



GOJUST – Human Rights Project

Second Semester Narrative Report

July to December 2017

Signed:

JOSE LUIS MARTIN C. GASCON

Chairperson, CHR

PREPARED BY THE
PROJECT MANAGEMENT DIVISION (PMD),
PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE (PASCO)



Second Semester Narrative Report

July to December 2017

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

The peculiar circumstances of the current human rights situation and political landscape of the Philippines, underscored the need to revisit and revise the GOJUST Human Rights Project Logical Framework and Work and Financial Plan to make it more responsive. During the Third Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting held on 6 June 2017, it was agreed that the proposed amended framework and work and financial plan be adopted as they reflect the necessary changes to ensure more effective implementation of the said project.

From July to December 2017, the project's updated framework was implemented with the following details:

Intermediate Outcome 1 – The institutional, operational and technical capacity of the CHR and its staff, including through building of partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) are strengthened

Output 1.1 Human resource management reengineered

Output 1.2 CHR personnel competency updated in key areas

Through the Human Resource Development Division (HRDD), the CHR endeavors to reengineer the human resource management to enhance the technical capacities of the personnel and further professionalize the work culture and environment. The ground plan was designed and approved during the last quarter of 2017 although this shall be fully carried out in 2018.

As planned, the following shall be developed to address gaps in CHR’s systems and practices which are under transactional level in personnel administration:

- Human Resource Management Manual/Employees’ Handbook;
- Guidebook/Manual on Personnel Selection Process;
- Guidebook on Health and Wellness; and
- 3-Year Competency Development Plan.

Output 1.3 Business processes reengineered

Related activities shall be initiated in 2018.

Output 1.4 Cooperation and coordination mechanisms with key government institutions established

The CHR organized a workshop with the Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC) to revisit or review the existing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the two (2) institutions. Likewise, the workshop served as an avenue to discuss various concerns on jurisdictional issues, partnership opportunities, protocol and



cooperation points, joint capacity development programs, among others. The AECID-GOJUST Technical Assistance Team (TAT) facilitated the two-day workshop which was held on 10-11 October 2017 at Hotel Conchita in Cagayan de Oro.

The two-day workshop raised several operational issues between the CHR and the RHRC which include the conduct of joint investigations and human rights promotion activities, issuance of human rights policies, data sharing on cases of human rights violations being handled by respective institutions, provision of financial assistance to victims, participation in capacity building activities, representation in international human rights fora, among others. The activity likewise generated sound and creative recommendations that both institutions can work on. These included the following:

- Strengthening of referral system in view of providing legal assistance to the public;
- Assisting the RHRC in lobbying for the provision of financial assistance to victims of human rights violations in the ARMM;
- Defining a joint witness protection program;
- Operationalizing a transitional justice program;
- Eliminating jurisdictional overlaps through clear communication and cooperation mechanisms;
- Undertaking joint human rights monitoring missions; and
- Collaborating in coming up with human rights situation reports.

Output 1.5 Capacity for protection services upgraded

The contracted Critical Human Rights Documentation Analyst reviewed CHR documents and processes. Based on the review made, the following were the findings:

- There is limited understanding of human rights and this entails waste of resources particularly in terms of awarding of financial assistance to victims of human rights violations and the cost of conducting investigations of common crimes;
- There is limited understanding of the CHR mandate based on the heavy reliance on police efforts, deference to victim's family to prosecute as a policy of continuing investigations, and deference to witness to testify as a policy of gathering witness' statements/affidavits;
- There is limited use of the CHR powers in terms of issuing subpoena and/or contempt;
- There are factual and legal analytical gaps, such as in terms of CHR's resolutions lacking the proper legal analysis, FIRs lack the proper factual analysis although they include legal conclusions, among others; and
- There is insufficient compliance with CHR's rules and procedures particularly on how to treat a case with insufficient evidence.

