

THE 2019 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW OF THE PHILIPPINES

Review of the Status of the Implementation of the
Sustainable Development Goals in the Philippines
Focusing on Empowering People and Ensuring
Inclusiveness and Equality



GOALS IN FOCUS

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I. Introduction

In September 2015, the Philippines, together with 192 other United Nations (UN) member states, committed to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets by 2030. The SDGs, also called the Global Goals, have a range of economic, social, environmental, and governance targets and there was recognition, early on, that these need to be achieved in order to attain the long-term vision as articulated in *AmBisyon Natin 2040*.

The SDGs present a bold commitment to finish what has been started through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. The Philippines affirms its commitment to achieve the SDGs by 2030, if not sooner, especially as the Global Goals are in sync with the country's development plans and long-term aspirations for 2040.

The Philippines, together with 50 other countries, is presenting its Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs to the 2019 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in New York from July 9 to 18, 2019. The 2019 VNRs are expected to focus on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality and will highlight Goals 4 (Quality Education), 8 (Decent Work), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 13 (Climate Action), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

The Philippines uses the VNR as venue to report on its progress on the SDGs, and plans to periodically participate in the VNR. This is to lend urgency to the development agenda of the SDGs, which is one of the lessons learned from the MDG-era implementation. For its first VNR conducted in July 2016, the Philippines focused on the lessons learned from the MDGs and how to build on its gains moving forward to the SDG era¹. For the second VNR, we will provide a thorough discussion on the milestones achieved and lessons learned focusing on the goals stated above.

In conducting the VNR, the Philippines undertook several consultation workshops to gain feedback from stakeholders and to engage and renew commitments for cooperation towards the achievement of the goals. For this report, focus has been given to synergies between government and non-government actions that empower people and ensure inclusiveness and equality, particularly on deliberate efforts to reach out to the marginalized sector.

¹ Some of the key findings of the Philippines' first VNR are: (1) good governance is a key lesson – the attainment of the MDGs requires a sustained and consistent commitment from all stakeholders (government, private sector, civil society, and development partners); (2) there should be a clear implementation plan that covers institutional arrangements, communication and advocacy strategies, and financing plans; and (3) an appropriate data monitoring system to support the accountability mechanism should be in place -- and must be responsive to the demand for disaggregation of data and must ensure the timeliness of data collection so that policies and program designs benefit from up-to-date information.

II. Main Message of the Philippine VNR

Filipinos long for work-life balance, a comfortable, secure and peaceful life. This long-term aspiration — *AmBisyon Natin*² 2040 — was gleaned from a nationwide survey conducted in late 2015. This was about the time the Philippines adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and subsequently crafted the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022. The country soon recognized that it needed to transform the world by ensuring sustainable development and leaving no one behind in order to live “the life we want.”

Sustainability and inclusivity are both goals and principles that guide development strategies of the country. Engaging stakeholders is necessary for an initiative to gain traction and be owned by a broad section of society who are driven to make it work and succeed.

The Philippines’ second Voluntary National Review emphasizes the synergies between government and non-government actions required to ensure inclusiveness and equality.

The country has employed a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to SDG implementation. National actions are grounded in laws to ensure robustness. Cross-sectoral coordination and orchestration of actions are done through existing institutional mechanisms. Stakeholders are informed and engaged in discussions. The recently-launched SDG website provides a platform for broader engagement, including the youth and the Filipino diaspora.

The primary catalyst for action is the PDP 2017-2022, which incorporates the SDGs. The PDP has subsequently been cascaded to the whole of government, including at the local level, following *Executive Order No. 27 s. 2017*. Nationally-determined 2030 numerical targets were identified, which set the required pace of progress of the SDGs. These targets are reflected in the *Results Matrices*, a companion document of the PDP. The Philippine Statistics Authority monitors the Tier 1 indicators through their SDG Watch.

While government is both catalyst and mobilizer of the policy framework for the SDGs, even non-government stakeholders have taken on the responsibility for the agenda and delivering the services to the rights-holders.

For quality education - the legal framework for institutionalizing the *Alternative Learning System* has been set. The Department of Education, working with the private sector, has been reaching out to what they call the “last mile,” which includes out-of-school youth and other vulnerable groups, to deliver education services.

For decent work – to allow for a just transition to a greener economy, the Philippines’ *Green Jobs Act* incentivizes enterprises to offer jobs using green production practices. The Securities and Exchange Commission will also require Sustainability Reports for Publicly Listed Companies, beginning 2020. Private businesses, such as cosmetics manufacturer Human Nature, are adopting inclusive business models, such as a value chain that deliberately involves disadvantaged communities. The *Mentor Me* program of the Department of Trade and Industry further promotes mentoring and partnership between small and large enterprises.

² *AmBisyon Natin* literally translates to “Our *AmBisyon*.” *AmBisyon* is a portmanteau of the Filipino words for *Ambition* and *Vision*.

To reduce inequality - the *Conditional Cash Transfer* provides targeted interventions to disadvantaged families. Responding to *Republic Act 10524 (otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability)* which reserves employment for persons with disability, companies such as Lamoian Corporation employ handicapped people who comprise a significant proportion of their personnel. To offset regional disparities, the *Assistance to Disadvantaged Municipalities* provides a support fund for poorer local governments to build access roads, water systems, and reproductive health services, among others.

For climate action - the *Climate Risk Management Framework* provides risk information to enhance adaptive capacity. *Project NOAH* exemplifies the partnership between the academe and government in providing timely weather information for disaster preparedness. A ban on single-use plastics is already implemented in a number of cities and municipalities. A *Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan* is now being formulated to provide a coherent framework for climate action.

For peace, justice, and strong institutions – a major milestone is the ratification of the *Bangsamoro Organic Law*, which was a result of cumulative initiatives, including those by the international community, to address a long-standing conflict in southern Philippines.

To ensure effectiveness of partnerships - the Philippines has been conducting the *Official Development Assistance Portfolio Review*. However, SDG implementation is still mostly financed from domestic resources.

Pursuing the SDGs requires an ambitious approach that gets everyone behind the goal of leaving no one behind. Involving the different stakeholders today in a very concrete way will determine the attainment of the SDGs in the remaining 11 years, and on to 2040.

III. Methodology and Process of the Review

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), as the socioeconomic planning ministry of the Philippines, is in charge of coordinating the implementation of the SDGs using the process of overseeing the implementation of the PDP.

Consistent with the theme of empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality, the Philippines’ VNR prides itself on its consultative processes. One of the main motivations to conduct the VNR was to reinforce interest and commitment to the SDGs both from government and non-government actors. The VNR process (*Table 1*) was utilized as an opportunity to connect with different stakeholders representing different sectors and geographic regions.

Table 1. Philippines’ VNR Process

COMPONENT	SCHEDULE
Phase 1: Planning and Institutionalization	
Communicating to the President of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) the intention of the Philippines to conduct a VNR in 2019	April 2018
Preparatory meetings to discuss initial scope of review and map key national actors/stakeholders	May – August 2018
Phase 2: Identifying the 2030 SDG National Numerical Targets	
Planning Workshop for the Identification of the 2030 National Numerical SDG Targets	September 2018
Data gathering and preparation of the Zero Draft of the Identification of the 2030 SDG Targets	September – October 2018
National Consultation Workshop on Identifying the 2030 National Numerical Targets	November 2018
Finalization of the 2030 National Numerical Targets	December 2018 – January 2019
Phase 3: Gathering Inputs and Data for the VNR	
Data gathering for the Zero Draft of the VNR	October - December 2018
Initial review of the Zero Draft	
Conduct of Inter-agency workshop: Luzon	March 2019
Conduct of Inter-agency workshop: Visayas	March 2019
Conduct of Inter-agency workshop: Mindanao	March 2019
Conduct of inter-agency workshop: with children	April 2019
Conduct of inter-agency workshop: with children-focused civil society organizations (CSOs)	April 2019
Conduct of inter-agency workshop: labor unions	April 2019
Conduct of inter-agency workshop: CSOs	April 2019

COMPONENT	SCHEDULE
Phase 4: Writing of the Main Message and VNR	
Drafting of the main message and VNR	May 2019
Finalization of the VNR	May – June 2019
Phase 5: Presentation and Feedback	
Presentation of the VNR in New York	July 2019
Consolidation of findings and feedback	August - September 2019
Determination and implementation of next steps	October 2019 onwards

Phase 1. Planning and Institutionalization

The Philippines signified its intention to present its VNR to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in April 2018. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) was then engaged by NEDA to draft the report with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) providing financial support. During the inception phases, non-government organizations (NGOs) signified their intention to participate in the VNR process. These meetings were used to map the key stakeholders to be engaged. Members from the UN and international CSOs provided some feedback on the previous year’s HLPF.

The content and scope of the review was then identified. The UN suggested that the VNR be used to assess the progress on all the 17 goals, however, this VNR centers exclusively on the focus goals. The Philippines intends to participate in the VNR every four years, given the three-year cycle and rotation of the focus goals.

Phase 2. Identifying the 2030 SDGs National Numerical Targets

Consistent with the SDGs’ principles of ownership and consultation, NEDA involved the PDP planning committees and other agencies on each of the Tier 1 indicators of the SDGs to initiate discussions on the required efforts to meet the targets. It was emphasized that achievement of the SDG targets is not only feasible, but is also necessary to achieve our long-term vision.

NEDA and PIDS provided different modalities in identifying the 2030 numerical targets. The methodology is discussed more thoroughly in Section VI. Acknowledging that the target-setting process is more political than technical, NEDA and PIDS presented the computed targets to agencies and planning committees, which then either confirmed and committed to the targets or provided an alternative. The outputs of this target-setting exercise were discussed in another workshop, which provided a multi-sectoral platform to negotiate and arrive at a consensus. Through these exercises and negotiation processes, the Philippines arrived at its initial list of 2030 national numerical targets.

Phase 3. Gathering inputs and data for the VNR

The national numerical targets were used alongside other information from the Philippine Statistical System, the PDP 2017-2022, and the Socioeconomic Report (SER) 2017³ to assess the Philippines' progress in achieving the SDGs and to arrive at the zero draft of the VNR. The zero draft provides a thorough analysis on the focus goals with in-depth analysis for each of the targets that have corresponding Tier 1 indicators.

To gather inputs and data for the VNR, eight consultation workshops were conducted with representatives from different sectors and regions in the country.

Consultation	Description
Luzon (Clark City, Pampanga)	Regional consultations in each of the three major Philippine island groups attended by CSOs, academic institutions, media, business consortia, and government representatives, including law enforcement personnel.
Visayas (Cebu City, Cebu)	
Mindanao (Davao City, Davao)	
National Capital Region (Quezon City)	Discussions focused on data granularity and sustaining engagement with government. The demand for platforms for CSO engagement to better direct and coordinate their functions and resources to support the SDGs was also highlighted as well the need to translate the results and recommendations of the consultations to policy documents.
With Children (Quezon City)	In partnership with UNICEF and Plan International Philippines, the report was presented to children for their feedback. Discussions focused on the importance of education, how climate change has affected them, and the need to treat children as participants rather than mere recipients of services. The consultation was used as an opportunity to advocate for the SDGs with children.
With trade and labor unions (Manila)	In partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment and the International Labour Organization Philippines, discussions focused on the need for more spaces for engagement between government and trade and labor unions and the need to translate the country's economic growth to equitable growth and decent working conditions. The consultation also resulted in a working paper submitted by the trade unions to PIDS and NEDA containing their issues on each of the focus goals.
With Child-Focused CSOs (Tacloban City)	In partnership with UNICEF and Plan International Philippines, discussions focused on the need for greater data granularity to report on the status of vulnerable sectors and the extent of the operationalization of "leaving no one behind." The need to sustain the engagement between government and CSOs after the VNR presentation was highlighted.

³ The SER 2017 provides a review of the implementation of the PDP. It features the major groundwork laid down in 2017, along with the recommended priority strategies for 2018 and 2019.

The consultations served as a venue to account for the many different non-government initiatives that contribute to empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality. The following were the key questions during the consultation process:

- *Are there any initiatives supportive of the SDGs that you wish to highlight in the report? What are the best practices that you can share?*
- *In pursuit of the SDGs, how can stakeholders be further engaged?*

The SDG Website (sdg.neda.gov.ph) was also used as a platform to solicit comments on the draft VNR. The inputs from the consultations and the online feedback have been documented but due to editorial constraints, only selected inputs are reflected in this report.

