. Human rights education is a primary function of the CHRP, which is being implemented through its Human Rights Promotion Office.
11. The Commission in 1994 conceptualized the Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC)<sup>15</sup>. It aimed to empower people in the grassroots in promoting and protecting human rights and at the same time bring the services of the Commission closer to the people. In particular its objective was to reach the people in the far-flung areas, for the people in the remote area to save time, effort and expenses in filing their complaints of human rights violations and become fully aware of their human rights.
12. Human Rights Actions Center is a unit that acts on human rights matters, including human rights promotion and complaints of human rights violations. It is a mechanism that ensures the performance of Local Government Units (LGUs) of their mandated duties to respect, protect and fulfill human rights within their jurisdictions. In order to further strengthen this, the Commission established the BHRAC. In addition, the Commission has established several cooperation agreements with the Department of Interior and Local Government throughout the years to further promote the program.<sup>16</sup>
13. Up to this day, the Commission still continues to work toward its objective to popularize BHRAC. With the goal of strengthening the culture of human rights on the ground, CHRP Chairperson Richard P. Palpal-Iatoc met with Assistant Secretary Billy Racho of the Department of the Interior and Local Government and

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<sup>15</sup> Barangay Human Rights Action Center (BHRAC), available at <https://elibrary.chr.gov.ph/cgi-bin/koha/opac-retrieve-file.pl?id=c1e6c021f7692d5cf695c38aca2e8379> , last accessed Sept. 11, 2023

<sup>16</sup> Barangay Human Rights Action Center Program Legal Bases pg 9, available at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.ph/UNDP4/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/BHRAC-Legal-Bases.pdf>, last accessed September 21, 2023

Joint Memorandum Circular No.1.s.2014, available at [https://www.dilg.gov.ph/PDF\\_File/issuances/joint\\_circulars/dilg-joincircular-20141219\\_d0214ba253.pdf](https://www.dilg.gov.ph/PDF_File/issuances/joint_circulars/dilg-joincircular-20141219_d0214ba253.pdf), last accessed September 21, 2023

the UN Joint Programme on Human Rights to discuss possible collaborations in strengthening the establishment of BHRACs, as well as Human Rights Cities across the country.<sup>17</sup>

14. Human rights city refers to the general understanding that a city shall morally and legally be governed by human rights principles and approach. It is a global initiative aimed at localizing human rights, solely based on the recognition of the key roles of local authorities in the promotion and protection of human rights. The UN's Human Rights Council Advisory Committee prepared a report on the role of cities and local governments in the promotion and protection of human rights. The report has been adopted during the UN General Assembly in 2015<sup>18</sup> and provides a framework on human rights cities principles and guidance.

The Commission together with the UN Joint Programme (2021-2024)<sup>19</sup> has done numerous programs/activities in its work of promoting Human Rights Cities such as;

- I. Learning Sessions to capacitate the commissions employees in their advocacy work
- II. Engagements with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute on Human Rights with respect to development of Human Rights Cities.
- III. Establishing Indicators or criteria to constitute Human Rights Cities.
- IV. Connect with Human Rights Cities Network
- V. Sustained learning activities and continued advocacy work for the establishment of Human Rights City

15. CHR continues to push for bills that will uphold and protect human rights, which include: the CHR Charter, the bill for the establishment of the National Preventive Mechanism; CHR Human Rights Institute; and the Human Rights Defenders (HRD) Bill, among others. Efforts to localize the HRD Bill together with CHRP partners are also being done on the ground to institutionalize state obligations at the local level as well as for the protection of the rights of HRDs as a response to

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<sup>17</sup> CULTIVATING HUMAN RIGHTS IN COMMUNITIES ON THE GROUND, available at <https://www.facebook.com/chrgovph/posts/pfbid02nNvjhbiJ84EFF9vMLyN955EvEnLr4xWrDzMtYUz1SgbxRcoYky8BxVRdVPN3KfjHl>, last accessed Sept. 11, 2023

<sup>18</sup> Role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights – Final report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, available at [https://www.ohchr.org/en/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_30\\_49\\_ENG.docx](https://www.ohchr.org/en/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A_HRC_30_49_ENG.docx), last accessed October 2, 2023

