Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region VII, Central Visayas
DIVISION OF CITY SCHOOLS - TAGBILARAN
City of Tagbilaran

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November 18, 2019

Division Memorandum
No. 671, s. 2019

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK ON LEARNERS AND SCHOOLS AS ZONES OF PEACE

TO: **Division Chiefs**
Education Program Supervisors (EPS)
Public Elementary and Secondary School Heads
Teaching Personnel
All Others Concerned

1. Pursuant to DepEd Order No. 032, s. 2019, the Department of Education issues **National Policy Framework on Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace** to guide the education sector towards the creation of safe, inclusive, and conflict sensitive learning avenues.

2. This Order shall take effect immediately upon its issuance.

3. For complete information, please find attachments for your reference.

4. Immediate and wide dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.

JOSEPH IRWIN A. LAGURA, Ph. D.
Schools Division Superintendent

11/12/2019

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MA'AM CHEA
FOR CHECKS
FOR APPROPRIATE
ACTION
11-12-19

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

11 NOV 2019

DepEd ORDER
No. 032, s. 2019

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK ON LEARNERS AND SCHOOLS AS ZONES OF PEACE

To: Undersecretaries
Assistant Secretaries
Bureau and Service Directors
Minister of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education, BARMM
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) issues the enclosed **National Policy Framework on Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace** to guide the education sector towards the creation of safe, inclusive, and conflict-sensitive learning environments.

2. This Framework defines the components and guiding principles in the declaration and establishment of Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace. It outlines the overall strategy for ensuring the safety and security of learners, personnel, and schools; the continuity of education in situations of armed conflict; and the contributions of education and schools to peacebuilding. It institutionalizes conflict sensitivity, peacebuilding, and community engagement into education interventions, as a means to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from armed and violent conflict.

3. This Order shall take effect immediately upon its issuance.

4. For more information, please contact the **Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service**, 2nd Floor, Mabini Building, Department of Education Central Office, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City through email at drrmo@deped.gov.ph or telefax no. (02) 637-4933.

5. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.

LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES
Secretary

Encl.: As stated
References: DepEd Order Nos.: 44, s. 2005; 40, s. 2012; 21, s. 2015; 57, s. 2017, and 44, s. 2018
To be indicated in the Perpetual Index under the following subjects:

CALAMITY HUMAN RIGHTS PEACE EDUCATION

MCR-DO-National Policy Framework on Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace
0409-June 19, 2019

(Enclosure to DepEd Order No. 032, s. 2019)

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK ON LEARNERS AND SCHOOLS AS ZONES OF PEACE

I. RATIONALE

Armed conflict continues to pose serious security threats to thousands of barangays, with adverse impacts particularly on children's education.

DepEd EBEIS data show that from SY 2009-2010 to 2017-2018, a total of 10,883 schools nationwide reported effects of violent incidents, including armed conflict. These schools have suffered from the effects of violent incidents, specifically damages to school facilities and disruption of classes. In the said time period, all the 6 regions in Mindanao as well as Regions V and VIII consistently figured as the top 10 regions each year with the highest proportion of schools with incidences of armed conflict.

In May 2017, the Marawi siege broke out, much larger in scale and with greater impact than the Zamboanga siege. Lasting for nearly 5 months, the ensuing war affected 96 barangays, completely destroyed 20 schools in ground zero, and displaced thousands of learners.[1] Other than these large-scale conflicts, sporadic small-scale clashes between the government's armed forces and armed groups also take their toll on the education sector.

Armed conflicts impact the three education outcomes—access, quality, and governance—thereby dismantling the foundations on which learners, families, and communities build their future. Armed conflicts affect access to education through disruption of the delivery of educational services. These are disrupted due to attacks on schools, including school personnel, suspension of classes which can last for long periods of time, and the use of schools as temporary evacuation centers. Schooling is also disrupted as a result of the displacement of learners. In addition, fear or trauma among learners, personnel, and parents, or simply their own regard for personal safety and security, prevent learners from going back to school.

