The Strengthening the Children and Youth Participation in Governance Program

1. Background

Consistent with the Philippine Constitution, the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act 7160) instituted mechanisms for a meaningful participation of the youth sector in local governance. On January 15, 2016, the Code was indirectly amended with the passage of the SK Reform Law (RA 10742) which sought to "establish adequate, effective, responsive and enabling mechanisms and support systems that will ensure the meaningful participation of the youth in local governance and in nation-building"[1].

The reform also created a Local Youth Development Council to support the SK programs composed of representatives from different youth organizations in the community including student councils, church and youth faith groups, youth-serving organizations, and community-based youth groups. The age of the council was also amended from 15 - 17 years old to 18 - 24 years old.

The intentions of the SK Reform Law, however, could only be realized when (i) youth leaders and the youth councils themselves have not only the technical know-how but most importantly the capacity to actively and effectively involve in governance equipped with relevant and important information to craft standard as well as beyond conventional programs; (ii) there are effective mechanisms for participation mainstreamed in LGU processes; and (iii) such capacities and mechanisms work for their LGUs to actually integrate and implement innovative and longer term programs for the children and the youth.

2. Program Objectives

As a contribution to the realization of the SK Reform Act, the Galing Pook Foundation (GPF), The National Youth Commission (NYC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) entered into a collaboration and came up with the **Strengthening the Children and Youth Participation in Governance Program.** The program is basically designed to ensure that:

- Adolescent youth leaders and members of youth development council (SK, KK, LYDO) capacity in local planning and budgeting is strengthened;
- Mechanisms for adolescent youth participation in governance is mainstreamed in LGU processes (local planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring); and,
- The ability of LGUs to implement and develop innovative and adaptive programs for children and adolescent youth has improved.

3. Program Mechanics

3.1. Areas. The program was implemented in select areas recommended by the UNICEF namelyNorthern Samar, Samar, Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga City. The provincial governments, in consultation with the LYDO and SK Federation, each selected a pilot

[1] Section 2, RA 10742 otherwise known as "The Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015".

municipality/city for the program implementation. Samar had Catbalogan City, Northern Samar took as pilot the Municipality of Catarman while Zamboanga del Norte selected Dipolog City

3.2. Implementation of the Galing Pook AILC Course. Galing Pook has been implementing the Adaptive and Innovative Learning Course (AILC) -- a designed for local chief executives (LCEs), pertinent members of the LGU, and select civil society organizations operating in the partner LGUs. AILC became the core capacity building component of the project. Apart from the LCEs (governor and mayor of pilot cities/municipalities), the City/Municipal SK Federation presidents were also included as participants for this project.

The Adaptive and Innovative Learning Course has four modules:

3.2.1. **Module 1: Grounding and Visioning** – basically designed to assist the leaders realize their campaign promises (especially for LCEs) that is grounded and backed with data/evidence.

3.2.2. **Module 2: Creating Innovations** – designed to expose the leaders to innovative ideas, projects or programs and involve experiential learnings and interactive processes with award-winning LGUs and implementers.

3.2.3. **Module 3: Developing Adaptive Capacities** – designed to assist the leaders in classifying and responding to challenges particularly those that are adaptive in nature.

3.2.4. **Module 4: Developing Results, Creating Public Value** – the final module designed to ensure that the programs selected by the LGU participants could deliver results and value to the constituents. This is usually conducted back-to-back with the Governance Fair.

3.2.5. Pre-Module Deployments. Prior to the deployment of Module 1 and Module 2, a **pre-Module deployment** was implemented with partner youth development organizations namely the Positive Youth Development Network (PYDN), SUGPAT Adolescent Development and Participation Program (SUGPAT), SIKLAB Pilipinas, and Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER).

- For Pre-Module 1, the deployment focused generally on activities (i.e., workshop) towards data generation, validation and visioning and facilitated largely by the partner youth development organizations.
- For Pre-Module 2, the deployment focused more on project planning towards creating innovations.

3.2.6. **Mentoring.** After every module, mentoring was done by Galing Pook and AILC Mentors. These mentors regularly contacted the LGUs and assisted the local project stakeholders in developing and implementing their Galing Kabataan initiatives.

3.3. Methodology. The Adaptive and Innovative Learning Course is not mainly an inputs-based course. Aside from exposure and experiential learning from award-winning programs and implementers, the participants were required to develop a program or project, a localized version of Galing Kabataan initiative that became the banner program/project of the LGU. The Galing Kabataan initiative anchored mainly on the nine core centers of participation under the Philippine Youth Development Plan. More information about the Galing Kabataan initiative can be found here.

For more information about the program please contact Galing Pook Foundation and look for:

Jay Carizo
Program Coordinator
jay.carizo@galingpook.org