In view of the above stated, the Analyst provided the following recommendations for the CHR to consider:

- Establish an analysis unit at the CHR Central Office to evaluate patterns of abuses;
- Enhance the authority of the CHR Commission en Banc in terms of using subpoena and contempt powers;

- Conduct of onboarding and continuing education on human rights protection services;
- Streamline investigation practices in all CHR regional offices, such as using standard trigger questions, strictly applying Rules 4, 17, 18 and 21 of the Omnibus Rules, and consider using provisions from the International Criminal Court (ICC) for other reasonable basis;
- Develop a form of revisiting mechanism for previous cases, including the strengthening and expansion of witness protection program to address witness' fear of reprisal and establishing a monitoring system;
- Revise CHR Form No. 9 to include having a Filipino version similar to a police incident report form, additional entries on whether the case has been previously reported to the police and if actions are undertaken as well as on special circumstances;
- Revise the CHR FIR in which each possible human rights violation in a given incident is specified, all evidentiary basis relied upon for the factual findings are listed, and the recommendation portion is deleted; and
- Attach the FIR to the Resolution to facilitate referencing by the analysis unit.

In addition, the CHR conducted the Basic Training on CHR Witness Protection Program – Luzon Cluster last 11 – 15 December 2017. The activity was attended by 52 participants consisting of selected CHR lawyers, regional directors, security officers and special investigators from Luzon. The basic objective was to ensure that the participants fully understand the context of the Witness Protection Program. There were two (2) resource person invited to share their respective expertise on the matter. They were Mr. Wolfgang Jobs and Atty. Martin Meñez who lectured on the international context and national application of witness protection, respectively.

Output 1.6 Interim National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) operationalized

To move towards the development of a monitoring and evaluation system specifically for the NPM, the CHR contracted the services of a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist for a period of six (6) months during the last quarter of 2017. The specialist has formulated a set of indicators and monitoring tools to measure the performance of NPM, prepare the activity design for the related workshops to be conducted, and facilitate the conduct of the workshops.

Output 1.7 Policy work capacity of CHR developed

On 1 – 4 August 2017, the CHR conducted a high level training workshop to enhance the capacity of the personnel on the use of international mechanisms for strengthening advocacies on promoting and protecting human rights. The International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) facilitated the conduct of the



four-day training. There were 27 participants, including the members of the Commission en Banc, directors and division chiefs of the CHR Central Office as well as representatives from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). They all actively took part in intensive, immersive discussions, workshops and sharing of experiences designed to build and strengthen skills in engaging and making use of international human rights mechanisms in view of their respective positions. CHR Commissioner Karen S. Gomez-Dumpit presented an overview of the work of the Commission as a national human rights institution (NHRI) through years of engaging international human rights mechanisms. Dr. June Lopez, member of the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture (SPT), a United Nations Treaty Body, provided an insightful presentation on the unique role of the SPT in taking States to task in complying with the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

Moreover, the CHR contracted the services of a Policy Development Specialist during the third quarter of 2017 for a period of five (5) months to develop the policy manuals for advocacy, strategy, monitoring and mechanisms in mobilizing duty bearers, rights holders for the CHR's Policy Cluster. A Legislative Advocacy Plan has now been developed and shall be used to pursue the Legislatives.

Output 1.8 Human rights modules for incorporation in school curriculum (K-12)

In the past year, the Promotion Office came up with an assessment of the Human Rights Modules incorporated in the K-12 Curriculum and based on the assessment conducted, the Human Rights Modules shall be updated. Related activities shall be initiated in 2018.

Output 1.9 Work environment upgraded

During the last quarter of 2017, the CHR was able to expend/download the Fifteen Million Pesos (PhP15,000,000.00) allocated for the building construction in Region 1. This is based on the agreement with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in said region as well as with the Provincial Board of San Fernando, La Union. The lot is nominally leased to the CHR Regional Office 1 for a period of 25 years.



Before 2017 ended, the regional office in CARAGA likewise managed to secure a Deed of Donation from the Provincial Board in Butuan as well as the corresponding agreement with the DPWH. The funds shall be downloaded to them in early 2018.

Output 1.10 Mechanisms for donor support established

Related activities shall be initiated in 2018.