Moreover, armed conflicts create unsafe and unsecure environments where learners face the risk of being victims of grave child rights violations (GCRVs). The youth, especially out-of-school youths, are vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups and government forces. These groups may also use schools for propaganda and recruitment purposes. These issues call for strengthening governance of the education system to make schools safer, more secure, and child-friendly.

II. LEGAL BASES

DepEd is fully committed to ensuring the protection of learners and schools in conflict-affected areas as well as the continuity of education during periods of armed conflict. This is based on the 1987 Constitution which guarantees the right of all citizens to quality and accessible education at all levels[2], and for the right of children to special protection[3].

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[1] DepEd Post-Conflict Needs Assessment Report.
[2] 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XIV, Sec. 1
[3] 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article XV, Sec. 3(2)

Other legal bases for this policy include RA 7610 *(Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act)* which declares children as Zones of Peace and protects schools from being used for military purposes; RA 10821 *(Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act)* which governs the provision of emergency relief and protection for children in disasters; and RA 11188 *(Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act)* which defines guidelines for protecting and rehabilitating children in cases of armed conflict.

Towards this end, the Department has instituted a number of policies including the *Declaration of Schools as Zones of Peace* (DO No. 44, s. 2005) and the *Policy on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict* (DO No. 57, s. 2017). In 2017, the Department reiterated its declaration due to incidents of violence and the Marawi siege. The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) was also established in 2011 to address natural and man-made disasters, including armed conflicts, that affect schools and learners.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following key concepts and terms are used in this Framework:

- **Armed conflict** refers to armed confrontations occurring between government forces and one or more armed groups, or between such groups arising in the Philippine territory. These shall include activities which may lead to or in preparation of armed confrontation or armed violence that put children's lives at risk and their lives violated.[4]

- **Armed group** refers to an armed non-State actor or non-State entity engaged in armed violence against the State or its government forces or against other non-State armed groups, actors or non-State entities.[5]

- **Attack on schools** refers to the attacks, occupation, shelling, targeting for propaganda of schools and their personnel; causing damage to such places, or harm or injury to their personnel; or causing the total or partial physical destruction of such facilities; or disruption of educational activities.[6]

- **Children involved in armed conflict** refer to children who are either forcibly, compulsorily recruited, or who voluntarily joined a government force or any armed group in any capacity. These children may participate directly in armed hostilities as combatants or fighters; or indirectly through support roles such as scouts, spies, saboteurs, decoys, checkpoint assistants, couriers, messengers, porters, cooks, or as sexual objects.[7]

- **Conflict-affected areas** refer to areas where there are actual armed encounters between the government forces and armed groups and where armed groups have dominance in the state of affairs of the community.[8]

- **Conflict-vulnerable areas** refer to communities that are proximate to conflict-affected areas where possible side-stepping of armed groups are imminent. It can also include

[4] RA 11188.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Adapted from OPAPP PAMANA Manual of Operations.

geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas whose resources, actual or symbolic, are deemed valuable by the armed group.[9]

- **Conflict sensitivity** refers to the capacity of an organization, institution, or their individual members to understand the context of the area where they operate, i.e. the nature, history, causes and dynamics of social conflict in said area; and to understand how to interact with this context in order to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts.[10]

- **Crisis management** involves plans and institutional arrangements to engage and guide the efforts of government, non-government, voluntary and private agencies in comprehensive and coordinated ways to respond to the entire spectrum of crisis needs.[11]

- **Education-in-Emergencies** refers to quality learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis. It provides physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives without sacrificing the goal of each learner to learn.[12]

- **Government forces** refer to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), paramilitary, and other law enforcement agencies.[13]

- **Grave child rights violations (GCRVs)** refer to the crimes committed against children that constitute flagrant violations of their human rights and have severe consequences on their lives. These crimes include intentional and causal killing or maiming of children, recruitment or use of children involved in armed conflict, rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, abduction of children, attacks against schools, or denial of humanitarian access to children.[14]

