



Number of incest cases in Philippines increasing

By Helen Flores, The Philippine Star - Posted at 11/05/2010 9:58 AM

MANILA, Philippines - The Child Protection Unit-Philippines on Thursday expressed concern over the high incidence of incest cases in the country.

CPU legal consultant Katrina Legarda said 33 percent of the total child abuse incidents recorded in 2009 were incest.

Citing data from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the agency said Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula) topped the list of areas having the most number of reported incest in 2009 with 90 cases; followed by Region VII (Central Visayas) with 82; Region III, 60; Region II (Cagayan Valley) and National Capital Region with, 50; and Region I (Ilocos Region) with 49.

The CPU blamed the high incidence of incest in the country to the increasing number of women working overseas, as well as alcohol and drug abuse.

"This disturbing phenomenon of the girl-child being turned into substitute spouse has been happening in our country along with the feminization of labor migration," Legarda said in a statement.

Legarda said women now comprised 70 percent of Filipino workers deployed abroad.

The problem, however, remains largely unreported because of its sensitive nature and fear of shame that comes with filing a formal complaint.

"There is also a need to push for national laws and policies to protect children from violence and abuse," Legarda said.

She said compared to stranger abuse, incest has a different psychological and emotional impact on the victim because of the damaged relationship of trust between the victim and the parent.

"A child molested by a stranger can run home for help and comfort. A victim of incest cannot," Legarda said.

Legarda said a long-term program should be set for education about the rights of children to address the lack of necessary support system for victims of incest.

CPU earlier said it will put up one national and six regional training and treatment centers in the next five years to provide assistance to at least 10,000 children abused every year.

The country has 25 child protection units in key areas in the country and 81 satellite offices nationwide.

"The centers and clinics will address the lack of necessary support system for victims while proactively safeguarding human rights of children," the CPU said. CPU is a Manila-based organization composed of child protection practitioners committed to provide the highest clinical standards of care for abused children.

Look also here: www.incest.philippineculture.ph