Outcome 3 – The human rights promotion and protection role of the CSOs is reinforced, including through strategic litigation, monitoring of human rights violations and support to victims

Output 3.1 Multi-sectoral-wide strategic alliances for social advocacy, social mobilization, and social action operationalized

The CHR, through the support of the GOJUST Human Rights Project, co-organized the Solidarity Conferences on Human Rights, Peace, Justice and Democracy in Quezon City and Davao City. The former was co-organized with the Bangsa, Mindanao Peoples’ Peace Movement (MPPM), Alliance of the Tri-people for the Advancement of Human Rights (ALTAHR), and In Defense of Human Rights and Dignity Movement (iDEFEND). The latter, on the other hand, was under the auspices of the Lumad



Mindanao Peace Foundation (LMPF), together with its primary organizations among indigenous peoples in the region and CSO partners. There were around 100 participants during the Quezon City event which was held on 16 July 2017 at the University Hotel. For the Davao City activity held on 27 – 30 July 2017, there were 25 participants who are leaders from various indigenous peoples’ groups.

The above stated events endeavored to (1) unify support for Mindanao’s calls for peace, justice and democracy, (2) agree on approaches to critical issues of terrorism and human rights violations, (3) map all CSOs in relation to human rights advocacies, and (4) establish information channels to better respond to urgent human rights concerns related to the declaration of Martial Law in the Mindanao region. In view of moving towards the formal

mapping of CSOs, the CHR contracted a Field Researcher/CSO Mapper for a period of four (4) months commencing in September 2017.

Likewise, to ensure that the social mobilization aspect is achieved, the CHR geared towards partnership building for human rights. The CHR formalized the partnership accreditation mechanism in which out of the initial fifteen (15) CSOs that applied, ten (10) were accredited, namely, the Center for Popular Empowerment (CPE) Inc., Coalition Against Trafficking in Women – Asia Pacific (CATW-AP), Initiative for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS), Inc., LMPF, Dakila – Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism, Inc., Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA), Institute of Politics and Governance (IPG), Active Vista Center, Inc., G-Watch, Inc., and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Youth Philippines, Inc.

To further build on the partnership for human rights, the CHR posted six (6) Scopes of Work (SoWs) for partner CSOs to bid and accomplish the required tasks for the promotion and protection of human rights. The SoWs include building partnership for human rights in the National Capital Region, Northern and Central Luzon Regions, Southern Luzon Region, Visayas Region and Mindanao Region, and community-parish partnership building for human rights education, promotion and protection in the CAMANAVA (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela), Manila and Quezon City communities. Out of the said number of SoWs, four (4) were awarded to CATW-AP and one (1) each for CPE and LMPF.

To ensure that this output is managed well, the CHR considered contracting the following specialists:

- Communications Specialist – for a three-month term to support the development of a multi-sectoral communications plan;
- Social Media Specialist – for a six-month term to further enhance the effort to popularize human rights through various mediums, including social media platforms;
- Outcome 3 Project Development Specialist – for a five-month term to oversee the overall implementation of activities under Outcome 3 of the GOJUST Human Rights Project;
- Social Mobilization Team Leader – for a five-month term to lead the Social Mobilization Team (SMT) in the effective implementation of activities that will result in multi-sectoral-wide strategic alliances for social advocacy, social mobilization and social action as well as in university-based human rights promotion;

- Social Mobilization Team Coordinator – for a five-month term to assist the SMT Leader in coordinating with different stakeholders and perform necessary tasks for the accomplishment of targets under the Outcome 3; and
- Social Mobilization Team Project Officer – for a five-month term to provide administrative and finance support for the implementation of activities under this component.