- **Learner** is any individual seeking basic literacy skills and functional life skills or support services for the improvement of the quality of one's life.[15]

- **Peacebuilding** refers to a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development.[16]

- **School** refers to an educational institution, private and public, undertaking educational operation under the DepEd, usually located in a building or a group of buildings in a particular physical or cyber cite. It shall also refer to a learning center or a physical space to house learning resources and facilities of a learning program such as the Alternative Learning System under the DepEd for Out-of-School Youth.[17]

IV. SCOPE

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[9] Ibid.
[10] Adapted from UNICEF Technical Notes on Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding.
[11] National Disaster Response Plan.
[12] International Network for Education in Emergencies.
[13] RA 11188.
[14] Refer to Sec. 9 of RA 11188, and its IRR.
[15] RA 9155.
[16] Decision of the UN Secretary-General, May 2007.
[17] Adapted from RA 9155.

DepEd hereby establishes the National Policy Framework on Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace (LSZOP). This is anchored on the concept of a just and comprehensive peace as laid down in EO No. 3, s. 2001. That is, peace requires not merely the end of internal armed conflicts, but just as importantly, the resolution of the root causes of the armed conflicts and social unrest, and the transformation of Philippine society to one characterized by justice, equity, tolerance, harmonious pluralism, and full respect of human rights.

This policy shall apply to:

1. DepEd Central, Regional, and Schools Division Offices
2. School heads and administrators
3. Teaching and non-teaching personnel
4. Learners in public and private elementary and secondary schools

This policy framework primarily covers learners and schools in situations of armed conflict. It re-affirms and substantiates DO 44, s. 2005 and DO 57, s. 2017 by defining and operationalizing the concept of Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace.

It also sets the direction and priorities for the protection of learners and schools; continued delivery of education services; peacebuilding in conflict-vulnerable and conflict-affected areas, and across all phases of armed conflict, i.e. before, during, after.

V. POLICY STATEMENT

The Policy Framework is in cognizance of the Department's role in responding to the immediate impact of armed conflicts on learners and schools, including school personnel, as well as to the requirements and challenges of long-term peacebuilding toward establishing a resilient society. The declaration of learners and schools as Zones of Peace is to be made with this dual role in mind.