On top of the assessment of the progress of the SDGs, the Philippine VNR also showcases the country's achievements in the past three years in SDG coordination, monitoring, and creating the enabling environment for the implementation of SDG-supportive programs and projects. Specifically, this report looks into the implementation mechanisms and the alignment of the SDGs with the national development agenda. For the *Means of Implementation* section, the Philippines leverages competencies and resources to mobilize actions, localizes the SDGs, and further engages stakeholders.

Phase 4. Writing the Main Message of the VNR

Given the feedback received from the different stakeholders and their commitment to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, the Philippines' main message focused on both whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to meet the SDGs. Using the inputs from the zero draft and the results of the consultation workshops, an abridged version of the VNR was written. For the Philippines, the VNR process is as important as the product itself.

Phase 5: Presentation and Feedback

The VNR and the consultation processes are timely and coincide with the midterm updating of the PDP. Stakeholder recommendations during the VNR consultations will be forwarded to the appropriate PDP planning committees as inputs, thus providing a link between the VNR process and the mainstream policy and planning processes of the government. These inputs will be the basis for the identification of programs and projects for funding.

At the same time, evaluation and feedback activities will be undertaken to provide the findings and the core messages of the VNR to relevant stakeholders.

IV. Incorporation of the SDGs into National Frameworks

Since the adoption of the SDGs, the Philippine government has been setting up the policy and enabling environment for their implementation, as well as compiling and analyzing data for monitoring the country's conditions on the SDGs. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), as the cabinet-level agency responsible for development and planning in the country, looks into synergies of the SDGs indicator framework in relation to the monitoring of the country's medium- and long-term development plans. All concerned government agencies have been enjoined to provide the necessary data support for monitoring the Global Goals with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), an attached agency of NEDA, designated as the official repository of SDG indicators.

AmBisyon Natin 2040 and the PDP

AmBisyon Natin 2040 represents the collective long-term vision and aspirations of the Filipino people for themselves and for the country. It describes the kind of life that people want to live, and how they want the country to be by 2040.

“By 2040, the Philippines will have been a prosperous, predominantly middle-class society where no one is poor, our people live long and healthy lives, are smart and innovative, and live in a high-trust society.”

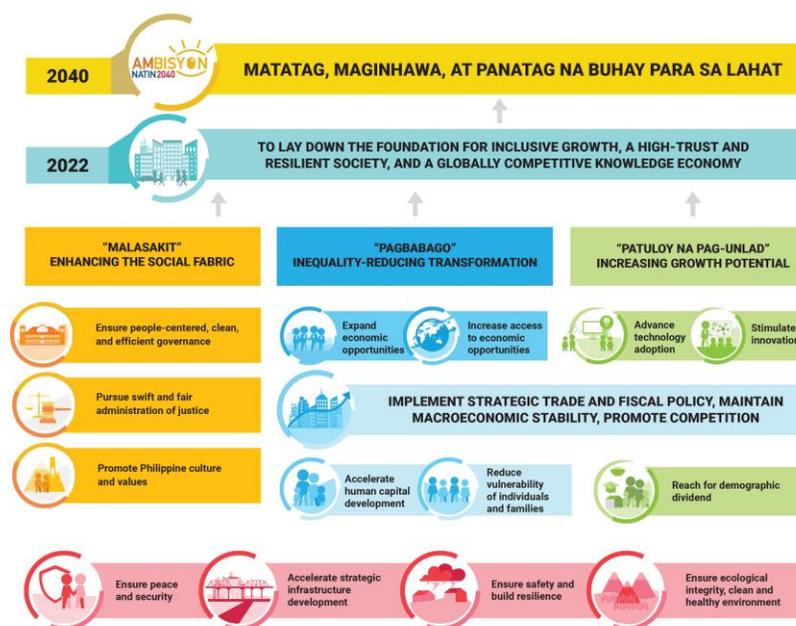
This long-term vision is a basis for national unity and is meant to guide development planning across at least four government administrations. The attainment of the SDGs, set at 2030, should pave the way for the achievement of *AmBisyon Natin 2040*. The vision, which necessitates inter-generational equity, is consistent with the core principles of the SDGs of sustainable development and leaving no one behind. Sustainable development requires long-term planning where present development should never be at the expense of future generations. This is a requisite for the Filipino *AmBisyon* of a life that is *matatag* (strongly rooted), *maginhawa* (comfortable), and *panatag* (secure).

Executive Order No. 27, s. 2017 “Directing all government agencies and instrumentalities, including local government units to implement the Philippine Development Plan and Public Investment Program for the Period of 2017-2022” prescribes the following as the basis for the crafting of the PDP 2017-2022:

- The Philippine's Long Term Vision entitled *AmBisyon Natin 2040*;
- The President's 0+10 Point Socioeconomic Agenda; and
- UN Resolution No. 70/1 or the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

With this executive order, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda becomes a basis for the Philippines' medium-term national development strategy. The PDP serves as the implementation mechanism of the SDGs in the Philippines with the 17 goals integrated into the Plan. The country has taken an integrative approach in implementation, utilizing existing mechanisms and structures both at the national and local levels. The PDP serves as the strategic development roadmap of every administrative term. It is crafted and coordinated by NEDA in consultation with the different line agencies of government and other non-government stakeholders. Below is the strategic framework of the PDP with each box in the diagram representing a chapter.

Figure 1. PDP 2017-2022 Strategic Framework



The goal of the PDP 2017-2022 is to lay down a robust foundation for inclusive growth, a high-trust and resilient society and a globally competitive knowledge economy. This foundation will be the basis for enabling and empowering every Filipino, now and in the future generation, to attain his/her aspirations.

All SDGs can be mapped into the priorities of the PDP (Figure 2). Ending poverty (SDG 1) and ensuring that households have food on their table (SDG 2) have consistently been one of the Philippines’ core development priorities. Meanwhile, the achievement of *Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production* is seen as a precondition to ensuring that development achievements are sustained across generations.

The strategies of the PDP fall under the three major pillars of enhancing the social fabric, inequality-reducing transformation, and increasing the growth potential. There are also cross-cutting strategies to support the other interventions and to provide a bedrock for all strategies to work.

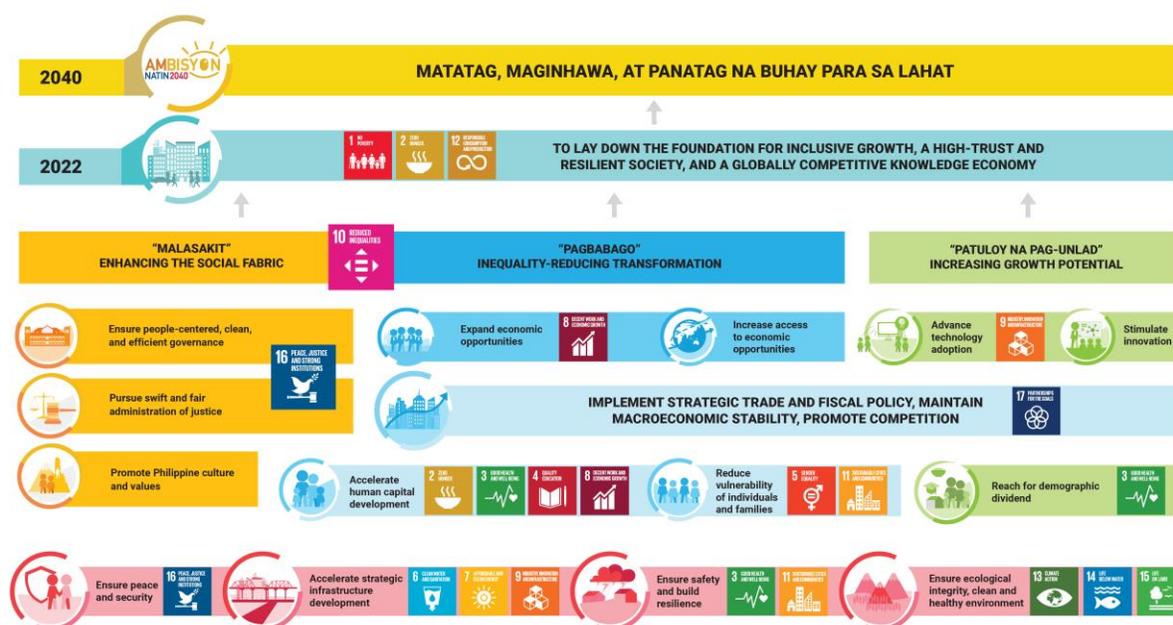
For the pillar on enhancing the social fabric, strategies include improvements in public service delivery and regulatory reform, justice sector reform, and the mainstreaming of culture in development and governance. The objective is to regain peoples’ trust in public institutions and cultivate trust in fellow Filipinos. SDG 16, which focuses on attaining peace, justice, and strong institutions, closely corresponds to this goal as many of the crime- and governance-related indicators are found here.

The two pillars of the PDP on enhancing the social fabric and effecting inequality-reducing transformation align with SDG 10 as the goal calls for reducing inequalities in income as well as those based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic, or other status within a country. The pillar on inequality-reducing transformation hosts many of the social development goals of the SDGs namely *Goal 2: Zero hunger*, *Goal 3: Good health and well-being*, *Goal 4: Quality education*, *Goal 5: Gender equality*, *Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth*, and *Goal 11: Sustainable cities and municipalities*.

Two major strategies have been identified to sustain and further accelerate growth and development in the future. One is by *building up the knowledge economy*. This will require human capital development and establishing the institutions and infrastructure to encourage research, innovation, and technology adoption. The second strategy is by accelerating the *full harvest of the demographic dividend*. Age-appropriate sexuality education and services will be made accessible to fully meet the need for modern family planning methods. This will be complemented by measures to increase the labor market participation of women to defer childbearing and attain wholesome birth spacing.

The indicators on population development can be found in *Goal 3: Good health and well-being*, while the indicators that will help reap the benefits of the fourth industrial revolution are found both in *Goal 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure* and PDP chapters on technology and innovation.

Figure 2. PDP 2017-2022 Strategic Framework with Corresponding SDG Goals



Implementing strategic trade and fiscal policy and maintaining macroeconomic stability and promoting competition and cooperation require international partnerships. These are consistent with *Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals*.

The red bar at the bottom of the strategic framework are the foundations for sustainable development. These are considered bedrock strategies and are necessary conditions for implementation of the PDP strategies. The physical environment will be characterized by a balanced and strategic development of infrastructure, while ensuring ecological integrity and a clean and healthy environment. Underpinning all these are strategies to secure the country and its people against natural and human-induced threats.

Ensuring peace and security is consistent with *Goal 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions*. Accelerating strategic infrastructure development corresponds with *Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation*, *Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy*, and *Goal 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure*. Indicators on disaster risk resiliency are reflected in *Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities* and *Goal 13: Climate action*.

The PDP chapter to *Ensure ecological integrity, clean, and healthy environment* is consistent with *Goal 13: Climate action, Goal 14: Life below water, and Goal 15: Life on land.*

The PDP is also accompanied by the Public Investment Program (PIP) 2017-2022 which contains a list of priority programs and projects, updated annually, to be implemented within the medium term by the national government, government-owned and controlled corporations, government financial institutions, and other national government offices and instrumentalities that contribute to the achievement of the PDP. In the latest iterations of the PIP, each proposed program and project is tagged according to the SDG to which it contributes.

PDP strategies are translated into sector-specific actions through the different sectoral plans, many of which undergo broad-based consultations. These sectoral plans are also guided by the SDGs, such as the *National Environmental Health Action Plan*, which is based on meeting SDG Targets 6.1 – 6.3. This sectoral buy-in has resulted in a two-way demand between the central planning agency (NEDA) and the line agencies. NEDA enjoins the line agencies to reflect the targets of the SDGs in their sectoral plans, while line agencies push for NEDA and PSA’s assistance in the development of the monitoring and evaluation systems related to the SDGs (e.g., implementing the necessary groundwork to shift Tier 2 indicators to Tier 1). This leads to greater engagement among different government and non-government actors.

0+10 Point Socioeconomic Agenda

The President’s 0+10 Point Socioeconomic Agenda, which gives emphasis to regional or subnational equality and the improvement of the access to services in rural areas, aligns with the SDG’s core tenet of *leaving no one behind*. The “business as usual” growth process has led to unequal growth in certain regions, leading to very unequal development outcomes. In the pursuit of the 0+10 Point Socioeconomic Agenda and the SDGs, particular focus is given to address regional disparities to reach the *last mile*.

Regional Development Plans

Resolving regional disparities requires localization of the SDGs, especially in disadvantaged regions in the country. The main mechanism for SDG localization is through the Regional Development Plans (RDP), which translate the national development plan to regional strategies and priorities. The RDPs, by extension of the alignment and complementation of the PDP and the SDGs, serve as the implementation mechanism of the SDGs at the regional and local levels. NEDA’s Regional Development Offices are in charge of the crafting and coordination of the RDPs.