Moreover, the following activities were undertaken with various CSOs under the GOJUST Human Rights Project:

- CSO Coordination Meeting – on 29 August 2017, representatives from the CHR, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), Legal Network for Truthful Elections (LENTE), Dakila, and the Outcome 3 SMT discussed the need for having a unified identity for the cause of human rights as well as the need to determine how the CHR and CSOs work on differences and similarities to be a strong network. The meeting likewise highlighted the need to determine what will unify the CSOs and to map them accordingly in terms of pushing for human rights and human dignity with the CHR as the unifying agency;
- Mini Caucus with CSOs – on 14 September 2017, the CHR convened with the various CSOs, GOJUST TAT, and the Outcome 3 SMT to determine where CHR, in collaboration with CSOs, may take on in terms of pushing for efforts to combat EJKs and other human rights violations, share experiences of CSOs, and strategies to bridge CSOs with other groups;
- Multi-Sectoral Strategic Communications Planning Workshop – from 25 – 26 September 2017 at Hive Hotel in Quezon City, Ms. Malou Mangahas from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) facilitated the conduct of the two-day workshop to guide the development of a unified multi-sectoral strategic communications plan for the human rights community and to equip partners with a common message and approach in promoting human rights. Around thirty (30) participants from the CHR and CSOs were invited to develop a unified key message and design the campaign as well as communications plan that are in line with the Commission’s strategies;



- Human Rights Short Film Competition – from November – 10 December 2017, the competition invited Filipino revolutionary filmmakers to shed light on versions and visions of truth that responds to the call of



the times. This was a search for an artistic expression through short films the power to inspire real change amidst the surge of a social storm that dampens freedom and challenges human rights and dignity. The filmmakers were requested to submit films portraying human rights issues of violence, justice, tyranny, historical revisionism, right to life, right to information, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), social acceptance, poverty, right to equal opportunity, freedom of expression, human dignity, migration, anti-colonialism, education, labor rights, human trafficking and slavery, and the war on drugs and EJKs. There were 64 entries coming from filmmakers from different regions, sectors and gender with genres varying from comedy, drama, action, animation, satire and experimental. The 10 finalists were recognized during the Alab ng Puso concert last 9 December 2017 at the Times Square, Araneta Center in Quezon City. The formal awarding took place at Cinema Centenario in Quezon City on 10 December 2017. The Best Film was awarded to *Si Astri Maka Si Tambulah* by Xeph Suarez which depicted the fate of transwomen in the Muslim community. The second Best Film went to *Aliens Ata* by Glenn Barit which showed the poignant tale on different kinds of loss. The third Best Film was given to *Retrospektib* by Daryll Jameson Apaga which presented a comical journey through the nightmares of dictatorship.

- 2017 Human Rights Festival – from 22 November – 10 December 2017, the Active Vista organized a series of exhibits, film screenings, theater talks, workshops, concert, bike ride and a youth empowerment summit. The opening night kicked off with the photo exhibit, “Moving Pictures: Artists for Human Dignity” from some of the country’s notable artists and journalists, such as Xyza Bacani, Hannah Reyes Morales, and Luis Liwanag. The Moving Pictures was first placed at the ShangCineplex, Shangri-la Mall in Mandaluyong City. After the opening, the



exhibit was moved to the University of the Philippines, Manila from 23 – 25 November, University of Makati from 28 November – 2 December, De La Salle College of St. Benilde in Taft, Manila from 4 – 8 December. The exhibit was displayed at the CHR for the rest of December. Likewise, the Sundance-winning documentary “Motherland” by US-based Filipina filmmaker, Ramona Diaz, premiered on the same night. The activity endeavored to awaken the public to the truth by providing them an understanding of human rights through various art forms and platforms. The platforms reflected narratives on human struggles and the importance of upholding human dignity; and

- C4HR General Assembly and Planning: Capacity Building to Design and Implement CSO Networking under the GOJUST Human Rights Project – the C4HR (CHR-CSOs Consultative Caucus for Human Rights) was formalized through a publication of a Statement of Unity during a media conference held at the CHR’s Central Office on 7 December 2017. The initial



conveners and signatories of the caucus include Arya Progresibo, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines – National Secretariat for Social Action, Center for People Empowerment, Institute of Politics and Governance, LENTE, PAHRA,