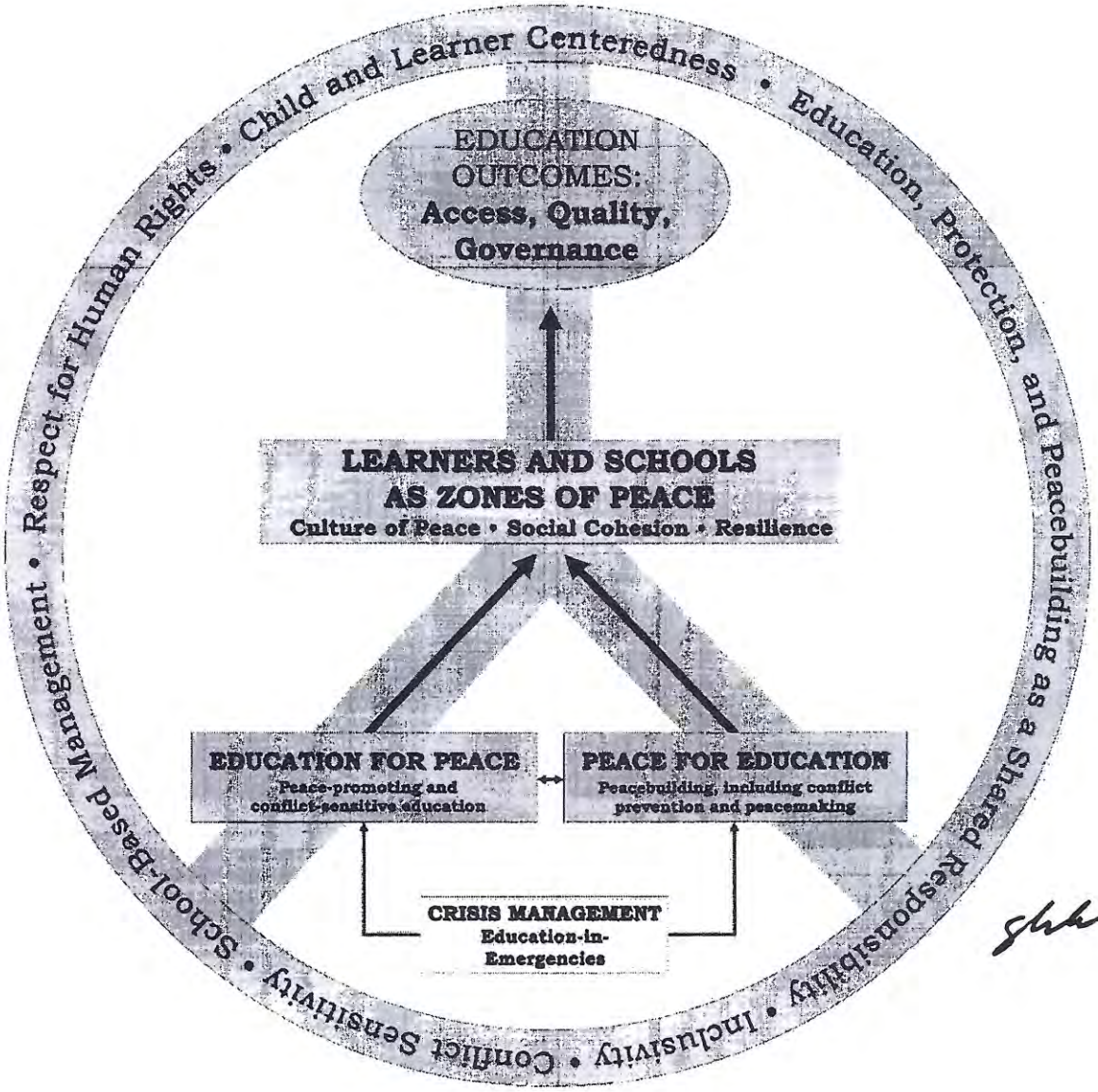
This specifically means that:

a) **in situations of armed conflict**, DepEd in coordination with national and local government and non-government units shall aim to protect learners and schools from the adverse effects of armed conflict and ensure continuity of education; and

b) **under normal circumstances**, DepEd in coordination with national and local government and non-government units shall enable and capacitate schools, including their learners and personnel, in preventing and mitigating, preparing for, and responding to the impact of armed conflict incidences. More importantly, it shall help in building a culture of peace and resilience in the community. This involves the integration of peace-promoting concepts and values in the curriculum as well as peace-promoting processes and structures within DepEd at all levels.

VI. THE NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

A. Conceptual Framework



The National Policy Framework, as illustrated, is firmly anchored on the following principles: respect for human rights; child and learner-centeredness; education, protection, and peacebuilding as a shared responsibility of all stakeholders; inclusivity; conflict sensitivity; and school-based management.

Central to the Framework is the concept of Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace which operates on the basis of these principles toward the achievement of the education outcomes: access, quality, and governance. These outcomes shall be attained in ways that promote a culture of peace, social cohesion, and resilience to armed conflict and violence in their respective communities.

Schools, with the support of external stakeholders, shall pursue *education for peace.* This pertains to the delivery of education that is conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting.

Furthermore, they shall advocate for and collaborate with external stakeholders to pursue *peace for education*, or the creation of a peaceful and secure environment conducive to effective teaching and learning.

During situations of armed conflict, schools and external stakeholders shall pursue *education-in-emergencies (EiE)* as part of crisis management. EiE must itself be conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting. Rehabilitation and recovery efforts shall be undertaken as part of overall post-conflict peacebuilding.

