

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10977



Introduced by: Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list
Representative Iris Marie D. Montes

AN ACT
REORGANIZING THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION CENTER (WCPC) OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE INTO THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION GROUP (WCPG), DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS, STRUCTURE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The protection of women and children from violence, abuse, exploitation, and trafficking is a fundamental responsibility of the State. These crimes inflict profound and lasting harm not only upon victims and their families, but also upon the health, security, productivity, and social well-being of communities. Protecting women and children from these forms of violence is therefore not merely a law enforcement concern—it is an essential obligation of government and a measure of a society's commitment to human dignity and human rights.

For years, the Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC) of the Philippine National Police (PNP) has served as a critical component of the country's response to these crimes. Through investigation, intelligence operations, rescue and law enforcement activities, and coordination with other government agencies and service providers, the WCPC has worked to protect vulnerable women and children and bring perpetrators to justice, often despite limited resources and increasing operational demands.

However, crimes against women and children are becoming increasingly complex. Criminal networks now operate across jurisdictions, while the rapid expansion of digital platforms has created new avenues for grooming, trafficking, sexual exploitation, and the abuse and dissemination of child sexual abuse materials. These emerging threats require law enforcement capabilities that are more specialized, technologically equipped, adequately resourced, and capable of responding across geographic and jurisdictional boundaries.

The proposed measure therefore seeks to reorganize the WCPC into the Women and Children Protection Group (WCPG) and strengthen it as a specialized National Operational Support Unit of the PNP. The measure institutionalizes a stronger national law enforcement mechanism dedicated to the prevention, intelligence gathering, investigation, case build-up, rescue, and operational response to violence against women and children (VAWC), trafficking in persons (TIP), online sexual abuse or exploitation of children (OSAEC), child sexual abuse or exploitation materials (CSAEM), and related offenses.

Among the key features of the bill are the following:

- **Strengthened PNP Mandate** – Establishes the WCPG as the specialized national unit for crimes against women and children, complementing existing WCPDs and PNP units.
- **Enhanced Investigative Capability** – Strengthens intelligence, case build-up, cyber investigation, digital forensics, and other modern law enforcement capabilities.
- **Victim-Centered Protection** – Institutionalizes gender-responsive, child-sensitive, trauma-informed, and human rights-based approaches, with prompt referral to appropriate support services.
- **Stronger WCPD Network** – Provides technical assistance, operational guidance, training, and capability-building to WCPDs nationwide.
- **Greater Inter-Agency Cooperation** – Strengthens coordination and information-sharing among law enforcement agencies, government institutions, LGUs, and international partners.
- **Specialized Personnel Development** – Institutionalizes continuing training and professional development in VAWC, TIP, cybercrime, digital forensics, victim protection, and related fields.
- **Improved Data and Accountability** – Strengthens case management, information systems, performance monitoring, reporting, and evidence-based responses, subject to data privacy and confidentiality safeguards.

The measure also recognizes that effective protection requires not only capable law enforcement personnel, but adequate resources, modern equipment, appropriate facilities, specialized technology, and sustained support for the personnel who perform some of the PNP's most demanding and emotionally difficult work.

By strengthening the WCPC into a Women and Children Protection Group, this measure seeks to build a more capable, coordinated, specialized, and responsive police institution—one that can keep pace with both traditional and emerging forms of violence and exploitation.

The measure likewise reinforces the Philippines' continuing commitment to its international obligations to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and hold perpetrators accountable. More fundamentally, however, its purpose is simple and enduring: no woman or child should be left without protection because the systems tasked to protect them lack the capacity, resources, or coordination to respond.

The safety, dignity, and well-being of women and children must remain at the heart of public service. Strengthening the Philippine National Police through the institutionalization of the Women and Children Protection Group is a necessary step toward making that commitment real, effective, and lasting.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


IRIS MARIE D. MONTES
Kababaihan Kabalikatan para sa Kapakanan
at Kaunlaran ng Bayan (4K) Party-list

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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Women and Children Protection Group Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to protect women and children from abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. To strengthen the enforcement of laws addressing these concerns, the Philippine National Police (PNP) shall reorganize its Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC) into a National Operational Support Unit to be known as the Women and Children Protection Group (WCPG).

