

JOINT MEMORANDUM-CIRCULAR FOR WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH) IN EARLY CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (ECCD)

No. 01 **Series 2016**

SUBJECT:

MULTI-SECTORAL COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND CONVERGENCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH) IN EARLY LEARNING CENTERS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

TO:

PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, ARMM GOVERNOR, CITY/MUNICIPAL MAYORS, AND *PUNONG BARANGAYS*;

THE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (ECCD) COUNCIL, THE KEY OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG), AND ALL OTHER INSTRUMENTALITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

A. Rationale:

The Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is a comprehensive program that seeks to improve children's access to clean and sustainable water supply, functional toilets, sanitation and hygiene facilities in all early learning centers, specifically day care centers and child development centers.

To fully realize the overarching goals of the WASH in ECCD program, its vital components must be present in the implementation and these are the following: the provision of group handwashing facilities, hygiene kits, functional toilets, and water that is safe, accessible and sufficient; and clean and safe environments for play and learning.

There is a need to prioritize the WASH in ECCD program among local government units and national government agencies, reinforce political will, ensure the availability of material and technical resources, and provide more opportunities to increase the capacity to design and implement WASH programs.

This Joint Memorandum-Circular affirms the state's responsibility to ensure access to water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities by allowing its national and local agencies to come together to cultivate a culture of cooperation, collaboration, and convergence.

It upholds the spirit of convergence as the best possible mechanism to leverage resources, foster capacity building and integrated knowledge management, obtain maximum impact within the shortest possible time, win over and mobilize a broader base of champions and stakeholders.

The local government units (LGUs), from the provincial, city, municipal, and barangay levels, and its duly designated agencies and entities, are the points of convergence that shall see through the implementation of the WASH in ECCD program, operationalize and synergize the inputs of the participating national government agencies and local government units so that the end-users—children in early learning centers— will be optimally served.

This Joint Memorandum-Circular is committed to the vision of empowering communities towards a people-centered development where civil society and individuals have opportunities to act on their own behalf, and where national government is always accountable for ensuring there are no barriers to the citizens' access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and where LGUs willfully and vigilantly discharge its mandate.

B. Legal Bases:

1. It is enshrined in Article 24, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that “children have the right to good quality health care – the best health care possible – to safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay healthy.”

2. The 17 Social Development Goals, as adopted by Heads of States and High Representatives in September 25-26, 2015, has singled out water and sanitation as indispensable ingredients to sustainable human development through Goal # 6 (“Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.”)

The realization of the aforementioned goal is premised on the attainment of specific targets namely Target 6.1 (“By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.”) and 6.2 (“By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls in vulnerable situations.”)

3. The right to water, sanitation, and hygiene is implicitly in the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, both of which are protected by the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

4. The right of a child to health is best protected when there is access to safe water, and adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities. It is understood that the absence of these facilities will compromise the child's physical health in his/her early years, will make him/her vulnerable to infectious and communicable diseases that will have irreversible consequences to his/her physical and mental development.

5. These rights are best espoused by the state which is aware of its obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights enshrined in the aforementioned international treaties and national legislation, as it is also the state's role to take steps toward the progressive realization of such human rights; in particular, the state affirms its avowed responsibility to ensure that the fundamental rights of a child to health is upheld in all stages of the development process.

6. Republic Act 10410, also known as "The Early Years Act of 2013," recognizes the age zero (0) to eight (8) as the first crucial stage of development, thereby providing the legal bases for strengthening the early child care and development system; furthermore, it is recognized that the years zero (0) to four (4) is the responsibility of the Early Child Care and Development (ECCD) Council, and that the years five (5) to eight (8) is the responsibility of the Department of Education (DepEd).