<sup>19</sup> Philippines, UN launch first-ever national joint programme for human rights following Human Rights Council resolution 45/33, available at <https://philippines.un.org/en/137080-philippines-un-launch-first-ever-national-joint-programme-human-rights-following-human>, last accessed October 2, 2023



the attacks, red-tagging, vilification, and threats to their lives and security.<sup>20</sup> Another example of the Commission's efforts to localize bills on human rights is the SOGIE Equality bill<sup>21</sup>. Through the continued coordination with the local governments, local ordinances prohibiting discrimination based on SOGIE have been passed.<sup>22</sup>

16. The Commission constantly coordinates with LGUs to promote the passing of Human Rights Defenders Ordinances which serves as a recognition of Human Rights Defenders for their valuable contribution in striving for the protection and promotion of human rights. Its promotion serves as the Commission's commitment and efforts in the shared responsibility of protecting and promoting the rights of human rights defenders by actively advocating for the localization of the pending Human Rights Defenders (HRD) Bill. There are already LGUs in the country with such ordinance, namely: Isabela City, Basilan<sup>23</sup> and Digos City, Puerto Princesa.
17. The CHRP and the Department of Interior and Local Government have also issued the Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-01<sup>24</sup> "Ensuring Gender-Responsive Interventions to COVID-19 and the New Normal Including Ensuring Prompt, Effective, and Survivor-Centered Response to All Forms of Gender-Based Violence", which was signed to make concrete directives and recommendations towards gender responsive and intersectional interventions during the COVID-19 crisis and even during the recovery period, including responses to the new normal and was set to cover all local government units.

DILG has also issued policy issuances, with the technical assistance and advocacy of the Commission, represented by Human Rights Policy Advisory Office and the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Center of the CHR such as;

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<sup>20</sup> Supra note 3

<sup>21</sup> The SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression) Equality Bill is a proposed law in the Philippines that aims to prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. In May 2023, the House of Representatives Committee on Population and Family Relations approved the proposed Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) bill.

<sup>22</sup> Such as Quezon City, Cebu, Davao, Dinagat Islands, Bataan, among others

<sup>23</sup> CHR lauds Isabela City, Basilan for enacting the pioneer ordinance on Human Rights Defenders' Protection, available at <https://chr.gov.ph/the-commission-on-human-rights-lauds-isabela-city-basilan-for-enacting-the-pioneer-ordinance-on-human-rights-defenders-protection/>, last accessed September 25, 2023

<sup>24</sup> Ensuring Gender-Responsive Interventions to COVID-19 and the New Normal Including Ensuring Prompt, Effective, and Survivor-Centered Response to All Forms of Gender-Based Violence, available at <https://chr.gov.ph/ensuring-gender-responsive-interventions-to-covid-19-and-the-new-normal-including-ensuring-prompt-effective-and-survivor-centered-response-to-all-forms-of-gender-based-violence/>, last accessed September 15, 2023

- DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2020-110: "Mobility of Older Persons in Quarantine Situations"<sup>25</sup> - the Memorandum Circular enjoins LGUs to designate the Offices of Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCAs) to be included in the respective "LGU Task Force Against COVID-19," which will ensure that older persons are represented in the strategizing and planning of the LGU in responding to the crisis;
- DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2020-066: Guidelines on Providing Proper Welfare of Persons with Disabilities during the ECQ due to the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>26</sup> - Under the Memorandum Circular, provincial governors are mandated to ensure that their city and municipal mayors will cover persons with disabilities in their list of beneficiaries. The memorandum also states that LGUs should provide transportation services to persons with disabilities in case of emergencies as mass transport services are suspended during the ongoing quarantine period.<sup>27</sup>

18. Some of the challenges that the Commission has observed or documented are:

- Some local government officials might be resistant to change or may not prioritize human rights.<sup>28</sup>
- Local governments often face budget constraints, making it challenging to allocate resources specifically for human rights promotion.
- Even if human rights policies exist, their enforcement can be a problem.
- Local culture and traditional practices may conflict with internationally recognized human rights standards.<sup>29</sup> For example, CHR expresses its growing concern regarding the continuous harmful practices against

<sup>25</sup> DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2020-110, available at <https://www.ulap.net.ph/ulap-news/advisories/541-dilg-memorandum-circular-no-2020-110.html>, last accessed September 25, 2023