SEC. 3. *Reorganization and Renaming.* - The Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC) is hereby reorganized and renamed as the Women and Children Protection Group (WCPG).

SEC. 4. *Mandate.* - The WCPG shall be the lead unit of the PNP in enforcing relevant and pertinent laws against trafficking in persons (TIP) and violence against women and children (VAWC), such as:

- (a) Anti-Mail Order Spouse Law (RA No. 10906);
- (b) Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act (RA No. 7610);
- (c) Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 (RA No. 7877);
- (d) Anti-Rape Act of 1997 (RA No. 8353);
- (e) Rape Victims Assistance Act (RA No. 8505);
- (f) Enhanced Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (RA No. 9208 as amended by RA 10364 and RA 11862);

(g) Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004 (RA No. 9262); and

(h) TIP-OSAEC/CSAEM as prohibited under the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act (RA No. 11930).

SEC. 5. *Functions.* - The WCPG shall:

(a) Maintain a "one-stop shop" of the PNP for the investigation and treatment of victims of child abuse, violence against women, trafficking in persons, and other similar crimes, through a multi-disciplinary approach;

(b) Conduct intelligence gathering, operations, and investigation of cases of VAWC and TIP and initiate necessary actions against these offenders for prompt prosecution and arrest;

(c) Conduct computer-based investigations to identify and apprehend suspects who utilize the internet as a means of enticing and/or coercing young people into prostitution, in coordination with the PNP Anti-Cybercrime Group and other law enforcement agencies;

(d) Conduct rescue operations of victims of VAWC and TIP;

(e) Monitor, evaluate, and assist the Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs) established in local police units in the conduct investigation of cases of VAWC and TIP;

(f) Formulate and implement policies and strategies for effective law enforcement and public awareness on VAWC and TIP;

(g) Maintain linkages with local and international authorities or nongovernment organizations for exchange of information and necessary assistance for the protection, rehabilitation, and health related services of rescued victims;

(h) Maintain and update relevant database including watchlist of most wanted traffickers in compliance with Section 16 of Republic Act No. 10364; and

(i) Proactively determine whether the crime has a nexus abroad and coordinate respectively with foreign law enforcement agencies for the exchange of intelligence and information for the purpose identifying additional victims and suspects, and carrying out further investigation, case build-up, including the referral of information to foreign law enforcement agencies for the conduct of a parallel investigation; and

(j) Perform other tasks as directed by the Chief PNP or Director of Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM).

SEC. 6. *Organizational Structure.* - The WCPG shall have an organizational structure that is appropriate, responsive, and sufficient to effectively carry out its mandate and functions under this Act.

The WCPG shall be headed by a Director who shall be a qualified Police Commissioned Officer, preferably a woman with appropriate experience, training, and demonstrated competence in the protection of women and children and the investigation of related offenses. The Director shall be assisted by such deputy directors, chiefs, and other key officials as may be necessary for the effective administration and operation of the Group.

The organizational structure of the WCPG shall provide for appropriate units or offices responsible for, among others, administration and resource management, operations, intelligence and investigation, legal affairs, victim protection and support, specialized investigation, and other functions necessary to accomplish its mandate.

The WCPG shall likewise maintain appropriate regional, field, or other operational units to ensure adequate geographic coverage and timely delivery of its investigative, operational, and support functions throughout the country, particularly in areas with significant incidence or risk of violence against women and children, trafficking in persons, online sexual abuse or exploitation of children, child sexual abuse or exploitation materials, and related offenses.

The specific organizational structure, number and functions of divisions, offices, field units, and other components of the WCPG, as well as their respective staffing requirements and appropriate ranks, shall be determined in the organizational structure and staffing pattern approved in accordance with this Act, taking into consideration the WCPG's mandate, geographic coverage, workload, operational requirements, emerging threats, and available resources.