B. Underlying Principles

As mentioned earlier, the National Policy Framework is anchored on the following principles:

1. ***Respect for Human Rights.*** Human rights shall be respected at all times, even during situations of armed conflict. Respect for human rights, as a universally recognized element in creating a culture of peace,[18] shall be inculcated not only among learners but also among all internal and external stakeholders. Access to quality education is a basic human right. As such, education must continue even in situations of armed conflict.

2. ***Child and learner-centeredness.*** At all times, including during situations of armed conflict, the human rights and best interest of children, and utmost respect for their dignity, shall be the primary consideration in any decision-making that affects their development and welfare.

3. ***Education, protection, and peacebuilding as a shared responsibility.*** Education is a shared responsibility among stakeholders, including school systems, local government units, parents, and civil society organizations. The protection of learners, personnel, and schools in situations of armed conflict, and the long-term task of peacebuilding is also a shared responsibility which is crucial in the establishment of the school as a Zone of Peace.

4. ***Inclusivity.*** In promoting and advancing the rights of all learners to quality basic education and protection, especially during situations of armed conflict, DepEd shall consider and respond to the needs, capacities, and contexts of learners and communities at all times. This shall be done through extending adequate and appropriate education and support for all types of learners, regardless of where they are, their skills and interests, socio-economic, cultural and ethnolinguistic background, religious and political views, sex and gender, and physical and psychological condition.

5. ***Conflict sensitivity.*** DepEd processes, systems, and programs especially in conflict-vulnerable and conflict-affected areas shall be conflict-sensitive. Interventions toward ensuring continuity of quality education and protection of schools, learners, and school personnel shall be formulated based on adequate analysis of the conflict situation. They shall take into account the nature and dynamics of local conflicts, their vulnerability and exposure to armed conflicts, availability of resources, and existing partnerships and linkages.

[18] UN General Assembly Resolution 53/243. Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

6. ***School-Based Management.*** Schools, with the support of their respective communities, shall exercise prerogative and flexibility in deciding the specific measures and initiatives to take in performing their functions as Zones of Peace.

C. Zones of Peace

1. **Learners as Zones of Peace** means that (a) their human rights are fully recognized and respected even in situations of armed conflict, and (b) in the exercise of their rights, they actively participate and contribute to building a culture of peace in the school, community, and country.

   The following human rights[19] of learners shall be recognized and respected at all times, even in situations of armed conflict:

   a. Right to life, survival, protection, development, and participation as they need a protective, secure, and stable environment in which to grow and develop their moral, psychological, social, and spiritual needs;
   b. Right to quality, accessible, and appropriate basic education which provides skills, knowledge, and values needed to become caring, self-reliant productive, and patriotic citizens;
   c. Right to be consulted and to participate in all matters affecting them whenever feasible;
   d. Right to protection from recruitment or use by any party to an armed conflict, or to become children involved in armed conflict (CIAC);
   e. Right to grow up in an environment free from armed conflict;
   f. Right to be protected from any negative consequences of armed conflict such as physical and psychological effects;
   g. Right to assistance, recovery and rehabilitation from the effects of conflict, to reunite with their families, and receive relief as a priority; and
   h. Right to live in peace and express their views even in times of conflict.

   Learners, especially children, shall not be the object of attack and shall be entitled to special respect. They shall be protected from any form of threat, assault, torture or other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment.[20] They shall be guaranteed protection under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and all other human rights treaties, other pertinent international instruments and protocols ratified by the Philippines, the rights guaranteed by the Philippine Constitution, and all existing laws, rules, and regulations relevant thereto.[21]

   Any potential/alleged grave child rights violation shall be reported through Monitoring, Reporting, and Response System (MRRS) instituted by Department Order 57, s. 2017.