SENTRO, Task Force Election, Ateneo Human Rights Center, Center for Migrant Advocacy, IDEALS, LIBERTAS, Participatory Education on Rights Awareness and Social Action, Rural-Urban Peoples Linkages, Inc., and Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan. The C4HR is envisioned to be the broadest coalition composed of the CHR, traditional and progressive human rights groups, and other concerned individuals coming together for the cause of human rights in the country. The assembly also served as a venue for planning and training of trainers on documentation and human rights education. It was an opportunity to share and validate the results of regional consultations on human rights issues. Likewise, on 9 – 11 December 2017, a three-day Trainers’ Training on Human Rights Education and Mobilization was conducted by LENTE. Overall, the above stated activities aimed to: (1) provide a space to deepen the understanding of human rights situation in the country based on a summary of the regional consultations; (2) capacitate trainers among civil society organizations on specific methods of documentation; and (3) develop a broad implementation plan for C4HR around the three (3) core areas of accountability, human rights education and networking. Although the planning component was held in abeyance due to conflicting schedules, the conveners of the C4HR committed pursuing this during the first quarter of 2018.

There were several meetings conducted in view of furthering the implementation of the social mobilization aspect of Outcome 3 of the GOJUST Human Rights Project.

Output 3.2 University-based human rights promotion established

Last 30 November 2017, the Heroes Hub Youth Empowerment Summit took place at the Novotel Hotel, Araneta Center in Quezon City with 267 attendees. It was a half-day event initiated by Dakila and Active Vista to form a network of youth leaders in Metro Manila and empower them with discussions and creative platforms



to further their respective advocacies in human rights. The program aimed to: (1) pay importance to the role of youth in shaping discourse on pressing social issues and in

formulating actions towards the common good; (2) empower the youth towards the realization of the importance of recognizing, upholding and protecting human rights; (3) serve as a platform for formulating, exchanging and collaborating creative ideas, innovations and practical solutions that can address societal concerns and problems; (4) redefine the concept of heroism through upholding, protecting and defending the rights and welfare of others; (5) amplify the voice of the youth in social issues by engaging them in movements geared towards nation building; and (6) inspire the young generation into contributing to efforts geared toward the promotion of human rights, freedom and democracy.

Output 3.3 Partnerships for documentation of human rights violations established

On 23 – 24 November 2017, a two-day Human Rights Summit, organized by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), was conducted at the SMX Convention Center at SM Aura Premier in Taguig City. The event was open to all chapters of the IBP as well as to other legal-centric organizations, law firms, legal aid program, and the academe. The Summit was attended by around 200 lawyers from all over the



country and it aimed to: (1) capacitate lawyers/legal actors to provide appropriate and accessible legal services to victims of human rights violations, through the learning sessions; (2) develop a coordinating mechanism among the different IBP chapters and the various law groups; (3) discuss collective and strategic actions that can be taken by the legal community, including documentation, case build-up, legal advice, among others; and (4) draw a pool of lawyers who are committed to provide legal services, either through documentation, rights awareness and education, legal counselling, case handling or policy influencing. The activity produced a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between the CHR and the IBP.

Output 3.4 Response mechanisms to extra-judicial killings and other critical human rights concerns expanded

The CHR organized a strategic planning workshop with partner law groups on 27 July 2017 at the University Hotel in Quezon City. The activity aimed to: (1) familiarize the participants with the GOJUST Human Rights Project; and (2) strengthen the CHR’s partnerships with the law groups as well as to plan out strategies which will complement and supplement work of the Commission based on various assessments, including the operationalization of the CHR’s MOAs with them. Specifically, it served as an avenue to: (1) update the undertakings being done by the law groups in relation with human rights; (2) orient the law groups on the existing projects of the CHR that are related to legal protection, among others; (3) discuss on the documentation of alleged cases of human rights violations; (4) adopt a system for referral of alleged cases of human rights violations and the coordination for strategic litigation; (5) agree on approaches to critical legal issues that have implications on human rights; (6) determine opportunities for collaboration between the law groups and the CHR; and (7) establish information channels to better respond to urgent human rights concerns.



The CHR Regional Office 3 organized the Consultative Meeting for the Investigation and Comprehensive Documentation of EJKs last 10 August 2017 in San Fernando, Pampanga. The consultative meeting was held to know the challenges or issues



faced by the CHR regional offices in the investigation of EJKs and the need to address them. It was deemed necessary for CHR lawyers and investigators to be better equipped in undertaking comprehensive documentation particularly in investigating EJK cases in their respective areas of responsibility. During the activity, the contracted Critical Human Rights Documentation Analyst presented her findings on CHR’s processes and forms as

well as her corresponding recommendations. The standard investigation and documentation process flows shall be shared with partner CSOs and/or law groups as they multiply CHR's protection services on the ground.