V. SDGs Monitoring

From October 2015 to May 2017, the Philippine government, through the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), conducted several technical, multi-sectoral workshops with concerned data producers and compilers on the SDG indicators. The PSA also held bilateral meetings with various data producers. As a result, 156 indicators were identified as being available in the Philippine Statistical System (PSS). Of these, 103 were SDG global indicators, 28 were proxy indicators, and 25 were supplementary indicators.

In May 2017, the PSA Board approved the list of 156 preliminary National SDG Tier 1 indicators. Subsequently, the PSA compiled data on these indicators from its own data sources and from pertinent data producers then made these available in an information portal, called the *SDG Watch*. Monitoring of the SDGs presents huge challenges for the entire PSS and its respective counterparts in UN member states, particularly with respect to data gaps, including insufficient data granularity which limits the country's ability to monitor the progress of the ethical imperative of leaving no one behind. A summary of the Tier 1 indicators per Goal is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of SDGs Tier 1 Indicators

Goal	Global Tier 1	National Tier 1			
		Global SDGs	Supplementary	Proxy	Total
Goal 1	2	7	11	0	18
Goal 2	6	2	1	2	5
Goal 3	13	13	4	6	23
Goal 4	4	6	1	9	16
Goal 5	3	8	3	4	15
Goal 6	4	3	3	2	8
Goal 7	4	4	0	0	4
Goal 8	9	8	1	0	9
Goal 9	8	5	0	0	5
Goal 10	5	7	0	0	7
Goal 11	2	3	2	0	5
Goal 12	1	1	0	0	1
Goal 13	0	4	0	0	4
Goal 14	2	1	0	0	1
Goal 15	4	10	1	0	11
Goal 16	6	8	1	2	11
Goal 17	15	13	0	0	13
Total	88	103	28	25	156

The PDP Results Matrices (RMs) 2017-2022 is an accompanying document of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) which monitors the implementation and achievement of its strategies and programs. Out of the 155 Tier 1 indicators of the SDGs, 68 (43.87%) are currently reflected in the RMs. The midterm updating of the PDP this year is seen to add to this number.

VI. Setting the National SDGs Numerical Targets

The Philippines has already determined numerical targets for the national SDG Tier 1 indicators. In setting the numerical targets, the following processes were observed.⁴:

- examination of the (direct and implicit) global SDG targets⁵;
- extrapolating the required growth rate to meet the 2022 PDP targets of selected SDG indicators that are also part of the RMs of the PDP 2017-2022;
- use of the champion method⁶, i.e. determining the best performance of UN member states in similar states of development, and,
- a trend analysis of the national performance in the National SDG Tier 1 indicators.

A summary of the indicators with final or provisional targets by Goal as of end of 2018 is provided in Table 3. Out of 156 indicators, 91 have either final or provisional targets, 10 are for reporting only, while 55 indicators have to undergo review based on the recommendations of the workshop participants.

Table 3. Summary of Tier 1 Indicators with Provisional Targets

Summary of Targets for SDG Indicators by Goal	With final targets	With provisional targets	No target/ Reporting only	For review	Total
Goal 1	15	0	0	3	18
Goal 2	0	5	0	0	5
Goal 3	14	1	0	8	23
Goal 4	5	7	0	4	16
Goal 5	6	1	0	8	15
Goal 6	2	0	0	6	8
Goal 7	2	0	0	2	4
Goal 8	4	2	2	1	9
Goal 9	0	1	4	0	5
Goal 10	4	0	2	1	7
Goal 11	4	1	0	0	5
Goal 12	0	0	0	1	1
Goal 13	4	0	0	0	4
Goal 14	0	1	0	0	1
Goal 15	0	1	0	10	11
Goal 16	8	0	0	3	11
Goal 17	4	0	2	7	13
TOTAL	72	19	10	55	156

⁴ Methods 2-4 are used when the SDG target does not have an explicit numerical equivalent. For Target 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors, and the equivalent national indicator "Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita".

⁵ As an example, for Target 2.2: By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons, the national target by 2030 will be zero.

⁶ United Nations Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific. *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report*. Accessed online through <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Asia-Pacific-SDG-Progress-Report-2017.pdf>.

VII. Progress on the Goals and Targets: Integration of the Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development and Leaving No One Behind

This chapter discusses the extent to which the Philippines has empowered people and ensured inclusiveness and equality pertaining to the focus goals.

While it is the government's task to provide the policy framework, relevant legislation, and policy enactments that will enable the achievement of the goals, the engagement of non-government stakeholders is crucial. Given this needed cooperation, we highlight best practices from both government and non-government actors that support the SDGs. Some of these are initiatives on inclusive education and business practices and specific programs designed for the poor and marginalized. We also highlight the *Boracay Rehabilitation*⁷ as an example where the objective of leaving no one behind was integrated into making sure that economic progress does not come at the expense of environmental integrity. More comprehensively, the development of the *Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan* highlights the need for better complementarities between households and firms to ensure sustainable consumption and production.

The last section provides a stock-taking of Philippines' needs in relation to the focus goals and looks at future and potential partnerships with the international community.



Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The pursuit of social equity across generations is articulated in SDG 4. Consistent with the aspirations of the Filipino people as articulated in the long-term vision *AmBisyon Natin 2040* and with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022's pillar of *Pagbabago* (Change), this global goal targets to address the needs of the current generation in terms of education and learning to develop their full potential and human capital (NEDA 2017; 2016). SDG 4 also promotes social inclusion to ensure an improved quality of life for all.

Policy Mainstreaming

Pursuing quality education has always been a priority of the government; the Philippine Constitution guarantees the right to education of every Filipino and mandates that education receive the highest budget priority. Guided by *AmBisyon Natin 2040*, the PDP also reiterates the importance of promoting lifelong learning or education and skills development as part of its strong commitment in accelerating human capital development and in the achievement of the SDGs.

The 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report lauded the Philippines for its progress in providing access to education for vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, out-of-school youth, and overseas Filipinos. Institutionalization of these key education inclusion programs through

⁷ Further discussed in the section for Goal 8.

legislation have ensured their continuity and sustainability, regardless of changes in political leadership: Alternative Learning System, through the Governance of *Basic Education Act of 2001*; Indigenous Peoples' (IP) Education, through the *Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997*; the *Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013*; Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education, by virtue of *RA 10931*; and TESDA Online Program and massive open online courses (MOOCs), through the *Open Distance Learning Act*.

The government has also been strengthening other complementary programs that provide incentives to support school attendance, such as the *DepEd school feeding program*, various government assistance, subsidies, including the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)* or Conditional Cash Transfer. Through 4Ps, education grants are given to identified beneficiaries (i.e. poorest of the poor families) with the condition that their children aged 3 to 18 be enrolled in school and maintain an attendance of at least 85.0 percent of class days every month. All these public interventions are meant to achieve the country's national development plans and long-term aspirations pertaining to human capital development, as well as attain SDG 4.

Moreover, strengthening linkages among government, the academe, and industry is consistently emphasized as a key strategy in the PDP 2017-2022 and Socioeconomic Reports for achieving desired education outcomes. These collaborations are critical in ensuring policy coherence, productive cost-sharing, pooling of resources, and improved accountability in the sector, while also reaching underserved groups in society.

Assessment

Table 4. Status of Goal 4 Indicators: Philippines

Indicators	Baseline		Actual	
	Data	Year	Data	Year
Primary				
Net enrolment rate	91.0	2015	94.2	2017
Completion rate	84.0	2015	92.4	2017
Cohort survival rate	87.5	2015	93.7	2017
Dropout/school leavers rate	2.7	2015	1.6	2017
Secondary				
Net enrolment rate	73.6	2015	76.0	2017
Completion rate	74.0	2015	84.3	2017
Cohort survival rate	81.6	2015	85.6	2017
Dropout/school leavers rate	6.6	2015	5.2	2017

Indicators	Baseline		Actual	
	Data	Year	Data	Year
Proportion of children at the end of primary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics⁸				
Reading	40.4	2016		
Mathematics	34.8	2016		
Proportion of children at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics				
Reading	46.0	2016		
Mathematics	37.3	2016		
Higher Education				
Passing rate in Licensure Exam (HEd)	39.3	2015	36.8	2017
TVET				
Certification rate	91.1	2015	92.9	2017

Source: Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)

The Philippines has made great strides in increasing access to basic education, with the net enrollment rates (NER) in kindergarten, elementary, junior, and senior high school continuing to rise. Primary and secondary NERs have increased to 94.2 percent and 76.0 percent, respectively. The country's cohort survival rate (CSR) and completion rates have been consistently increasing while dropout rates have been decreasing at both primary and secondary levels. From 2015 to 2017, primary and secondary CSR rose to 93.7 percent and 85.6 percent respectively, while completion rates rose to 92.4 percent in primary and 84.3 percent in secondary.

Access to education increased through various Inclusive Education Programs to address the needs of vulnerable learners (Alternative Learning System [ALS], Alternative Delivery Modes [ADMs], IP Education, and Special Education). In 2017, over 600,000 learners across the country have benefitted from the ALS, which is the main strategy to reach out to dropouts and provide them with alternative access to education. Programs on retooling and upskilling such as special training programs and open distance learning are also being implemented to cater to those who do not have the opportunity to physically attend trainings due to workload, physical disabilities, or other restrictions.⁹

The implementation of the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education in 2018 has made tertiary education more accessible. This landmark policy provides free tuition for students in state-run colleges, universities, and state-run technical-vocational institutions (TVI) regardless of socioeconomic status. A Tertiary Education Subsidy is also being provided to poor students, whether they are enrolled in private or public higher education institutions. Free higher education has been officially implemented beginning

⁸ Note: Data on indicators approximating mastery of students were not reflected because the 2017 National Achievement Test (NAT) has been redesigned to transition into measuring proficiency rather than mastery. Hence, the latest 2017 NAT results are not in any way comparable with the previous NAT results.

⁹ Further discussed under this section's best practices.

Academic Year (AY) 2018-2019, which benefitted around 1.3 million students in 190 state/local universities and colleges (SUC/LUC) nationwide. Free Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) was also rolled out in September 2018, which benefitted 51,325 by the end of 2018.

Gaps remain in ensuring the quality of basic education, especially with the new K to 12 curriculum.

The Department of Education (DepEd) is currently improving teacher quality through strengthening pre-service training in partnership with teacher education institutions; and in-service training particularly through the institutionalization of Learning Action Cells where teachers are organized into professional learning communities in schools and engaged in regular, collaborative learning sessions to solve shared challenges encountered. In 2016, DepEd issued the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, which aims to standardize teacher performance assessments, identify needs, and support professional development. DepEd is also working on increasing the proportion of teachers who teach subjects in line with their specializations. In 2018, over 75,000 new teaching positions were created across the country, with over 40,000 new positions in kindergarten/elementary, 34,000 in junior high school, and 356 in senior high school.

While higher education is accessible through a total of 2,353 higher education institutions (HEI) and satellite campuses, quality is compromised by the low number of HEIs with accredited programs.

Quality is also reflected in the low national performance in licensure exams (from an average of 39.3% in 2015 to an average of 36.8% in 2017). On the other hand, data show that certification rate of TVET graduates has increased from 91.1 percent in 2015 to 92.9 percent in 2017. Nonetheless, quality measures are vital especially with the huge government investments in making tertiary education accessible. Pedagogical methods also need to be improved in tune with technological advancements. Integration of information and communications technology (ICT) and innovative practices in education need to be scaled up to improve learning outcomes of students. Education and training institutions also need to pursue more partnerships with industry and academe not only to upgrade their curricula, but also to capacitate its educators and boost research and development.

Best Practices

Access to basic education of vulnerable groups was expanded through inclusive education programs.

In 2017, DepEd recognized 648 special education centers and established an additional 302 schools to serve indigenous learners. In 2017, 4,024,897 learners benefitted from the DepEd's inclusive education programs (e.g., Indigenous Peoples Education, Special Education, Madrasah Education, ADMs, ALS, and Multigrade education). In 2018, over 1,500 learners received their high school diplomas through partner-delivered ALS services from the Motortrade Life and Livelihood Assistance Foundation, *Tanglaw ng Buhay* Foundation, and Uplift Cares Global Movement Foundation.

Through open distance learning programs, the government is tapping ICT to provide access to education to Filipinos who are unable to physically attend formal schooling.

For instance, the *TESDA Online Program*, an open education resource was rolled out to make technical education more accessible to professionals, laborers, unemployed, out-of-school youth, students, and overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who want their skills upgraded. Several universities have also started offering MOOCs and online Masters programs.