2. **Schools as Zones of Peace** means that:

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[19] Adopted from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, RA 11188, RA 9155, and DO 57, s. 2017.
[20] RA 7610.
[21] DO 57, s. 2017.

a. Schools are recognized as effective instruments in building a culture of peace. Individually, schools working closely with their respective communities shall serve as centers from which the culture of peace shall emanate outward, reaching out to adjacent schools and communities.

b. Schools are an integral part of a peaceful and secure environment conducive to effective teaching and learning, which is realized through the collective peacebuilding efforts of all stakeholders. Schools shall be recognized and respected as places for learning, caring, and nurturing - a true second home for the learners, where children can receive utmost peace and security.[22]

c. Schools, as a general rule, should be free from the presence of armed combatants, whether they be from government forces or armed groups. Armed force protection units from government forces, if needed, shall be situated proximate to the school and not inside the school.[23]

d. Schools shall not be utilized for propagation of political agenda or ideology, nor for military purposes such as but not limited to command posts, barracks, detachments, supply depots, collection points, casualty evacuation points and similar purposes. This includes recruitment by government forces and armed groups, the conduct of anti-insurgency information activities, or such other related uses that may endanger the lives of learners and school personnel.[24]

e. Schools in conflict-affected and -vulnerable areas shall, with the support of their respective Schools Division Offices, coordinate with their respective LGUs to determine and set appropriate security measures.

f. Any activity undertaken by government forces inside schools shall be guided by the following:

   i. All personnel inside the school shall be unarmed[25] and wear the prescribed uniform for activities (i.e. Type B or Type C).

   ii. Activities conducted in support of schools, learners, personnel, and education, such as participation in Brigada Eskwela and construction of schools especially in remote areas, shall be undertaken with the written authorization or approval of the respective DepEd Regional Office, and in close coordination with the LGU.[26]

   The written authorization shall include the following: (a) description of the activity, (b) time and duration of the presence of military personnel inside the school, (c) identity of the military unit/s and the corresponding officer-in-charge and his/her designation, and (d) specific location of the activity within the school.

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[22] DO 44, s. 2005 and DM 109, s. 2017.
[23] DND Circular No. 1, dated 04 February 2016.
[24] Adopted from RA 7610 and DND Circular No. 1, dated 04 February 2016.
[25] DND Circular No. 01, dated 04 February 2016 (Child Protection During Armed Conflict Situations).
[26] Adopted from DND Circular No. 1, dated 04 February 2016.

iii. There shall be no military detachment or patrol base constructed within 460 meters from a school.[27] This applies even when a school has been temporarily abandoned by the students and personnel.

g. In situations of armed conflict, schools shall be guaranteed special protection under the International Humanitarian Law. They shall be treated as civilian objects and therefore shall not be target of any form of attack.[28] This covers both physical and non-physical attacks which put the lives and rights of learners and school personnel at risk, and may cause damage to educational resources and facilities. Attack on schools during armed conflict is a grave child rights violation.[29]

h. At all times, schools shall be guaranteed special protection under all pertinent instruments and protocols and all existing laws, rules, and regulations relevant thereto.

D. Building Blocks

Education for Peace, Peace for Education, and Crisis Management through Education in Emergencies (EiE) are referred to as the building blocks essential for the full operationalization of the LSZOP, closely interacting with and not mutually exclusive of each other. These components, in broad terms, are activities and strategies that the Department must undertake while being guided by the principles enumerated in this Policy Framework.

1. Education for Peace

This component recognizes education as an essential tool for building and sustaining a culture of peace,[30] and is a concrete manifestation of the Department's contributions to securing a just and lasting peace. The implementation of the following strategies, especially in conflict-vulnerable and conflict-affected areas, shall thus be strengthened:

a. Peace Education. The Curriculum and Instruction (CI) Strand and the Curriculum and Learning Management Divisions shall lead and support schools in providing transformative education which promotes a culture of peace.