In addition, to ensure that a mechanism for documenting critical human rights violation is in place to be utilized by the CHR and partner CSOs and/or law groups, there will be a Technical Specialist to be hired who shall develop the said mechanism. The envisioned mechanism shall provide support to documenters of human rights violations to serve as basis for "truth telling", understanding the needed support to victims, and holding perpetrators accountable.

Outcome 4 – The human rights monitoring and data management is strengthened through the establishment of an Observatory for Human Rights in the Philippines

Output 4.1 Human rights observatory set up

Related activities shall be initiated in 2018.

Output 4.2 Partnership with key sources of data and resource materials established

Related activities shall be initiated in 2018.

Output 4.3 Data collection, management and monitoring system established and initial data collected

To understand the perceptions of and know the understanding of and attitude of the public towards human rights institutions and human rights per se, the CHR required the conduct of a baseline study to aid initiatives being developed under the GOJUST Human Rights Project particularly on the establishment of the Human Rights Observatory in the Philippines. The survey shall be used to gather relevant information to ensure that the observatory to be set up is appropriate and effective in articulating and processing a

systematic, reliable, timely and truthful manner of sharing information on human rights. The CHR contracted the services of the Social Weather Station (SWS) to conduct a baseline survey for a period of two (2) months.

Output 4.4 Human rights situation report published

The Policy Development Specialist, contracted under the Intermediate Outcome 1 of the GOJUST Human Rights Project, developed the CHR’s policy guidelines for advocacy, strategy, monitoring, and mechanisms in mobilizing duty bearers and rights holders. The guidelines, once adopted and institutionalized by the CHR, shall serve as the framework for the system of coordination, collaboration, data collection, and analysis for drafting substantive human rights situation reports. Moreover, the CHR shall use the guidelines for its future policy advocacy priorities on the findings of monitoring and/or situation reports.

Output 4.5 Research on thematic human rights areas conducted (for Observatory)

The CHR conducted series of public hearings and field visits that form part of the National Inquiry on the Human Rights Situation of the Filipino Indigenous Peoples (IPs). The hearings/inquiries initiated in March 2017 in Baguio, then in May in Iloilo, August in



Palawan and Tagaytay, September in Davao City, and in October in Cagayan de Oro. A final consultative workshop to present the initial report on the conducted inquiries took place on 20 November 2017 at the University Hotel in Quezon City. The CHR team presented the report to major stakeholders (both duty bearers and rights holders) for validation and/or additional inputs. The report included the proposed operative elements of the IP Rights Observatory. The national inquiry process served as a monitoring mechanism and as an avenue for issuance of the situation, report, policy papers and the programs that pertain to Filipino IPs. It likewise served as the advocacy platform for the government and the IPs wherein the concerns of the latter were identified in order that concerned government agencies may appropriately and effectively address these to avoid human rights violations, such as discrimination, killings and abuses. The National Inquiry

endeavored to educate the public at large on the importance of the IPs' role in nation-building. The major areas covered during the inquiry were:

- The protection and promotion of the IPs' land and cultural rights;
- The effectiveness of the current government process to obtain free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of the IPs; and
- The state of economic and social development of IPs in the Philippines.

Another thematic area of study is on the impact of climate change to human rights. The contracted research team looked into the various aspects in relation to the context of climate justice. From July to December 2017, the team conducted several community dialogues, focus group discussions, fact-finding missions, investigations, and conferences in various areas in the country to contribute to the national inquiry proper in 2018. They gathered inputs on the impacts of climate change on the human rights of the Filipino people and the responsibility, if any, of the “carbon majors”. Likewise, coordination with the local government units were undertaken to ensure participation, transparency, and accountability.

Output 4.6 Relevant GOJUST Human Rights Project outputs turned over to Human Rights Observatory

Related activities shall be initiated in 2018.