Government entered into partnerships with the private sector and civil society to improve access and quality of education.

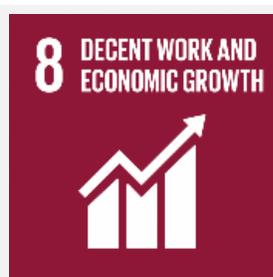
The Philippine government recognizes that partnership with the private sector, CSOs and NGOs has become an important paradigm in delivering education services. For instance, the government implements an *Adopt-A-School Program* which gives tax incentives for donations from the private sector. DepEd also engages private sector and CSO partners in the delivery of ALS services in far-

flung communities. The annual *Brigada Eskwela* brings together nationwide voluntary efforts from stakeholders and communities to prepare public school facilities for the opening of the school year. It allows private partners to donate materials and volunteer time for public school maintenance and improvement, fostering shared governance among stakeholders and communities. Another example of successful external partnership is the creation of the T’Boli¹⁰ Senior High School (SHS) in South Cotabato, together with the Ateneo de Davao University and the T’Boli community. Inaugurated in 2015, the T’Boli school’s curriculum is both K to 12 compliant and grounded in the culture, history, arts, and heritage of the T’Boli tribe, ensuring an inclusive and learner-centered environment.

Another notable initiative is from *Escuela Taller de Filipinas Foundation Inc.*, a non-profit organization located in Intramuros, Manila, that implements skills development and training targeted towards indigent youth. Their students specialize in protection, conservation, and restoration of cultural heritage sites. *Escuela Taller* collaborates with local government units and communities in the selection process, orientation, and coordination with families of scholars. They also team up with several universities with expertise in heritage conservation who assists in the conservation projects. The success of *Escuela Taller’s* programs show how strong collaboration between government, civil society, and the academe (whole-of-society approach) facilitates the implementation of effective human capital development interventions. It also highlights that education and training programs may be tapped and mobilized to address challenges in other SDGs and sectors - in this case, heritage, and culture conservation (under SDG 11).

The Philippines also taps these collaborations to pool needed resources in the education sector. When the Philippine government reformed its basic education, the *K to 12 Plus Project* was launched by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry in partnership with the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and the Philippine government (DepEd and TESDA). The project supports the basic education program of the government by assisting in the implementation and refinement of the new technical-vocational-livelihood track in Senior High School through: (a) industry needs assessments; (b) bundling of competencies to make graduates attractive to employers; (c) training supervisors in companies to become qualified in-company trainers; and (d) facilitation of immersion in companies.

A non-stock, non-profit organization, *Teach for the Philippines*, also partners with the government in addressing the uneven distribution of teachers across the country. The organization recruits and trains promising young leaders, regardless of their college degrees or professions, to teach for two years in public schools, particularly in areas that lack teachers. These teacher fellows are provided compensation and given various training opportunities for professional development.



Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

One of the ways businesses can contribute to the SDGs is through *Inclusive Business*¹¹, which provides a sound basis for building a resilient economy. It is important to harmonize the goals of human and economic development by providing an alternative model for businesses to be profitable, responsible, and accountable. The Philippine government and the United Nations Development

¹⁰ The T’Boli are one of the Philippines’ indigenous peoples, mainly found in Southern Mindanao

¹¹ Defined as a private sector approach to providing goods, services, and livelihood on a commercially-viable basis, either at scale or scalable, to people living at the base of the economic pyramid (BOP) making them part of the value chain of companies’ core business as suppliers, distributors, retailers, or customers.

Programme (UNDP) implemented Business+ with the support of the most prominent business associations in the country to understand the current levels of awareness, knowledge, and engagement of the private sector in Inclusive Business and to determine the challenges and possible policy interventions. The research results showed that the respondents believe the Inclusive Business ecosystem must be strengthened through raising awareness, building capacity, encouraging collaboration, and initiating certain policy interventions.

Policy Mainstreaming

Inclusive development begins with addressing spatial and socioeconomic inequalities. The Philippine government developed the *National Spatial Strategy* to identify geographic development challenges and opportunities to accelerate economic growth while taking into account the increasing role of cities as drivers of such growth and poverty reduction. It consists of three core strategies: (a) regional agglomeration, (b) connectivity, and (c) vulnerability reduction. Regional agglomeration aims to build on the efficiency and economies of scale in key urban growth centers and spread the benefits to its surrounding rural areas. Meanwhile, connectivity focuses on improving the network among growth centers, manufacturing sites, and settlement areas. Various projects under the *Build, Build, Build Program* are being carried out to improve the physical linkages of leading and lacking regions throughout the country. Vulnerability reduction, on the other hand, aims to enhance the safety of communities by putting in place disaster risk resilience measures and regulating settlements in hazard-prone areas.

Considering the country's vulnerability to the impact of climate change, it is imperative to ensure that the jobs being generated support sustainable development. The government enacted the *Philippine Green Jobs Act of 2016 (RA 10771)* which fosters a competitive, low-carbon, and environmentally sustainable economy, through the promotion of green jobs.¹² The law mandates the development of a *National Green Jobs Human Resource Development Plan* which lays down strategies to support the development of green skills and competencies required in a green economy. It mandates the just transition of work by providing adequate and sustainable social protection for job losses and displacement, and ensuring skills development and social dialogue.

The Philippine government, through NEDA, is also preparing the *Philippine Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Action Plan (Goal 12)* to serve as a guiding framework for more strategic and cohesive SCP actions to promote resource conservation and efficiency, sustainable business and lifestyles, and waste and chemicals management, among others. The government is now assessing SCP implementation and studying how the circular economy model can be contextualized in the country.

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) play a very important role in providing employment opportunities (*Target 8.2*) to the country's growing labor force. In line with this, the *Go Negosyo Act* was legislated, which aims to establish *Negosyo Centers* in all provinces, cities, and municipalities, which provide venues for collaboration among and technology transfer to the MSMEs. The *Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018 (RA 11032)* was also enacted to simplify the requirements and procedures to expedite business and non-business-related transactions with government.

¹² RA 10771 defines green jobs as decent jobs that contribute to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment, protect ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce energy/materials/water consumption, contribute to carbon reduction, and help minimize or avoid all forms of waste generation and pollution.

To advance the role of tourism in investment generation, foreign exchange, and employment, the *Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593)* was enacted. It promotes sustainable tourism development and grants preferential employment to Filipinos in tourism enterprises. It also encourages the participation of NGOs, people's organizations, and the private sector in initiating programs for tourism development and environmental protection. Following this, the government crafted the *National Tourism Development Plan 2016-2022* and *National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2022* to develop a globally competitive, environmentally sustainable, and socially responsible tourism industry.

To establish a living wage for all, the *Wage Rationalization Act* sets a mandatory minimum wage per region, which serves as a primary tool to address in-work poverty. It considers the socioeconomic characteristics of each region such as poverty threshold, average wage rates, consumer price index, and gross regional domestic product, among others. As a reform to the existing wage law, the *two-tiered wage system (TTWS)* was introduced in 2012 to minimize the unintended outcomes of the mandated minimum wages and to further improve coverage among the vulnerable sectors. Although it maintains the mandated minimum wage as the floor wage (Tier 1), it instituted a voluntary productivity-based pay (Tier 2) to further reinforce workers' income protection while promoting productivity improvement and gain sharing. The implementation of TTWS also strengthens collective bargaining to help reduce obscure wage inequalities among the workforce.

Inequality can also be reduced through the implementation of the programs and policies promoting continuing education, such as the *Alternative Learning System* and the *Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act of 2017*. These provide opportunities for the youth-at-risk to acquire relevant skills and improve their employability.

The government is also keen on eliminating the engagement of children in hazardous work. The Department of Labor and Employment and the Department of Social Welfare and Development locate and assess the child laborers and their families providing them with needed interventions such as educational, medical, and livelihood assistance.

Meanwhile, labor force participation is being encouraged particularly among the youth and women. The recently-passed *First Time Job Seekers Assistance Act (RA 11261)* supports first time job seekers, especially the youth, to actively participate in the labor force by waiving the government fees for the following government documents: police clearance certificate; National Bureau of Investigation clearance; barangay clearance; medical certificate from a public hospital; birth certificate; marriage certificate; transcript of academic records from state universities and colleges, Tax Identification Number, and Unified Multipurpose Identification Card, among others.

To encourage and promote female labor force participation (*Target 8.5*), the *Expanded Maternity Leave (RA 11261)* was enacted in February 2019. This allows female workers to enjoy 105 days (from 60 to 78 days) of maternity leave in both the public and private sectors, with an option to extend to additional 30 days without pay. Solo working mothers are given additional 15-day paid leaves. Although this may pose a threat in terms of discrimination against hiring female workers to avoid granting additional benefits, the *Act Strengthening the Prohibition on Discrimination Against Women (RA 6725)* prohibits any employer from discriminating against female employees regarding terms and conditions of employment solely on account of sex. Women's rights are also protected and promoted with the passage of the *Magna Carta of Women* which spells out every woman's right to protection from violence and disaster, participation and representation, equal treatment before the law, equal access to services, non-discrimination, comprehensive health services and information, and social protection, among others. Female labor force participation is also encouraged by the *Telecommuting Act (RA 11165)* which allows employees in the private sector to work from an alternative workplace with the use of telecommunication and/or computer technologies.

Recognizing the critical role and contribution of the private sector towards sustainability, the Securities and Exchange Commission issued the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines for Publicly-Listed Companies (PLCs). The guidelines set forth the information that PLCs will have to disclose in relation to their non-financial performance across economic, environmental, and social aspects of their organizations, such as information on employee wages and benefits, diversity, and equal opportunity at the workplace and occupational health, among others. The guidelines also provide a framework for reporting of the companies' contributions towards achieving the SDGs and *AmBisyon Natin 2040*. Following these guidelines, the PLCs will be required to attach the sustainability report to their 2019 annual reports.

Assessment

Table 5. Status of Goal 8 Indicators: Philippines

Indicator	Baseline Data		Recent Data	
	Value	Year	Value	Year
Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	4.3	2015	4.6	2018
Annual growth rate of GNI per capita (LCU)	4.1	2015	4.3	2018
Annual growth rate of GNI per capita (PPP \$)	5.8	2015	2.7	2018
Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person	5.6	2015	4.1	2018
Unemployment rate	6.3	2015	5.3	2018
Female	5.8	2015	5.1	2018
Male	6.6	2015	5.4	2018
Youth (15-24 y.o.)	15.0	2015	13.4	2018
Labor force participation rate	63.7	2015	60.9	2018
Female	50.1	2015	46.6	2018
Male	77.3	2015	75.1	2018
Employment Generation ('000)	183 ^{a/}	2015	826	2018
Underemployment Rate	18.5	2015	16.4	2018
Areas Outside NCR	19.7	2015	17.7	2018
Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment, or training ^{b/}	22.7	2015	19.9	2018
Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile money-service provider*	31.3	2014	34.5	2017

Notes: a/ Excludes Leyte

b/ Data on training is not yet available

Sources: National Income Accounts and Labor Force Survey, Philippine Statistics Authority

*available every three years

The country remains one of the fastest-growing economies in the region. In 2018, the country's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 6.2 percent. Per capita GDP was also at an all-time high, registering a 4.6 percent increase from PHP82, 593 in 2017 to PHP86, 370 in 2018.

To achieve the Filipinos' vision of becoming a prosperous, predominantly middle-class society by 2040, per capita gross national income (GNI) is being closely monitored in implementing the country's medium-term development plan. Given the significant share of remittances from overseas Filipinos to the total income of Filipino households, per capita GNI is considered an important measure of Filipino output. In 2018, per capita GNI growth rate in Philippine pesos grew by 4.3 percent (2.7% in PPP \$).

There has been significant progress in achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all Filipinos. The national unemployment rate further declined to 5.3 percent in 2018, the lowest recorded unemployment rate since 2005. Disaggregated by sex, male and female unemployment rates are at 5.4 and 5.1 percent, respectively. There was also significant progress in reducing underemployment rates in the country; in particular, the national underemployment rate stood at 16.4 percent in 2018 from 18.5 percent in 2015 while underemployment rate in areas outside the National Capital Region declined from 19.7 percent in 2015 to 17.7 percent in 2018.

In terms of employment generation, there was a turnaround from net employment losses of 663,243 in 2017 to 826,000 additional net employment in 2018. The quality of work in the country also improved as shown by the rising share of remunerative and stable wage and salaried employment, as well as the continuously declining share of vulnerable employment (unpaid family work and self-employed without any paid employee). Remarkable shifts from part-time to full-time employment were also recorded in recent years.