C. Coverage:

This Joint Memorandum-Circular covers the following national agencies:

1. The **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council**, composed of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); the Department of Education (DepEd); the Department of Health (DOH); the National Nutrition Council (NCC); the Union of Local Authorities in the Philippines (ULAP), and the ECCD Council Secretariat with office address at 4th Floor, Belvedere Building, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City, represented in this JMC by the *ex officio* Chairperson of the Governing Board, HON. BR. ARMIN A. LUISTRO FSC, herein referred to as the **ECCD Council**;

and

The **Department of the Interior and Local Government**, with office address at DILG-NAPOLCOM Center, Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, represented in this JMC by the Secretary, HON. MEL SENEN S. SARMIENTO, herein referred to as the **DILG**.

These agencies resolve to come together to seek the integration of WASH in early learning centers, to harness the enabling legal environment for pursuing WASH in ECCD, and use its national

programs and incentives packages as channels to sustain and scale-up the program.

D. Definition of Terms:

1. Sanitation: Generally refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. It also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and liquid disposal (WHO, 2005).
2. Hygiene: Refers to conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases.
3. Group handwashing: In the context of early learning centers, the simultaneous handwashing of five or more learners guided by the day care worker or the child development teacher.
4. Group handwashing facility: Handwashing trough that is equipped with running water, soap, is accessible and can accommodate at least five children at any one time.
5. Early learning center: A specialized center for children ages 3-4, instituted by the government or private institutions, that provides care and early learning, usually in a cohort framework, and utilizing early child care and development principles for rearing and teaching early life skills. Early learning centers are meant to prepare children ages 3 to 4 for kindergarten.
6. Capacity building: The process by which state organizations invest time, effort, and resources to systematically upgrade their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It may include training programs and other mechanisms directed at improving systems, generating political and cultural awareness, even raising and managing financial and technical resources.
7. Bottom-up budgeting: An approach to preparing the budgets of government agencies, taking into consideration the development needs of cities and municipalities as identified in their respective local poverty reduction plans that shall be formulated with the strong participation of basic sector organizations and civil society organizations.
8. WASH in ECCD: A comprehensive program that seeks to contribute to early child development through improving and sustaining children's access to clean water supply, functional toilets, handwashing facilities, hygiene supplies, and hygiene education in ECCD centers.

E. Standard Provisions and Activities for Implementing WASH in Early Learning Centers:

Towards creating a safe and healthy environment, as well as developing positive hygiene behavior among children, the early learning centers shall ensure the following WASH provisions and activities.

1. Adequate WASH facilities:

- a. Access to safe clean water for drinking, handwashing , and toothbrushing inside or within the premises of the center;
- b. Availability of water for flushing of toilet and general use inside or within the premises of the center;
- c. At least one (1) functional sanitary toilet that is safe and appropriate for children, bearing the following:
 - i. Cubicle space that allows adult assistance to the child inside the toilet;
 - ii. Toilet bowl height and width appropriate for children;
 - iii. Adequate ventilation and lighting;
 - iv. Walls and doors that ensure privacy for users.

2. Handwashing facilities within or near the toilet, with available water and soap for handwashing :

- a. Group handwashing facilities that can accommodate at least five children at a time, with proper roofing and safe access if outside the learning center;
- b. Proper drainage for waste water;
- c. Trash bins and system for proper disposal of solid waste.

3. Availability of hygiene and cleaning materials:

- a. Availability of soap, toothpaste and toothbrush for daily group and individual hygiene activity year-round;
- b. Availability of budget and/or materials for operation and maintenance of WASH facilities.

4. Regular conduct of WASH practices and maintenance activities:

- a. Conduct of daily group handwashing with soap by children, especially prior to eating/feeding session, and daily group toothbrushing with fluoride;
- b. Proper handwashing by kitchen staff, food handlers and servers before cooking and/or handling food;
- c. Conduct of bi-annual deworming of children following established regulations and protocols by the DOH;
- d. A designated individual or group that assists the day care worker/teacher in cleaning and maintaining WASH facilities.

