**Summary**

The Child Protection Clinic (CPC) on Wheels is a pioneering preventive grassroots advocacy approach to child protection particularly for the prevention of child abuse, commercial exploitation of children and human trafficking. Manned by a core of Salesian Sisters, social workers, volunteers and child rights advocates, the CPC on Wheels provide psycho-social spiritual intervention for child victims of abuse; child rights education; life skills sessions; training of frontline advocates on child advocacy for child protection in communities & schools. Learning sessions are also conducted to organize preventive alert systems in these localities. The CPC on Wheels also brings social services, socio-cultural and recreational activities, educational assistance, food distribution, and occasional free medical clinic in high-risk communities.

**What is the issue, problem, or challenge?**

Everyday the tri-media accounts for a number of children being abused, neglected and exploited within the family home and elsewhere. Furthermore, child trafficking and the high incidence of teenage pregnancy have been reported by the Council for the Welfare of Children. Our society’s awareness and understanding of the pervasiveness of child abuse is a growing concern not only by child advocates but a greater majority of the Filipinos. This happens despite the enactment of RA 7610, the Anti-Child Abuse law, and other legislations focused on the prevention and legal sanctions of children. The DILG reports that only 35% of the Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children (BCPC) who are the vanguards for child protection in communities are functional. Quite a number of unreported cases of abuses on children do not reach the police and the courts due to several factors among which are: the preservation of family secrets within the home and the lack of awareness whom to approach the cases of abuse. Meanwhile, the victims suffer tremendously from the negative impact of the abuse experiences.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development reflected a total number of 4,573 child abuse case in their February 2011 report. This figure excludes abused children that are served in non-government institutions and those that are not yet reported and therefore have been deprived of their need for recovery and healing. There are very few or even no community based program technically equipped to assist sexual abuse survivors and they could not really respond to the magnitude of the problem.

**How will this project solve this problem?**

As problems affecting children are perpetuated by people’s traditional practices and value system, the Laura Vicuña Foundation proactively responds by building a “culture” of social protection for children, which is being done through its Child Protection Clinic (CPC) on Wheels Programme. It offers target communities with a comprehensive package of preventive interventions which aim at building the capacity of community members to establish their own preventive alert system. The Project’s components and specific activities are the following:

1. **Preventive Actions and Early Interventions**

This will cover children and youth, who are identified to be very much at risk of sexual abuse, commercial sexual exploitation and child trafficking based on the general profile of trafficked children which was used as identification and selection indices.

The activities under this component will include:

1. *Educational Assistance* - This will be given either in the form of daily school allowance/ cash assistance for school projects/ activities, or supplies assistance depending upon the need of the participant and according to the requirements of the educational program where he/she is enrolled.
2. *Learning Sessions/ Child’s Rights Advocacy* - This will include awareness sessions on children’s rights and issues such as child labor, child trafficking and sexual abuse to be conducted in LVF CPC Areas.
3. *Protective Behavior Training*- The Protective Behavior Training equips children and youth with personal safety knowledge and skills so that they will be able to respond to impending dangers of abuse, preventing them from being victimized. Consisting of workshops and lectures, the training is given for two days to participants.
4. *Capacity Building of Child Rights Advocates* – Selected youth and parent partners will be given relevant formations and training to equip them as Child Rights Advocates.
5. *Livelihood/ Income Generating Activities for Parents of CPC child beneficiaries* – this component aims to economically empower parents to reduce the possibility of abuse in their households.
6. **Health and Nutrition Component**

The LVF Child Protection Clinic (CPC) on Wheels conducts feeding and medical/ dental mission in its partner communities in order to help improve the health condition of its children beneficiaries. This also targets improving the psycho, social and mental health of the project participants in order to decrease their vulnerability from child abuse, exploitation and trafficking. Specific activities under this component include the following: a) supplemental feeding; b) conduct of medical/ dental missions; and, c) psychiatric services & psychosocial interventions.

**Potential Long Term Impact**

By building the capacities of community members especially children in creating an enabling environment for the protection and development of children in high risk urban poor communities, incidence of child abuse, exploitation and trafficking will be eliminated.

**Project Message**

“Everyday there are thousands of children at risk of being abused or exploited. We have to get out there thru LVF’s Child Protection Clinic on Wheels and stop the abuse before it happens. We want to help those children, now.” (*Sr. Maria Victoria P. Sta. Ana, FMA/ 2013 Philippine Regulation Commission (PRC) Outstanding Professional of the Year in the field of Social Work)*