However, the number of economically active persons declined in 2018, with schooling as one of the primary reasons of those who dropped out of the labor force. This is reflected in the decline in unpaid family work, which is likely a result of programs, and policies encouraging school participation of the youth, such as the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*, a conditional cash transfer program.

There was a substantial reduction in the proportion of youth not in employment or education (NEE). Continuous efforts resulted in the lowest recorded proportion of youth NEE since 2006 (24.5%), registering at 19.9 percent in 2018.

Better and more responsive financial services are now more accessible to Filipinos through financial inclusion initiatives. In 2017, about 34.5 percent of the population aged 15 years and above had an account at a bank or other financial institution, or with a mobile money-service provider. This is 3.2 percentage points higher than the 2014 data of 31.3 percent. This share is expected to continually increase given the *Basic Deposit Account Scheme* issued by the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas* in 2018 to meet the needs of the unbanked as it will allow them to save without the burden of extensive documentary requirements and minimum deposit and maintaining balance.

Best Practices

Inclusive business practices highlight the role of the private sector in involving marginalized sectors in the production value chain. There have been increasing private sector initiatives exploring new business models and livelihood support programs that focus on empowering disadvantaged groups and lifting communities out of poverty. More companies recognize the potential of pursuing inclusive hiring programs and collaborating with groups from the government, academe, socio-civic organizations, and the rest of the private sector. For instance, *Messy Bessy*, a producer of home and personal care products, has been providing education, employment, and rehabilitation to youth-at-risk. In 2015, the company

established *Helping Ourselves through Sustainable Enterprises Foundation*, a non-profit that aims to replicate the program of *Messy Bessy* in other social enterprises and organizations. This kind of business model augments the access of disadvantaged groups to meaningful work.¹³

Sustainable tourism is envisioned to provide socioeconomic benefits to stakeholders, including stable employment and income-generating opportunities for host communities. The rehabilitation of Boracay Island, one of the Philippines' top tourist destinations, demonstrates the country's efforts to pursue sustainable tourism that balances the economic, social, and environmental aspects of tourism development. During Boracay's temporary six-month closure, social protection in the form of various complementary livelihood support (cash-for-work programs) were provided to displaced workers and residents. In addition, the *Medium-Term Boracay Action Plan*, which provides the strategic interventions for the continued rehabilitation and further development of the island beyond its closure, also identifies livelihood strategies that will be implemented in the medium term. These include: (a) conducting trainings to match skills with industry needs; (b) improving access of informal workers to livelihood programs; (c) identifying alternative sources of income; (d) enhancing quality of local products to boost competitiveness; and (e) enforcing labor laws and standards, among others.

Given the eminent role of technology and innovation to achieve growth and efficiency, businesses have also been training farmers to boost the performance of the country's agriculture sector. For instance, *Nestle Philippines* established the *NESCAFE Plan*, a sustainable and innovative coffee farming program, which seeks to increase Robusta coffee production of local farmers. The program provides training to farmers and ensures a ready market for their produce.

To improve social security coverage for workers, the Social Security System introduced the AlkanSSSy and the KaltaSSS-Collect programs. Informal sector workers, including contractual and job order employees, have little to no access and membership to statutory social protection programs. *AlkanSSSy* is a large metal safety deposit box with secure individual compartments where members can put their savings to pay for their monthly contributions. The program has expanded its membership to tricycle operators and drivers associations, community-based organizations, market vendors, farmers, jail inmates, jeepney operators and drivers, cooperative members, golf club caddies, and pedicab operators and drivers. *KaltaSSS-Collect*, on the other hand, allows national government agencies and the local government units (LGUs) to register their job order and contractual workers as self-employed members and remit their contributions and loan payments through automated salary deduction scheme.

The Basic Deposit Accounts framework simplifies the process of opening a bank account for the unbanked, particularly by addressing prevalent barriers such as cost and lack of money and documentary requirements. Along with the implementation of the recently enacted law on the Philippine ID System, this can expand formal bank account ownership and usage particularly among low-income households.

¹³ Philippine Business for the Environment and United Nations Development Program. Transformational Business. Retrieved from <https://www.sdgsbiz.ph/content/dam/sdgsbizph/resources/Transformational-Business-Philippine-Business-Contributions-to-the-UN-SDGs.pdf>



Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Income inequality among Filipinos has declined due to sustained robust economic growth and the implementation of policies and programs that aim to empower marginalized individuals and communities. However, greater effort must be exerted in ensuring social inclusion given the persistence of spatial and sectoral disparities.

Policy Mainstreaming and Best Practices

The PDP 2017-2022 stresses the reduction of inequality through the expansion of economic activities, development of human capital across all sectors, and equitable regional development.

The country has passed legislation to ensure that the rights of vulnerable groups are upheld. These include *Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities (RA 7277)*, *Magna Carta on Women (RA 9710)*, *Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (RA 8371)*, *Expanded Senior Citizens Act (RA 9994)*, and *The Child and Youth Welfare Code (Presidential Decree No. 603)*. In addition to the recognition of these groups' rights, these laws also highlight the mechanisms to empower and ensure their wellbeing.

Various social protection programs have been adopted to respond to various types of risks and vulnerabilities that confront households and individuals. The country adopted the Social Protection Operational Framework and has been implementing the conditional cash transfer program, *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)* which was recently enacted into law. The program seeks to improve human capital outcomes related to health and education. It is meant to eventually stop intergenerational poverty by investing in children early in life, allowing them to remain physically and mentally healthy so that they can be productive citizens in the future.

Affirmative measures have been undertaken to provide economic opportunities for marginalized sectors. For example, *the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability* reserves at least one percent of all positions in all government agencies, private offices or corporations for persons with disabilities. This law also provides private organizations with tax incentives when hiring persons with disabilities.

Government instrumentalities and legislation ensure participative decision-making. Composed of representatives from CSOs and government agencies, governmental bodies such as the Philippine Commission on Women, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the Council for the Welfare of Children, and the National Council on Disability Affairs were established to ensure that sector-specific issues are considered in the development discourse. These Commissions and Councils formulate plans and policies for their respective sectors and raise sectoral concerns during development planning and programming committees and forums.

Through RA 8425, the Philippines also created the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), which oversees the implementation of the Social Reform Agenda – a document which embodies the results of the series of consultation and summits on poverty alleviation. The NAPC is chaired by the President who appoints the NAPC Lead Convenor from either the government or private sector. It has a vice-chairperson from the government sector and a vice-chairperson from the basic sectors (farmer and landless rural workers, artisanal fisherfolk, formal labor and migrant workers, workers in the informal sector, indigenous peoples and cultural communities, women, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, victims of calamities and disasters, youth and students, children, urban poor, cooperatives, and NGOs).

The country also espouses the representation of marginalized and underrepresented sectors in the formulation and enactment of legislation through the *Party-List System Act (RA 7941)*. The law provides for a mechanism of proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives from national, regional and sectoral parties, organizations, or coalitions who are registered under the Commission on Elections. The party-list representatives constitute 20 percent of the total number of the members of the House of Representatives including those under the party-list.

Furthermore, pursuant to laws such as RA 7432 (as amended by RA 9994, on the benefits and privileges of senior citizens) and RA 10070 (on establishment of Persons with Disability Affairs Office), many LGUs have established local offices for senior citizens and persons with disability, among other sectors. These offices help ensure that their sectoral concerns are considered in local development planning, programming and budgeting.

Families are enabled to strategically plan their future. The 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey revealed that modern contraceptive prevalence rate registered at 40.4 percent while unmet need for family planning was at 31.6 percent. It also showed that women from the lowest income quintile have higher fertility rates at 4.3 live births per woman compared to 1.7 live births among women from the highest income quintile. As higher fertility rates place more pressure on families’ resources, there is an urgent need to address family planning concerns. To strengthen the implementation of the *Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health (RPRH) Act of 2012*, the President issued Executive Order No. 12 in January 2017 to “intensify and accelerate the implementation of critical actions necessary to address unmet need for modern family planning particularly, for all poor households.” Among others, the EO enjoins concerned agencies to locate couples and individuals with unmet needs for modern family planning, capacitate local structures to accelerate the implementation of the RPRH Law, and engage CSOs and the private sector in attaining zero unmet needs for modern family planning in their respective localities. As this enables families to limit or space the number of children, families can better manage their assets, giving them the flexibility to invest in activities that may increase their incomes.

Assessment

Table 6. Status of Goal 10 Indicators: Philippines

SDG Indicator	Baseline (Year)	Latest Data (Year)
Growth rates of household income per capita among the bottom 40 percent of the population and the total population		28.3% (Bottom 40% of Population) between 1 st Semester 2018 and 1 st Semester 2015
		21.2% (Total Population) between 1 st Semester 2018 and 1 st Semester 2015
Proportion of people living below 50 percent of median income	20% (1 st Semester 2015)	19% (1 st Semester 2018)

From 2000 to 2018, the Philippines’ real gross domestic product (GDP) averaged at 5.4 percent, compared to substantially lower figures in the one-and-a-half decades preceding this period, which was only at 3.4 percent in real terms. Accordingly, the Philippines has experienced a reduction in income inequality. Considering the data from the first semester 2015 and first semester 2018 rounds of the Family Income and

Expenditure Survey (FIES), the growth rate of incomes of households in the bottom 40 percent was faster (28.3%) than the average for the entire population (21.2%). In addition, there was a decrease in the share of people living below half of the national median income from about 20.0 percent to 19.0 percent. This suggests that on average, Filipinos are gaining higher relative incomes, implying a more equitable distribution of economic opportunity for all. These gains helped reduce poverty incidence from 27.6 percent to 21.0 percent during the same period.

Amidst these gains, however, there are persistent inequalities among localities and social groups. Across the regions, the proportion of persons with incomes below half the median per capita income varied considerably in the first semester 2018. For example, about four of every 100 (3.9%) persons in NCR come from families with per capita incomes below half the national median per capita income, while in ARMM more than half (55.8%) of families live below half of the median income. There are also disparities among population groups.

Best Practices

A modified cash transfer program is being implemented to address the needs of specific sectors. Aside from the regular CCT program, a modified conditional cash transfer program is also in place, which targets homeless street families, indigenous peoples (IPs) in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA), and families in need of special protection as beneficiaries.

The National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) has been utilizing opportunities presented by developments in ICT to spur the economic productivity of persons with disability. For instance, the NCDA worked with a local animation studio company to train persons with disabilities on 2-D Animation. The program also organizes them as a group of animators capable of accepting contracts and projects from animation companies.

Meanwhile, the *Integrated Livelihood Program* of the Department of Labor and Employment provides the following support services: working capital for the purchase of raw materials, equipment, and tools; training on setting-up and operating livelihood undertaking; enrolment in Group Personal Accident Insurance of the Government Service Insurance System; and continuing technical and business advisory services to beneficiaries.¹⁴ Persons with disabilities have also been beneficiaries of livelihood grants and capacity building services.

Capacities of localities and community members are being enhanced. The *Local Government Support Fund Assistance to Municipalities (LGSF-AM)* aims to address policy and governance gaps in the implementation of local programs and projects through the harmonization of LGSF-AM's processes with the existing systems of the local government, strengthening the latter. Addressing governance gaps focuses on building partnerships between local government units and CSOs and people's organizations in the selection and monitoring of infrastructure projects through the Local Development Councils. Addressing policy gaps focuses on correcting fiscal and infrastructure imbalances in local service delivery.

DSWD's *Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services* uses the community-driven development approach which: (a) helps communities in poor municipalities identify challenges in reducing poverty and make informed decisions on a range of specific, locally-identified options for development; (b) gives communities control over resources to address local poverty; and (c)

¹⁴ <http://www.bwsc.dole.gov.ph/images/InfoMaterials/Kabuhayan-Program.pdf>

builds the capacity of both state (including LGUs) and civil society stakeholders to provide assistance and respond to calls for support from poor communities as they implement development initiatives.

Private organizations play a significant role in reducing inequalities. Government agencies often collaborate with NGOs and private companies in implementing programs and ensuring inclusive plans and policies. There are, however, some private corporations and NGOs that independently implement initiatives that help address inequalities. For example, establishments such as the *Lamoian Corporation* hire individuals with hearing impairment, while others such as the *Unilab Foundation* engage with other companies to promote the employment of persons with disability. These efforts do not only provide decent work for members of the sector but also help debunk misconceptions related to their employment.



Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

The Philippines remains one of the global hotspots for high disaster risks. Recent studies rank the country as the third most vulnerable to hazards¹⁵ and the fifth most affected by the impacts of extreme weather events such as tropical cyclones, prolonged monsoon rains, and El Niño phenomena.¹⁶ To address the growing risks, reforms have been institutionalized and preparatory measures undertaken, including the formulation of guidelines/frameworks in mainstreaming climate and disaster risks; provision of additional financing for adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR); development of vulnerability and risk-assessment tools and methodologies; and capacity-building and awareness-raising activities.