F. Institutional Commitments:

1. The **Early Child Care and Development (ECCD)** Council through its member agencies shall seek the integration of the WASH in ECCD program by invoking the mandates of the national government agencies and mobilizing its programs, capacities, and resources.

a. Department of Health (DOH)

i. The DOH, through the integrated child health and nutrition "*Garantisadong Pambata (GP)*" campaign under its Children's Health Development Programs, pursuant to Administrative Order 33 Series of 2010, and which actively seeks to provide access to clean water, and sanitation and hygiene facilities for children ages 0-5, shall promote oral hygiene, handwashing, and the proper use of toilets, as practices that deter diseases.

ii. As per Administrative Order No. 2010-0021, the Department of Health declares sustainable sanitation as a national policy and priority program. This policy is anchored on the principle that sustainable sanitation is a fundamental human right. As a national policy, the DOH shall provide sustainable sanitation to early learning centers with adequate support in (1) program planning, implementation and coordination; (2) capacity building; (3) research and development; (4) knowledge management and advocacy; and (5) monitoring and evaluation.

Specifically, the DOH, standing on the premises of the National Sustainable Sanitation Plan (NSSP), shall also aim to achieve the eradication of open defecation practice through a vigorous campaign for the use of toilets, including the promotion of construction and maintenance of toilets in all early learning centers.

iii. The DOH, in holding the annual event for the *Gawad Kalusugan Awards* shall include in the set of criteria an item about the promotion of WASH in ECCD including the provision of toilet facilities; group handwashing facilities; proper solid waste disposal;

and the promotion, information, education and advocacy for sanitation.

iv. Finally, the DOH commits to cooperate and coordinate with other concerned agencies for the implementation of this Joint Memorandum–Circular on WASH in ECCD as an affirmation of its mandates, and in the continued pursuit of its objectives, to wit, *“promote the health and well-being of every Filipino; prevent and control the spread of diseases among population at risk; and protect individuals, families and communities exposed to health hazards and risks.”*

b. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)

i. The DSWD shall encourage the LGUs to establish group handwashing facilities in their day care centers.

ii. The DSWD shall integrate the WASH training module in the Standard Training for Day Care Workers.

iii. The DSWD shall advocate the inclusion of WASH protocols in the current handwashing practices of daycare centers.

iv. The DSWD, through its supplementary feeding program, shall reiterate and reinforce the benefits and practice of handwashing.

v. The DSWD shall promote the importance of access to potable water, proper sanitation and good hygiene practices to parents through the Family Development Sessions being conducted through the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*.

vi. The DSWD shall assure the continuous and sustained appropriation of funds for the inclusion of WASH facilities in the design of KALAHI-CIDSS-supported day care center construction.

vii. The DSWD shall advocate the importance of proper hygiene and sanitary environments through activities such as, but not limited to, the observance of the Annual Global Handwashing Day.

c. The Department of Education (DepEd)

i. The DepEd shall support the WASH in ECCD program by ensuring that the gains reaped from its implementation in the early learning centers will be reinforced by the DepEd’s water, sanitation, and hygiene program.

ii. The DepEd shall sustain the implementation of the daily group handwashing and toothbrushing, bi-annual deworming, correct practices for safe food handling, and environment sanitation under DepEd’s water, sanitation, and hygiene program.

iii. The DepEd shall ensure the provision and sustainability of water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities for kindergarten classes through the Department's budget for school facilities and operating expenses as well as those that can be derived from other funding sources, subject to the availability of funds and/or resources.

d. The Union of Local Authorities in the Philippines (ULAP)

i. ULAP shall harness its extensive national network to scale up the information dissemination of the WASH in ECCD program, and shall strive to reach out to local government authorities to broaden and strengthen the base of program implementation.

ii. ULAP shall promote the conduct of annual capacity building programs for LGU barangay leaders, day care workers/teachers to enhance knowledge and skills on WASH.

e. Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council Secretariat

i. The Secretariat shall take the lead in coordinating with the national government agencies on the implementation of the Joint Memorandum-Circular and the accompanying joint action plan.

ii. The Secretariat shall be responsible in monitoring the implementation, including consolidation, endorsement, and submission of reports from the national government agencies to the ECCD Council Board and concerned partner agencies.

iii. The Secretariat shall provide technical assistance and support services in the implementation of this Joint Memorandum-Circular.