The organizational structure and staffing pattern shall be periodically reviewed and, when necessary, modified to ensure that the WCPG remains responsive to evolving threats and capable of providing effective, specialized, and accessible law enforcement services for the protection of women and children.

SEC. 7. *Personnel Complement.* - The WCPG shall be provided with an adequate and competent personnel complement necessary to effectively carry out its mandate and functions under this Act.

The personnel complement shall be determined on the basis of the approved organizational structure and staffing pattern, taking into consideration the geographic scope of operations, volume and complexity of cases, operational requirements, specialized capabilities, and the need for adequate personnel in investigation, intelligence, cybercrime, digital forensics, victim protection, legal services, case management, information technology, administration, and other essential functions.

The WCPG shall be supported by qualified personnel with appropriate training, expertise, and experience in the investigation and handling of cases involving women and children, trafficking in persons, online sexual abuse or

exploitation of children, child sexual abuse or exploitation materials, and other related offenses.

The PNP shall ensure the progressive augmentation and development of the personnel complement of the WCPG and its field units as may be necessary to meet operational demands and emerging threats, subject to existing laws, civil service and PNP rules, and the availability of appropriations.

Personnel assigned to the WCPG shall undergo appropriate initial and continuing training, specialization, certification, and professional development programs to ensure competence in gender-responsive, child-sensitive, victim-centered, trauma-informed, rights-based, and technology-enabled law enforcement.

SEC. 8. *Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern.* – Within thirty (30) days after the activation of the WCPG, the Director of the WCPG shall formulate an organizational structure and staffing pattern and submit the same to the Chief, PNP, for approval.

SEC. 9. *Delineation of Functions with other PNP Units.* - Within sixty (60) days after the activation of the WCPG, appropriate directives providing for a clearer delineation of functions and responsibilities of the Director of the WCPG, Directors of other national support units and the Regional Directors of Police Regional Offices in addressing VAWC and TIP shall be formulated by the DIDM, subject to the approval of the Chief PNP.

The DIDM shall likewise issue detailed implementing directives necessary for the enhancement of the operational capability of the WCPG.

SEC 10. *Community Prevention and Public Awareness.* — The WCPG, in coordination with appropriate government agencies, LGUs, schools, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, shall support public awareness and community-based initiatives aimed at preventing violence against women and children, trafficking in persons, OSAEC, CSAEM, online grooming, and other related offenses.

Such initiatives shall promote awareness of available reporting mechanisms, victim assistance services, protective measures, and the responsibilities of communities in preventing and reporting offenses against women and children.

SEC. 11. *Data Management and Protection.* — The WCPG shall establish and maintain appropriate information and case management systems for cases within its mandate.

All information collected, processed, stored, or shared under this Act shall be subject to applicable laws, rules, and regulations on data privacy, confidentiality, and the protection of victims and witnesses.

The WCPG shall establish safeguards to prevent unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, loss, or misuse of personal, investigative, intelligence, and case information.

SEC. 12. *Five Year Development Plan.* - Within ninety (90) days from the activation of the WCPG, the Director of the WCPG shall submit to DIDM for subsequent approval of the Chief PNP, a Five-Year Development Plan to include facilities and equipment acquisition, personnel recruitment and training as well as manpower build up for the Regional Women and Children Protection Units (RWCPUs) following the approved organizational structure and staffing pattern.

SEC. 13. *Transitory Provisions.* - Upon approval of this Act, the functions, personnel, records, equipment, facilities, funds, and other resources of the WCPC shall be absorbed and transferred to the newly activated PNP Women and Children Protection Group. The WCPG shall occupy the current facility being occupied by the deactivated WCPC.

SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* - The initial funding shall be sourced from the existing WCPC budget. Thereafter, the annual fund support for the full operationalization of the WCPG should be programmed in the regular appropriation of the PNP by the Directorate for Comptrollership.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,