Policy Mainstreaming

Climate change and disaster risks are primary considerations in development planning. A number of policies and measures have been issued and/or institutionalized in line with the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the PA, the Sendai Framework for DRR, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Some of the landmark legislations include: *Climate Change Act of 2009 (RA 9729)* which established the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and directed the formulation of national and local climate change actions plans; *National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 (RA 10121)* which provides for the overarching country policy for DRRM, and established the national and local DRRM funds; and *People's Survival Fund Act of 2013 (RA 10174)*, which established a special fund of at least PHP2 billion (US\$45 million) from the 2013 to 2015 annual national budget to augment financial support for local adaptation projects.

The government also ensures the integration of risk reduction strategies into national, sectoral, and local plans. The PDP 2017-2022 embodies a number of strategies to address climate and disaster risks across various sectors (e.g., agriculture, infrastructure, and environment and natural resources). Sectoral and framework plans have also been updated to incorporate climate change and disaster risk parameters such

¹⁵ World Risk Report (2018). *The World Risk Index (2015-2018)* is calculated on a country-by-country basis through the multiplication of exposure to natural hazards and societal vulnerability.

¹⁶ German Watch (2019). *The Global Climate Risk Index analyzes to what extent countries and regions have been affected by impacts of weather-related loss events. The most recent data available - for 2017 and from 1998 to 2017 - were taken into account.*

as the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan, Philippine Energy Plan, Environment and Natural Resources Framework Plan, and river basin master plans. At the local level, Comprehensive Land Use Plans and Comprehensive Development Plans are also made climate and disaster risk-informed.

The Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCAM), and DRR was created under EO 43, s. 2011 and strengthened through EO 24, s. 2017 to lead the effective coordination, harmonization, and complementation of policies and programs on climate risk management, DRR, and sustainable development. The National Climate Risk Management Framework has also recently issued CCC Resolution 2019-001 to harmonize and integrate efforts of sectors and stakeholders in addressing the intensifying impacts of climate change. The government is also working on the completion of high-resolution multi-hazard and risk maps that will be more useful for LGUs and communities in planning and preparing for disasters, including slow onset events.

There is improved knowledge and awareness, and heightened action towards low-emission development. While adaptation remains the country’s priority, its pursuit of mitigation activities is anchored on the former and its sustainable development benefits. Hence, several policy issuances have been enacted that are geared toward mitigating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The most recent is the *Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act of 2019 (RA 11285)*, which intends to secure sufficiency and stability of the country’s energy resources by promoting the development and utilization of efficient renewable energy technologies and systems. Other relevant policy issuances in the past three years include: *Green Building Code of 2016* that promotes resource efficiency in buildings; *Green Jobs Act of 2016 (RA 10711)* that encourages the creation of green jobs, and provides incentives to business enterprises that use green technologies to produce environmental goods and render services; and Securities and Exchange Commission Memorandum Circular No.4 s. 2019 that provides the Sustainability Reporting guidelines to help publicly-listed firms manage non-financial performance along economic, environmental, and social aspects of their organization, including their contributions in attaining the SDGs.

The country has also established the *GHG Inventory Management and Reporting System* through EO 174, s. 2014 to enable the country to transition towards a climate-resilient pathway for sustainable development. Similarly, a *National Integrated Climate Change Database and Information Exchange System* was established to serve as the primary enabling platform of the government in consolidating and monitoring climate change-related data and information from public, private, and other stakeholders. This allows decision-makers to access, distribute, and exchange these data for policy-making, development planning, and investment decision-making. The government, through NEDA, is also developing a *National Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production*, which was discussed in the previous section.

Assessment

Table 7. Status of Goal 13 Indicators: Philippines

SDG Indicator	Baseline (Year)	Latest Data (Year)
Target 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries		
<i>13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population^{1/}</i>		
13.1.1.1. Number of deaths attributed to disasters ^{al}	116 (2016)	351 (2018)
13.1.1.2. Number of missing persons attributed to disasters ^{al}	29 (2016)	38 (2018)
13.1.1.3. Number of directly affected persons attributed to disasters	846,651 (2016)	682,315 (2018)
13.1.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*	1 (2016)	1 (2018)

SDG Indicator	Baseline (Year)	Latest Data (Year)
13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies ^{b/}		
National Capital Region (NCR)	52.9 (2017)	
Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR)	94.0 (2017)	
Region I	44.8 (2015)	
Region II	100.0 (2015)	
Region III	59.01 (2015)	
Region IV-A	99.8 (2016)	
Region IV-B	82.0 (2017)	
Region V		
Region VI	25.1 (2015)	
Region VII	Almost all (2015)	
Region VIII	100 (2015)	
Region IX	100 (2016)	
Region X	100 (2015)	
Region XI	100 (2016)	
Region XII	100 (2016)	
Caraga	74.4 (2016)	
ARMM	100.0 (2016)	
Target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning		
13.2.1 Number of countries that communicated the establishment or operationalization of an integrated policy/strategy/plan which increases its ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner that does not threaten food production (including a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report or other) ^{2/ *}	1 (2016)	First NDC for submission before 2020

* 1 if the country satisfies the requirement of the indicator, 0 otherwise

1/ Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters is not on per 100,000 population

2/ Executive Order 174 - Philippine Greenhouse Gas Inventory Management and Reporting System (PGHGIMRS)

a/ PDP RM Indicator (Chapter 11 Reducing Vulnerability of Individuals and Families)

b/ PDP RM Indicator (Chapter 20 Ensuring Ecological Integrity, Clean and Healthy Environment)

Enhancing resilience and adaptive capacities continues to be a challenging task for the country especially with the increasing intensity of hazards and uncertainties of climate change impacts. From 2016 to 2018, the number of persons directly affected by disasters declined but the number of casualties and missing persons remain relatively high.

The Philippines heeded the call for urgency on increased ambition and stronger global climate action.

The Philippine government signed and acceded to the PA in April 2016 and March 2017, respectively, and officially became a Party to the PA in April 2017. As part of the country's commitment, the government plans to submit its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) before 2020, which will contain the country's adaptation needs and priorities, and mitigation targets. The implementation of the NDC will support the achievement of the country's development goals and targets, including the SDGs.

Critical knowledge and data gaps persist. The government needs to be equipped with the right tools and approaches based on best-available science to effectively address the emerging challenges posed by climate change and prioritize adaptation investments and actions. Moreover, appropriate indicators to measure adaptive capacity and resilience are still lacking. More support is needed to generate accurate, timely, and local-specific climate risk information, and raise greater awareness and understanding on the use of such information especially by the LGUs and communities.

Limited technical and absorptive capacities impede effective implementation of risk reduction activities. Capacity-building support is needed to help local governments understand their risks, implement needed risk-reduction measures, and manage residual risks to minimize losses and damage. One hundred percent of the LGUs in nine of the 17 regions have incorporated risk-reduction strategies in their respective local plans; yet, LGU capacity to implement remains limited by financial constraints and technical expertise. Beyond funds, LGUs need knowledge in translating their risk-informed plans into implementable and bankable projects.

Best Practices

Several climate change and DRR initiatives have been successfully implemented at the national level.

The Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards (NOAH) Project utilized advanced technologies such as Light Detection and Ranging to generate high-resolution and accurate hazard maps. Such information was further developed into online applications for early warning systems for flood, rain-induced landslides, and storm surges. In 2015, the government institutionalized a Climate Budget Tagging System to track and monitor climate change-related expenditures of the national and local governments using a set of guidelines and procedures. The government also embarked on a Risk Resiliency Program, which focuses on priority climate-vulnerable provinces in terms of convergence planning, programming, and budgeting between and among national and local governments to achieve greater resilience outcomes. A National Color-Coded Agriculture Guide Map, which contains projected rainfall and temperature information, was launched in 2017 to better guide farmers in crop planning.

The success of national risk reduction policies depends on community-level actions. Community-based Early Warning System (CBEWS) has been successfully replicated in several areas of the country such as the Agos River CBEWS in Quezon Province, which has been devastated by extreme typhoon events. The system consists of rain gauges, flood watch points, radio communication devices, and a defined set of emergency measures aimed at preventing loss of lives and damage to properties.¹⁷ After the destruction caused by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, the municipalities of Daanbantayan and Medellin in the province of Cebu have successfully implemented community-led disaster recovery and rehabilitation efforts that resulted in timely rehabilitation of schools and restoration of tourism livelihood.¹⁸ The province of Albay, which is exposed to multiple natural hazards such as typhoons and volcanic eruption, has been a model of “zero-casualty” due to its effective response measures and proper coordination with relevant agencies. The successful implementation of these initiatives is a result of strengthened collaborations among LGUs, NGOs, national government agencies, academic institutions, and the private sector.

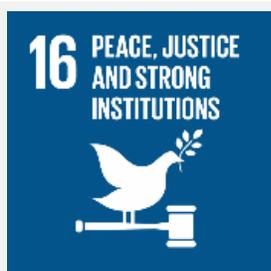
In 2017, the national government launched the *Green, Green, Green* program, funded under the Local Government Support Fund – Assistance to Cities, to promote the development of public open spaces and create greener, and more sustainable cities all over the country. The government also recognizes, through the annual *Gawad Kalasag Awards*, outstanding government agencies and institutions, LGUs, CSOs, private sector, and individuals who have made significant contributions to the country’s DRR and CCA programs.

Moreover, various climate change mitigation-related programs have benefitted from multi-stakeholder engagement including environmentally-sustainable transport schemes such as mass-transport systems and Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program; National Ecolabelling Program; Government Energy Management Program; Green Public Procurement; and waste management programs such as the

¹⁷ Source: <https://www.slideshare.net/SCRpresentations/early-warning-system-thai2-2>

¹⁸ Source: <http://yolanda.neda.gov.ph>

rehabilitation of Manila Bay and other waterways in Metro Manila, and issuance of local policies related to single-use plastics.



Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Essential to the achievement of sustainable development is fostering a peaceful and just environment where fundamental freedoms are protected and institutions are effective, accountable, and inclusive. One of the most dangerous hindrances to development is violence in all forms. Violence pervasively brings negative effects – from stunting economic growth, to placing insecurity in communities, to increasing health risks and problems for all victims. Institutions play a key role in sustainable development as they establish and enforce rules in society to maintain peace and order and protect human rights.

Policy Mainstreaming

Strengthening citizen participatory governance. By virtue of EO 24, s. 2017, the President created the Participatory Governance Cluster, which aims to enhance citizen participation in governmental processes. The Cluster formulates mechanisms to enable the public to properly understand, rationalize, and implement national government programs and projects based on specific realities. It also seeks to strengthen consultation mechanisms to ensure effective implementation of national programs and projects in the local government and grassroots level, and propose policies, programs, and projects that would foster participatory governance and build the capacities of LGUs.

The Inter Agency Committee on Good Governance (IAC-GG) was created through Memorandum Order No. 01-2018 to facilitate coordination among government agencies for the formulation, implementation, monitoring, assessment, and updating of development administration framework of the national development plan. The IAC-GG provides policy directions to agencies for the implementation of strategies, programs, and projects on good governance.

Sustaining transparent, accountable, and responsive governance. The Philippines is one of the founding members of the Open Government Partnership (OGP)¹⁹ launched on September 20, 2011. The OGP aims to help governments become sustainably more transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of their citizens. This initiative encourages participation of the various stakeholders by soliciting their commitments and including these in the Philippine OGP National Action Plan.

Promoting inclusion while ensuring security and privacy in the National ID System. The Act provides the framework to promote seamless delivery of service, improve the efficiency, transparency, and targeted delivery of public and social services, to enhance administrative governance, reduce corruption and curtail

¹⁹ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-ogp>

bureaucratic red tape, to avert fraudulent transactions and misrepresentation, to strengthen financial inclusion, and to promote ease of doing business.²⁰

The enactment of the PhilSys Act went through a rigorous consultation process to ensure security of information and to protect peoples' rights to privacy and confidentiality in accordance with existing data privacy laws and regulations.