2. The DILG, for its part, shall commit to integrate WASH in ECCD in its mainstream programs.

a. It shall assist waterless municipalities and barangays to gain access to basic services for water and sanitation through the *Sagana at Ligtas na Tubig (Salintubig)* program, the Bottom-up Budgeting (BUB) Water Program, and other relevant programs of the agency. Specifically, it shall provide infrastructure development to early learning centers that still do not have access to improved water supply services. Furthermore, following its program guidelines, the *Salintubig* and the BUB Water Program shall scale up the sanitation component of the program by enabling access to toilets with running water.

b. It will integrate orientation sessions and demonstration workshops for promoting WASH in early learning centers in the capacity building activities of local government units. Specifically, it will integrate the

WASH modules in the Local WATSAN Governance and Strategic Communication Training Modules.

c. It will integrate WASH indicators in the assessment criteria of the Child-friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA), and monitor compliance thereof.

d. It shall mobilize the municipal/city local chief executives to convene inception and, later on, monitoring and evaluation meetings to include the *Punong Barangay*, the municipal/city social welfare and development officer, the health and sanitation officer, and other instrumentalities to undertake and sustain the implementation of WASH in ECCD in the early learning centers.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Government Units:

The Local Government Units (LGUs) in the provincial, municipal, and barangay levels are specifically expected to include allocations from their Special Education Fund (SEF) and Gender and Development (GAD) Fund, in addition to other local funds, to be utilized for the purposes stated hereunder, pursuant to Section 7 of the Republic Act 10410, also known as "The Early Years Act of 2013":

- As support mechanism for the implementation of the WASH in ECCD Program;
- As fiscal inputs to organize and support parent associations to implement the WASH in ECCD Program;
- As counterpart funds for the continuing professional development on WASH in ECCD of their ECCD public service providers;
- Provide the facilities for the conduct of the WASH in ECCD Program.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing premises, the PARTNERS agree as follows:

That this understanding involves working together towards common goals of mutual interest, cooperation, understanding and efficient administration of the programs and activities of the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in Early Child Care and Development (ECCD);

That the purpose of this Joint Memorandum-Circular is to strengthen the cooperation, collaboration, and convergence between and among the LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND NATIONAL AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT in the spirit of mutual assistance, knowledge and resource sharing to achieve the objectives of the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) in Early Child Care and Development (ECCD);

That this Joint Memorandum-Circular shall take effect immediately and shall be in full force and effect until validly terminated. A joint action plan shall supplement this Joint Memorandum-Circular. This is an evolving document and shall be reviewed and updated as deemed necessary.

If any provision of the Joint Memorandum-Circular is declared unlawful or unconstitutional, the rest of the provisions not deemed as such shall remain valid and binding.

For compliance.



BR. ARMIN A. LUISTRO FSC

Ex Oficio Chairperson

Early Childhood Care and Development Council (ECCD)

Secretary, Department of Education

and

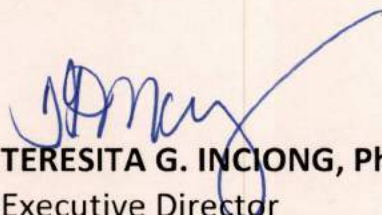


MEL SENEN S. SARMIENTO

Secretary, Department of Interior and Local Government



WITNESSES:



TERESITA G. INCIONG, Ph.D., DPA

Executive Director

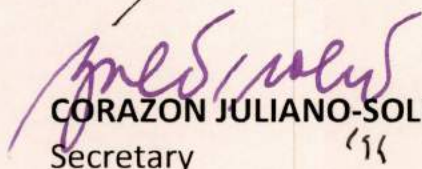
Early Childhood Care and Development Council



JANETTE L. GARIN, M.D.

Secretary

Department of Health



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