Other Related Activities Conducted

At the onset of the second semester of 2017, the CHR conducted an orientation on the GOJUST Human Rights Project for its employees from the central and regional offices. This was held last 6 July 2017 at the SEDA Vertis North Hotel in Quezon City. It was during this activity that CHR Chairperson Gascon formally introduced the GOJUST Human Rights Project and mentioned that there are four (4) components. Out of the said number of components, three (3) are lodged under the CHR and the remaining is for the RHRC. The orientation served as the avenue to ensure that the participants are well informed on the project’s goals, objectives, and process flows as well as for them to be acquainted with the AECID and its Technical Assistance Team for the project.



Likewise, the CHR conducted a separate orientation for CSOs which took place at the Commission’s Central Office on 26 July 2017. It was during this activity that the Commission explained to CSOs on the partnership accreditation requirements and process. Said accreditation shall qualify CSOs to bid and be provided with financial support to carry on the delivery of



human rights promotion and protection services to the ground. The CSOs are deemed as the CHR’s force multipliers and valuable partners in ensuring that the human rights and dignity of Filipinos are protected and respected.

COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

In compliance with the project’s requirements for dynamic communication and visibility actions, the CHR and its partners ensured the use and incorporation of the European Union’s (EU) and AECID’s logos in materials produced, such as backdrops, press materials, presentations, signages, and all other tools. The basic use of the logos guaranteed the raise of awareness of specific or general audiences on the support provided by the EU and AECID, as well as the results and the impact of such assistance. Moreover, there were several written materials and/or documentations that explicitly stated the activities conducted were supported by the EU and the Spanish government through the AECID.

The following snapshots demonstrate several of the materials used and/or produced during the implementation of activities from July to December 2017:











GOJUST – Human Rights Project

spanish aid



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY

CHR conducts Nat'l Inquiry on the situation of IPs

 COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PHILIPPINES - WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2017

31 May 2017
PRESS RELEASE

CHR conducts Nat'l Inquiry on the situation of IPs

ILOILO CITY—The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) held a public hearing on May 25-26, as part of a National Inquiry meant to look into the situation of indigenous peoples (IPs) in the Philippines.

"We are taking account of the concerns of IPs to further promote and protect their human rights," said Commissioner Gwendolyn Pimentel-Gana, CHR Focal Commissioner on IP rights. Joining her at the inquiry was fellow CHR Commissioner Roberto Cadiz.

Leaders of different IP groups fronted issues on entitlement to their ancestral lands; access to basic social services; lack of roads, health centers, and school buildings in their communities; as well as threats to their culture and tradition, among others.

Highlighting the role of IP perspective, Commissioner Pimentel-Gana said that solutions to the IPs' problems must always be sensitive to their culture and traditions. "When you address their problems, it must be through their eyes," she noted.

"*Filipino din sila* (they are also Filipinos). *Kaya lang* (but), apparently, there is discrimination in terms of implementation of laws when it comes to them."

Commissioner Pimentel-Gana encouraged local governments to take a more proactive role in fully implementing the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997.

"If they are not doing their job, call their attention. We hold them accountable. We are like the guardian angels of the right holders. We have the right to demand from the duty bearers na do your job because it is our right to demand from you," said Commissioner Pimentel-Gana.

The Commission is also set to do similar consultations in Luzon and Mindanao throughout the year. This initiative is supported by the CHR-Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID) Governance in Justice (GOJUST) Project. The National Inquiry aims to produce a recommendatory report on IP-related problems to be endorsed to government agencies, which bear equal mandate to protect the welfare of IPs in the country. ■

Contact Person:

Atty. Jacqueline Ann C. de Guia
Director, Public Affairs and Strategic Communication Office
Telephone No: (02) 928-5792 / 09175919833
Email address: comms.chr@gmail.com

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:

PRINCESS S. MOLLENO

Project Development Officer IV, PMD

ONESIMO L. CUYCO

Division Chief, PMD

Approved by:

ATTY. JACQUELINE ANN C. DE GUIA

Director, PASCO