Assessment

Table 8. Status of Goal 16 Indicators: Philippines

SDG Indicator	Baseline (Year)	Latest Data
Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere		
Number of victims of intentional homicide by sex and age	11,481 (2016)	
Male	10,366 (2016)	
Female	1,115 (2016)	
Number of murder cases	9,643 (2015)	
Monthly average index crime rate	11.3 (2016)	
Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms		
Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months (%)		
Availing of social services	3.2 (2016)	2.5 (2017)
Payment of taxes and duties	3.0 (2016)	1.6 (2017)
Access to justice	0.5 (2016)	1.0 (2017)
Securing registry documents and licenses	0.9 (2016)	2.0 (2017)
Any service	2.5 (2016)	1.9 (2017)
Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels		
Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget		
Economic Services	98.4 (2016)	117% (2017)
Social Services	86.9 (2016)	90% (2017)
Defense	87.1 (2016)	105% (2017)
General Public Services	91.6 (2016)	97% (2017)
Ensure responsive, Inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels		
Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions		
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments	28.7 (2016)	29.4 (2018)

²⁰ <http://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2018/08aug/20180806-RA-11055-RRD.pdf>

SDG Indicator	Baseline (Year)	Latest Data
Proportion of seats held by women in local governments	31.0 (2016)	21.3 (2018)
Provincial	19.7 (2016)	
City	78.8 (2016)	
Municipal	22.4 (2016)	
Barangay		29.3 (2018)
Proportion of women in managerial positions	46.6 (2016)	
Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance		
Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations (Indicator is also found in SDG 10.6.1)		
Proportion of membership of developing countries in international organizations**		
United Nations General Assembly	1 (2016)	1
United Nations Security Council	0 (2016)	0
United Nations Economic and Social Council	0 (2016)	1
International Monetary Fund	1 (2016)	1
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	1 (2016)	1
International Finance Corporation	1 (2016)	1
Asian Development Bank	1 (2016)	1
World Trade Organization	1 (2016)	1
Proportion of voting rights of developing countries in international organizations ^{1/****}		
United Nations General Assembly	1 (2016)	1
United Nations Security Council	0 (2016)	0
United Nations Economic and Social Council	0 (2016)	1
International Monetary Fund	1 (2016)	1
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	1 (2016)	1
International Finance Corporation	1 (2016)	1
Asian Development Bank	1 (2016)	1
World Trade Organization	1 (2016)	1
By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration		
Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age (%)	90 (2016)	
Ensure public access to information, and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements		

SDG Indicator	Baseline (Year)	Latest Data
Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information ²¹	0 (2015)	1 (2018)
Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, for preventing violence and combatting terrorism and crime		
Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles ²²	1 (2016)	1 (2018)

Reported cases of homicide, murder, and rape decreased. Violence, as reflected by the number of homicide and murder cases went down from 12,992 in 2015 to 9,458 in 2018. Similarly, the average number of index crimes decreased from 201,010 in 2015 to 139,459 in 2016.

The number of rape cases declined from 10,928 in 2015 (highest incidence) to 7,349 in 2018. Most of these cases can be observed in highly populated regions in the country such as NCR and CALABARZON, while ARMM recorded the lowest number.

However, crime statistics are primarily based on police blotter reports that may be incomplete and inadequate in capturing actual incidents. The victims' level of trust and confidence in the government and their empowerment to report the incidence is a significant factor on the quality of reported data. Priority must be given to establishing a more reliable monitoring and reporting mechanism for these statistics such as the Crime Victimization Survey that can capture data on actual crime incidents.

Bribery has been reduced. Data from 2013 to 2017²³ show there has been a marked reduction in bribing attempts relative to the total number of families who have made a government transaction. The reduction in the proportion of bribery attempts has been noticeable for social services transactions and securing of registry documents and licenses, while those for access to justice tend to highly fluctuate. The Office of the Ombudsman has strengthened its punitive, preventive, and promotional strategies. In the first five months of 2018, 100 percent of appellate cases have been affirmed by the Supreme Court for criminal dispositions. Conviction rate has also reached 81.0 percent in the first quarter of 2018 compared to 77.0 percent in 2016.

To promote participatory governance, the country is also implementing its National Action Plan for the Open Government Partnership (OGP). The OGP promotes co-creation of interventions among stakeholders including the government, civil society, and the private sector.

However, despite these accomplishments, public perception of government corruption remains largely unchanged due to delays in the implementation of infrastructure projects and spike in inflation, among others.

The national government of the Philippines has been generally consistent in the outturn of aggregate budget expenditure to the approved allocations. In 2017, actual expenditure outturns have been larger than the originally approved budget for economic services and defense by 17.0 percent and 5.0 percent,

²¹ Executive Order No. 2 (EO 2) is the enabling order for the Freedom of Information Law. EO 2 operationalizes in the Executive Branch the People's Constitutional right to information. EO 2 also provides the State policies to full public disclosure and transparency in the public service. EO 2 is an important enabling mechanism to promote transparency in the government's administrative process. Through FOI, citizens are empowered to make a formal request to get information held by the government, barring certain sensitive and important data related to the nation's security. FOI complements continuing proactive information disclosure efforts where agencies are duty-bound to publish information in the spirit of openness and transparency.

²² Commission on Human Rights

²³ *National Household Survey on Experience with Corruption in the Philippines, 2013, 2016, and 2017*

respectively. Meanwhile, expenditures on social services and general public services have been 10.0 percent lower than their respective approved budgets due to lack of absorptive capacities.

The Philippines is a member of several international organizations. Having representation in international organizations such as the UN General Assembly, UN ECOSOC, International Monetary Fund, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Finance Corporation, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and World Trade Organization gives the Philippines a voice in discussions about globalization and emerging international issues. This also provides opportunities for productive loans and investments, technology, and knowledge capacity improvement, as well as a recognized and accountable platform to give insights on the country's largest issues.

Women have become more visible in terms of political participation with a steady increase in the number of women elected in the legislative seats and local government positions. However, both Houses of Congress are still dominated by men. At the local level, there are more women chief executives in cities at 78.8 percent in 2016.

On provision of legal identity for all, including birth registration, 90 percent of children under 5 years of age have births that are registered with a civil authority as of 2016. The remaining unregistered children are likely IPs, Muslim, and children of the poorest sectors of the society. To address low birth registration among these groups, programs and projects are implemented to provide easier access for registration. The PSA conducts mobile civil registration activities for Indigenous Groups and hard-to-reach areas. The Indigenous Peoples Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health and Nutrition Project (2013-2016) of the European Union and United Nations Population Fund, implemented by the Department of Health and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, benefited more than 9,000 IPs in Mindanao through its late birth registration component. Nonetheless, more needs to be done to ensure the attainment of legal identities across the country.²⁴

In line with the initiative of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to strengthen and improve civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS), the Philippines adopted the Ministerial Declaration to proclaim the “CRVS Decade for 2015 to 2024.” This was further established nationally through Proclamation No. 1106 “Declaring the Years 2015 to 2024 as CVRS Decade.”

Government continues to promote freedom of information, while protecting data privacy. The Philippines is pursuing the passage of a law on Freedom of Information. In its absence, public access to information is guaranteed through Executive Order No. 2, series of 2016.

Laws such as the Philippine Identification System Act and the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act support the SDGs. The *Philippine Identification System Act* streamlines private and public transactions and strengthen financial inclusion by establishing a single, valid government-issued identification document for Filipinos and resident aliens. The *Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act* enforces shorter and simpler transaction periods in government agencies by reducing the processing time, number of signatories, and requirements, among others.

Best Practices

Pursuing institutional processes and mechanisms to achieve lasting peace. The passage of the *Bangsamoro Organic Law* and the recent establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim

²⁴ <https://philippines.unfpa.org/en/news/making-indigenous-peoples-count-through-birth-registration>

Mindanao marked the beginning of achieving lasting peace in Mindanao. The commitment of both the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to implement the peace agreement was evident in the issuance of Executive Order No. 8, s. 2016 that expanded the membership of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission, tasked to draft the law, to include other interest groups. The participatory and inclusive process ensured the creation of a law that is more responsive to the needs and aspirations both of the Bangsamoro and non-Bangsamoro peoples to pursue the realization of social justice, equity, and economic growth. The law includes provisions on self-governance, equitable share in the national budget through the block grant, and ensuring rehabilitation and development of conflict torn communities through the Special Development Fund. These provisions generated broader support that led to the ratification of the law.

Meanwhile, the ongoing impasse in the peace talks with communist insurgents creates a bigger challenge for the government to ensure peace and development in the communities. The President created the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict through EO 70, s. 2018 to institutionalize a whole-of-nation approach in prioritizing and harmonizing the delivery of services and provision of social development assistance to conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas.

Promoting peace is a process that should engage multiple actors to demonstrate empathy with those affected by the conflict. The case of the Marawi City conflict²⁵, though the rehabilitation process is still ongoing, stands out as an example of partnership. Development partners provided humanitarian assistance, including food and livelihood support, education, health and nutrition services, and protection measures such as the safe return of displaced families to their homes or places of origin. Around USD 131.96 million worth of humanitarian assistance was provided to the affected communities, some of which were coursed through NGOs or CSOs.

Table 10. Humanitarian Assistance in the Philippines

Development Partners	Total (in million PHP)	Total (in million USD)*
Multilateral Partners		
United Nations	5,053.69	96.17
Bilateral Partners		
Australia	547.44	10.42
Italy	47.67	0.91
Japan	612.73	11.66
Korea	528.90	10.06
US Agency for International Development	104.78	1.99
European Union	39.19	0.75
Total	6,934.40	131.96

Source: Department of Finance (*exchange rate as of May 23, 2019: USD1.000 = PHP52.551)

The Task Force Bangon Marawi²⁶ (TFBM), the inter-agency group designated to lead the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts of the government, received technical support in the formulation of the Bangon Marawi Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Program²⁷ (BMCRPP) and in the implementation of other key activities. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and World Bank (WB), in particular, provided

²⁵ The conflict in Marawi City started on May 23, 2017. After five months of armed encounter, the City was declared liberated on October 17, 2017.

²⁶ To create a unified and comprehensive effort for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi City and other affected localities, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Administrative Order (AO) No. 3 on June 28, 2017 that created the TFBM. Specifically, AO 3 tasked the TFBM to meet the immediate needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and/or adversely affected families; develop the BMCRPP; and facilitate and oversee the implementation of the BMCRPP's PPAs.

²⁷ The BMCRPP provides the strategic interventions for the rehabilitation of Marawi City and the municipalities directly affected by the conflict which are Butig and Piagapo in Lanao del Sur for implementation from 2018 to 2022. It has a total funding requirement of PHP60.51 billion.

technical support in drafting the Post Disaster Conflict Needs Assessment that was led by the Office of Civil Defense. The WB also provided substantive inputs to the BMCRRP, led by NEDA, as well as technical support in the profiling of internally displaced persons and in setting up the monitoring information system for the BMCRRP.

Furthermore, financial assistance through loans and grants were offered to fund the implementation of infrastructure (roads, bridges, markets, housing), social services (school furniture), and livelihood (agricultural inputs) projects in the BMCRRP. According to a Development Forum held on November 28, 2018, a total of USD 737.95 million had been pledged by development partners for Marawi rehabilitation and reconstruction. This includes infrastructure and livelihood-related projects in the BMCRRP that will be funded through grants and loans from ADB, Japan Government/JICA, UN FAO, and the Chinese Government.

Table 11. Support to BMCRRP and Technical Assistance/ Project Preparatory Support

Development Partners	Loans		Grants/TA and PPS		Total	
	in million PHP	in million USD*	in million PHP	in million USD*	in million PHP	in million USD*
Support to BMCRRP	32,726.67	622.76	2,447.69	46.58	35,174.36	669.34
Multilateral Partners						
Asian Development Bank	20,956.00	398.77	419.12	7.98	21,375.12	406.75
World Bank	5,239.00	99.69			5,239.00	99.69
International Fund for Agricultural Development	602.49	11.46			602.49	11.46
Bilateral Partners						
China			1,100.19	20.94	1,100.19	20.94
Japan	3,309.68	62.98	928.38	17.67	4,238.06	80.65
Spain	2,619.50	49.85			2,619.50	49.85
TA and PPS			3,605.54	68.61	3,605.54	68.61
Multilateral Partners						
Asian Development Bank			11.79	0.22	11.79	0.22
World Bank			31.43	0.60	31.43	0.60
United Nations			57.26	1.09	57.26	1.09
Bilateral Partners						
Spain			37.12	0.71	37.12	0.71
Australia			463.93	8.83	463.93	8.83
China			157.17	2.99	157.17	2.99
Germany			19.19	0.37	19.19	0.37
Japan			255.31	4.86	255.31	4.86
Korea			314.34	5.98	314.34	5.98
US Agency for International Development			2,258.01	42.97	2,258.01	42.97
Total	32,726.67	622.76	6,053.24	115.19	38,779.90	737.95

Source: Department of Finance (*exchange rate as of May 23, 2019: USD1.000 = PHP52.551)



SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development)

Achieving the SDGs requires effective and cohesive partnerships among various actors such as national and local governments, the development community, civil society, the private sector and other organizations to make optimal use of available resources. Collaborative efforts to develop the data infrastructure (Sections V and VI) and supporting mechanisms to implement SDG-supportive initiatives at the international, national, and local levels are also necessary.