It entails providing an enabling environment for infusing peace-promoting values, skills, and attitudes into the whole life of the school. To be effective, peace education shall be implemented through encompassing all the learning areas, engaging all members of the school community (learners, teachers, other school personnel), and the wider community (local government units, parents, etc.).[31]

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[27] DND Circular No. 01, dated 04 February 2016.
[28] Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts ("Additional Protocol I"), art. 52(1), and CARHRIHL.
[29] UNSCR 1539 (2004).
[30] EO 570 IRR, and UNESCO's Programme of Action: Culture of Peace and Nonviolence (2013).
[31] PDP 2016-2022 Chapter 17 (Attaining a Just and Lasting Peace) and "Peace Education: A Pathway to a Culture of Peace" by Dr. Loreta Castro and Jasmin Nario-Galace.

More specifically, peace education shall involve the following:

- Integration of peace concepts and values in the curriculum;
- Adoption of cooperative/dialogical teaching-learning methods;
- Implementation of peace-promoting co-curricular programs;
- Contextualization and use of teaching-learning resources on peace;
- Enrichment programs for school personnel on peace and conflict resolution; and
- Creation of peacebuilding programs involving parents and build/sustain participative structures and caring relationships among the school, families, and the community.

Peace concepts and values that promote a culture of peace may include: spirituality, human rights, non-violence, social justice, inter-faith and inter-cultural solidarity, respect for diversity, common humanity, oneness with nature, and human security[32]; critical thinking, conflict resolution, conflict management and transformation skills; and the attitude of caring, empathy, compassion, and non-discrimination, shall be emphasized.

Lastly, in the context of nation-building and pursuant to Article XIV, Section 3(2) of the 1987 Constitution, schools shall inculcate patriotism and nationalism, teach the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthen ethical and spiritual values, develop moral character and personal discipline, encourage critical and creative thinking, broaden scientific and technological knowledge, and promote vocational efficiency.

b. Conflict-sensitive Education. All DepEd offices and schools, supported by the CI Strand, Planning Service, and the DRRMS and their respective field officers, shall provide educational services which do no harm.

More specifically, education policies, programs and services especially in conflict-vulnerable and conflict-affected areas shall be informed by adequate conflict analysis that provides a clear understanding of the context of social conflict prevailing in the areas where they operate, and shall be designed accordingly to minimize their negative impacts, i.e. does not exacerbate the conflict, and maximize the positive impacts in said areas.

Conflict sensitivity shall be applied to all aspects of the education system. Among the measures to be undertaken include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Creation and use of systems, processes, policies, plans, programs, activities, as well as teaching-learning resources and lessons that are free of cultural, religious, and gender stereotypes, and are not intended for recruitment by armed groups;
- Implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) Program;
- Implementation of Alternative Learning System (ALS);
- Implementation of Alternative Delivery Modes of Education (ADM);
- Implementation of the Madrasah Education Program (MEP);

[32] EO 570 IRR.

- Conduct of school- and/or student-led conflict analysis as part of school-level planning and linked to Barangay and LGU plans;
- Involvement of learners and diverse social groups in key processes such as policy making, planning, program implementation, monitoring and evaluation, research; and
- Ensuring access of all types of learners to safe learning environment and learning resources.

c. Support for Holistic Approaches to Peace and Education (SHAPE). This strategy provides for specialized, targeted, and programmatic support services which supplements and directs regular DepEd programs towards learners and schools in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas. Such initiatives must align with the government's agreements, frameworks, strategies, and programs for peace and development.

The DRRMS, taking into consideration reports and trends on armed conflict affecting schools, shall coordinate with concerned DepEd offices and other concerned government and non-government organizations, for the implementation of support services which may come in the form of:

- Implementation of Last Mile Schools Programs (LMS);
- Extension of current programs to rebel returnees (e.g. Alternative Learning System, Literacy Programs, Social Integration Programs);
- Skills- and interest-based opportunities for the affected youth (e.g. technical, vocational, and livelihood education and training); and
- School-feeding for affected learners; and
- Home visitations for learners who have or are vulnerable to dropping out.