Statement of Commissioner Karen S. Gomez Dumpit, Focal Commissioner on the Human Rights of Older Persons, on the Issuance of the DILG Memorandum Circular on the Mobility of Older Persons in Quarantine Situations, available at <https://chr.gov.ph/statement-of-commissioner-karen-s-gomez-dumpit-focal-commissioner-on-the-human-rights-of-older-persons-on-the-issuance-of-the-dilg-memorandum-circular-on-the-mobility-of-older-persons-in-quarantine/>, last accessed September 25, 2023

<sup>26</sup> DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2020-066, available at <https://chr-observatories.uwazi.io/en/entity/fsf2rz4syam?page=1>, last accessed September 25, 2023

<sup>27</sup> LGUs urged to prioritize PWDs in relief aid during quarantine, available at <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1260226/dilg-reminds-igus-to-prioritize-pwds-in-relief-goods-distribution-during-ecq#ixzz8EHYmOoVR>, last accessed September 25, 2023

<sup>28</sup> E.g. PRIF Report GOVERNORS AND MAYORS IN THE PHILIPPINES. RESISTANCE TO OR SUPPORT FOR DUTERTE'S DEADLY WAR ON DRUGS, PETER KREUZER, [https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk\\_publicationen/prif0520\\_barrierefrei.pdf](https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_publicationen/prif0520_barrierefrei.pdf), last accessed September 15, 2023

<sup>29</sup> Cultural rights as human rights, available at <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000001194?posInSet=1&queryId=a4ebeb6f6-bc78-4ca2-8005-d9f3a5a8e266>, last accessed September 15, 2023

persons with diverse SOGIESC in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)<sup>30</sup>. In CHR consultations,<sup>31</sup> CSOs revealed resistance of the Bangsamoro Human Rights Commission (BHRC) to promote the rights of and respond to human rights violations involving persons with diverse SOGIE.

- In the Philippines, the [Department of Interior and Local Government \(DILG\)](#), is the focal executive agency that is mandated to provide supervision over local government units (LGUs) in the country. However, the LGUs “shall enjoy genuine and meaningful local autonomy to enable them to attain their fullest development as self-reliant communities and make them more effective partners in the attainment of national goals.”<sup>32</sup> In addition, in 2021, the Office of the President signed Executive Order No. 138.<sup>33</sup> These changes will somehow affect, as the LGUs may adopt different levels of institutional coordinations and CHR will have to observe these processes.

## 19. Recommendations:

### **The Commission sets forth the following recommendations to improve incorporation/implementation of human rights in local governance:**

- Local government units should strengthen collaboration with local human rights organizations, civil society organizations, community groups and NGOs to build partnerships and leverage their expertise and experiences on the ground.
- The NHRI, the national government, local government officials and other partners can enhance their coordination towards developing and implementing policies and guidelines that insert human rights in aspects of local governance or to mainstream the human rights-based approach in local governance.
- More support from local governments are needed in the initiatives to monitor and report human rights violations within their jurisdiction. This can include

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<sup>30</sup> The Bangsamoro Transition Authority is the interim governing body of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

<sup>31</sup> Regional Human Rights Report of CHR X for 2023 reports challenges faced by Amnesty International and other HR organizations in engaging the BHRC on issues of SOGIESC; Same issue was raised during the 2023 CEDAW Consultation

<sup>32</sup> An Act Providing for a Local Government Code of 1991, [Local Government Code of 1991], Republic Act 7160, §2 (1991).

<sup>33</sup> Office of the President, Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Governments, Creation of a Committee on Devolution, and for other Purposes, [Executive Order No. 138], June 1, 2021.

setting up hotlines, online reporting platforms, or independent oversight bodies to receive complaints and allegations of abuse.

- Conduct more awareness programs and highlight not only the human rights of all but also the local government's obligation to respect, protect and fulfill human rights.
- National Ministries or Departments on local governance (such as the Department of the Interior and Local Government in the Philippines) are recommended to consider the development of a systematic, rights-respecting, and participatory mechanism to understand the rights of people with diverse SOGIE, and other marginalized, disadvantaged, and vulnerable sectors, and must be ready to provide equal protection through local laws and policies.
- For the national government to monitor compliance by local government units with the delivery of needed socio-economic assistance and support with attention to non-discrimination of marginalized and vulnerable sectors in accessing goods and services.
- The national government must continually guide law enforcement officers to keep abreast with the laws and appropriate guidelines for case management of victims of gender-based violence.