2. Peace for Education

A peaceful and secure environment is deemed essential to school participation and effective teaching and learning. The creation and maintenance of said environment through peacebuilding efforts are recognized as a shared responsibility of all stakeholders to include DepEd at all levels, other government agencies, LGUs, private sector, civil society, the learners and their families/clans/ethnolinguistic groups, among others.

For its part, DepEd Regional and Division Offices, together with the schools, shall undertake the following especially in conflict-vulnerable and conflict-affected areas:

a. Consult, coordinate with, and capacitate concerned organizations, institutions, and community-recognized groups to ensure that peacebuilding efforts take into account the attainment of education outcomes.

b. DepEd regional offices, divisions, and schools shall strengthen their linkages with various mechanisms - government (e.g. LGUs and inter-agency bodies) and community groups (e.g. council of elders and religious leaders) - that are mandated or recognized and respected as authorities or leaders in preventing and resolving conflicts. DepEd shall work with these groups to come up with appropriate and effective measures to ensure the protection of learners and schools as zones of peace. These efforts may include the following:

- Forging of an agreement or code of conduct among community stakeholders to respect Learners and Schools as Zones of Peace;
- Deployment of civilian law enforcement or peacekeeping units (e.g. *tanods,* Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team) proximate to the school;
- Protocols on conflict monitoring and early warning; and
- Protocols on quick response, crisis management, and reporting.

3. Crisis Management through Education-in-Emergencies

This building block refers to the provision of Education-in-Emergencies (EiE) as an integral part of crisis management especially in situations of prolonged and large-scale armed conflict. This recognizes the following:

- As a basic human right, education must continue even in cases of emergencies, whether they be natural or human-induced;
- EiE is life-saving and life-sustaining – it provides a sense of normalcy and security, and addresses the full spectrum of developmental needs of learners; and
- Education can potentially reduce tensions and strengthen local capacities to disengage from conflict and build durable peace.

DepEd, through the DRRMS and its regional and division coordinators, with the support of the Planning Officers, Engineers, Designated Guidance and School Health Personnel, Youth Formation Coordinators, ADM Coordinators, IT Officers, LRMD Personnel, and Legal Officers, shall thus undertake the following:

- Preparedness for Response interventions (e.g. community risk assessment; school-community planning for armed conflict; creation of early warning & early response systems; drills for armed conflict situations; capacity building; prepositioning of response equipment and resources)
- Response interventions (e.g. lockdown of school; suspension of classes; activation of family reunification plan; initial psychological first aid)
- Rehabilitation and Recovery interventions (e.g. psychosocial support services; tracking of learners and personnel; employment of Alternative Delivery Modes of education; setting-up of Temporary Learning Spaces and emergency Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Facilities; repairs; emergency school feeding; provision of learner's, teacher's and hygiene kits)

The specific actions and protocols relating to the Crisis Management through EiE shall be guided by a separate Department Order.

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The DepEd through the DRRMS and the DRRM regional and division coordinators shall oversee the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this policy, with the support of various offices identified in the Policy Framework.

Appropriate monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning system shall be developed by the DRRMS. This shall include the documentation of good practices as well as issues and challenges in the implementation of the Policy Framework and how they were addressed. This policy will be subject to annual review and revision, if necessary.

VIII. REFERENCES

a. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
b. Republic Act 7610, the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act
c. Republic Act 10821, the Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act
d. Republic Act 11188, the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act
e. Executive Order No. 125, s. 1993, as amended by EO No. 3, s. 2001
f. Executive Order No. 570, s. 2006
g. DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2005, Declaration of Schools as Zones of Peace
h. DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, DepEd Child Protection Policy
i. DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2015, DRRM Coordination and Information Protocol
j. DepEd Order No. 37, s. 2015, Comprehensive DRRM in Education Framework
k. DepEd Order No. 57, s. 2017, Policy on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict
l. DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2018, Formation of the Department of Education DRRM Team in the Central Office