Policy Mainstreaming

Tax policy for development and inclusion. The Tax Reform for Accelerated Inclusion (TRAIN) enacted in late 2017 provided higher revenue for the government, but also contains provisions that discourage bad health habits. This is the intended effect of the additional excise taxes on “sin products” such as tobacco and alcohol, as well as on sugar-sweetened beverages. Proceeds from sin taxes are directed to the implementation of major health programs, including programs for universal health coverage.

The TRAIN also recognizes that there will be short-term negative impact. To mitigate the negative impact on the poor, it provides for an unconditional cash transfer program. The poorest 10 million households received cash transfer amounting to PHP 2,400 per household in 2018, and each will receive PHP3,600 in 2019 and 2020.

Investment liberalization measures to boost investment and induce greater participation from the private sector. In 2016, restriction on foreign ownership of financial companies was lifted. This increased net FDI in the sector from an annual average of USD 186 million in 2010 to 2015 to USD 532 million in 2016 to 2018. In 2018, restrictions were also lifted in five investment areas with the shortening of Foreign Investment Negative List (FINL): internet businesses, investment houses, teaching at higher education, training centers engaged in short-term high-level skills, and wellness centers. Three proposals pending in Congress – Amendments to the Foreign Investment Act, Public Service Act, and the Retail Trade Liberalization Act – are also expected to create a more favorable investment climate in the country.

Assessment

Table 9. Status of Goal 17 Indicators: Philippines

SDG Indicator	Baseline		Latest data	
	Value	Year	Value	Year
Total government revenue as proportion of GDP (in %)	15.8	2015	16.4	2018
Share of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes (in %)	69.7	2015	69.8	2018
Foreign direct investment as proportion of total domestic budget (in %)	9.9	2015	13.7	2018

Volume of remittances as proportion of GDP (in %)	9.7	2015	9.7	2018
Debt service as proportion of export of goods and receipts from services and primary income	5.6	2015	6.3	2018
Fixed internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed	2.06	2016		

Official development assistance (ODA) remains a vital component in achieving the country's development programs and projects and more broadly in achieving the SDGs²⁸. The NEDA ODA Portfolio Review reported that in 2017, 131 ODA programs and projects supported the achievement of the 17 SDGs. These represent 31.0 percent of the total loans and grants in the ODA Portfolio as of December 2017. The ODA net commitment amounting to USD 14.8 billion in December 2017 consisted of 70 loans (USD 12.3 billion) and 352 grants (USD 2.5 billion) as compared to the portfolio in December 2016 of USD 15.6 billion consisting of 66 loans (USD 12.2 billion) and 400 grants (USD 3.4 billion). However, results of the Development Finance and Aid Assessment conducted in 2014 revealed that ODA financing is decreasing. The study for the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) undertaken by the country in 2017 as a pilot, states the estimated TOSSD²⁹ resources (USD 3.5 billion based on 2014-2015 proxy data) received was close to two and a half times the amount of ODA provided to the country. Still, among the key findings of the study is that, for the Philippines, ODA remains an important financing source for investing in the SDGs.

Domestic resource mobilization has improved to complement external financial resources. The ratio of national government revenue to GDP increased from 15.8 percent in 2015 to 16.4 percent in 2018. The steady increase in tax effort from 2015 to 2018 largely contributed to improved revenue performance. From 13.6 percent in 2015, tax effort increased to 14.2 percent in 2017, and further increased to 14.7 percent in 2018. The intensified tax enforcement and anti-smuggling activities resulted in higher collection in 2017, while the implementation of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN Law) helped boost tax collection in 2018.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) as proportion of total domestic budget increased from 9.9 percent in 2015 to 13.7 percent in 2018, helping boost investment in sectors crucial to the attainment of national targets and the SDGs. FDI net inflows were largest in financial and insurance activities (in 2016), electricity, gas, and steam (in 2017), and manufacturing (both in 2017 and 2018)

Overseas Filipinos (OFs) can be made active partners in pursuing the SDGs by increasing the portion of remittances directed to savings and investment. The volume of remittances stood at 9.7 percent of GDP in 2018. Families of overseas workers enjoy higher remittance values following the decline in the costs of sending remittances as a proportion of the amount remitted from 5.2 percent in 2017 to from 4.2 percent as of the third quarter of 2018. While a significant portion of remittances are used in household consumption, investment among OFs can be promoted by exploring savings and investment instruments for overseas Filipinos, such as diaspora bonds, remittance bonds, and provident fund. Financial institutions, such as the Overseas Filipino Bank, among others, also need to actively promote savings and quality investments of remittances.

Despite accelerated public infrastructure spending, the national government ensures overall debt sustainability. The country's debt service as proportion of export of goods and services swung erratically from a low of 5.6 percent in 2015 to a high of 7.0 percent in 2016 before settling at 6.3 percent in 2018.

²⁸ "2018 Philippine Report on Enhancing Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Monitoring for Effective Development Cooperation" (February 2019)

²⁹ The aim of TOSSD is to complement ODA by better tracking the totality of officially supported development finance resources beyond ODA.

The same volatile trend is reflected in the country's debt service-to-GDP ratio. Nonetheless, the national government managed to steadily reduce the country's debt service as proportion of GDP, from 6.0 percent in 2015 to 4.5 percent in 2018. In particular, the share of national government interest payments to total disbursement declined from 13.9 percent in 2015 to 10.2 percent in 2018. Moreover, amidst large outlays on the Build, Build, Build Program, the government debt as proportion of GDP decreased from 44.7 percent in 2015 to 41.8 percent in 2018.

Improving the performance of revenue agencies and LGUs in revenue generation continues to be a challenge. The remaining packages of the tax reform program need to gain support to hurdle legislative challenges. Capacitating revenue agencies to implement administrative reforms deemed complementary to policy reforms could obtain the needed support from lawmakers. Currently, administrative measures under the TRAIN Law, such as fuel marking and the Electronic Receipt and Invoice System (ERIS) remains to be implemented. Similarly, capacitating LGUs to tap local sources of revenue and to carry out devolved functions could secure the passage of reforms to empower the LGUs.

South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC) allow for the replicability of development experiences between countries of relatively similar development capacities. However, SSC/TrC has not been fully utilized as a modality for development cooperation due to the absence of a mapping of the south countries' needs and also their competencies and advantages. The international community can address this dearth in information by providing a platform for the matching of the development needs of one country with the competencies of another to better facilitate the exchange of resources, knowledge, and technology among members of the global south.

Best Practices

Enhancing development cooperation. The Philippines participated anew in the 3rd Monitoring Survey Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. Coordinated by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and UNDP, the GPEDC seeks to gather evidence on progress in implementing effective development cooperation commitments at the country, regional, and global levels, supporting accountability among all development partners. A Philippine country report entitled “2018 Philippine Report: Enhancing Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Monitoring for Effective Development Cooperation” summarized findings of the monitoring survey resulting from several rounds of consultation with 14 development partners, 19 government agencies, 18 private sector firms, and various CSOs and trade union organizations. Findings of the report indicate that at the strategic level, there is a high level of alignment between development partners' country assistance strategies (CAS) with the PDP 2017-2022, *AmBisyon Natin 2040*, and the SDGs. Majority of the CAS timeframe are in sync with the timing of the national plan. The Philippine government signs off on 65 percent of these CAS. Transparency and inclusive partnerships are also pursued as 90.0 percent of development partners engaged CSOs, 80.0 percent consulted the private sector, and 55.0 percent engaged other stakeholders in the formulation of their respective CAS³⁰

Joint review and monitoring of ODA Projects. Portfolio Reviews jointly undertaken by the government and development partners to track progress on commitments and targets of development cooperation are continuing and expanding. NEDA and UNDP are working closely on the development of the operating guidelines to supplement the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF), jointly issued by the NEDA and the DBM in 2015. The NEPF calls for the purposive conduct of independent evaluation of government

³⁰ “2018 Philippine Report on Enhancing Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Monitoring for Effective Development Cooperation” (February 2019)

programs and projects in support of good governance, transparency, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making.³¹ The continuing conduct of the annual ODA Review³² allows for the improvement of the implementation of ODA-funded projects, and facilitates resolution of key project implementation issues, among others.³³ The 2017 ODA Portfolio Review already tagged the alignment of ODA projects with the SDGs.

Development partners’ support to the government in times of disasters. Such support usually comes in the form of “in-kind” humanitarian assistance during relief operations, and technical and financial assistance for the implementation programs/projects/activities (PPA) during the recovery and rehabilitation phase.

Platforms to harness the investment potential of overseas Filipino remittances effectively make them partners for development. The *Personal Equity and Retirement Account (PERA)* was launched on December 16, 2016 pursuant to RA 9505, encouraging individuals to save and plan for their retirement while enjoying tax incentives. In this program, OFWs are provided the additional benefit of being able to invest up to PHP 200,000 annually, twice the normal limit.

In addition, the BSP in partnership with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, redesigned its approach to financial literacy campaign among OFWs, branded as *PiTaKa (Pinansyal na Talino at Kaalaman)* for OFWs and their families. *PiTaKa* includes modules on financial planning and management, which aims to change financial behaviors and enable OFWs to transition from being big spenders, to becoming regular savers, investors, and even business owners. The Overseas Filipinos Remittances for Development (OF-RED) project³⁴ also set up a collective fund for investment in select local development projects. Remittances invested in the fund were also matched by the international partners and the LGUs.

Maintaining a borrowing mix that minimizes exposure to external risks, thereby contributing to overall debt sustainability. The Philippines borrows at an 80-20 mix in favor of domestic borrowing to minimize risks stemming from the external sector. Moreover, the national government seeks to widen its securities investor base by exploring third currency denominations. In addition, judicious selection of financing modes for the infrastructure projects minimizes risk exposure of the national government.

Making use of venues for regional cooperation. Regional cooperation mechanisms such as the ASEAN are important in pushing for reforms to help realize the shared aspirations of its members for a prosperous, peaceful, and stable community. ASEAN recognizes the complementary goals of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in uplifting the standards of living for ASEAN citizens.

The South-South and Triangular Cooperation is supportive of the priorities and initiatives of the Philippine Government. By providing opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and experience, the collaboration helped enrich the capacity of the government and its ability to forge partnerships and encourage cooperation with relevant stakeholders such as civil society organizations, the business community, and regional and

³¹ *Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2015- 01 The National Evaluation Policy Framework of the Philippines*

³² RA 8182, also known as the ODA Act of 1996, as amended by RA 8555, mandated NEDA to conduct an annual review of the status of all projects financed by ODA and identify causes of implementation and completion delays or reasons for bottlenecks, cost overruns (actual and prospective), and continued project or program viability. The NEDA is required to submit to Congress a report on the outcome of the review not later than June 30 of each year. The ODA Act complemented NEDA Board Resolution No. 30 s. 1992, which instructed the NEDA Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) to review all on-going ODA-funded programs and projects, with the aim of improving ODA absorptive capacity.

³³ <http://www.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Annual-Report-2017-as-of-16JUL2018.pdf>

³⁴ Launched by the United Nations Development Programme and the Western Union Foundation (WUF) and implemented by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO).

international organizations. Below are some of the government agencies' collaborations with Member States of South-South Cooperation:

- a. *Philippines - Papua New Guinea Rice Demo Farm* supporting the Philippines' effort pursuant to the Joint Declaration on Agricultural Cooperation between the Philippines and PNG. The Demo Farm was showcased during the APEC Leaders' meeting in November 2018;
- b. *Memorandum of Understanding between DENR and ASEAN - Republic of Korea Forest Cooperation (AFoCo)* for (a) Facilitating the Participatory Planning of Community-Based Forest Management Using Geographic Information System and Remote Sensing Technologies in Forest Resources Management in the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand, which aims to contribute to the improvement of forests and forest resources development within the ASEAN region; and (b) Capacity Building on the Application of Landscape Approach to Support the Sustainable Natural Resources Management in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Philippines and Singapore (BIPS Project), which aims to capacitate the concerned stakeholders within the identified Project Area in Assisted Natural Regeneration towards restoring degraded forestland;
- c. *Minamata Initial Assessment in the Philippines*, which aims at building capacity in Cambodia, Pakistan, and the Philippines, to reduce mercury exposure of humans and the environment by identifying the main sources and promoting integrated management;
- d. *Demonstration of Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) in Open Burning Activities* in Response to the Stockholm Convention on POPs, which aims to create resource-efficient waste management systems through the introduction of BAT and BEP to reduce Unintentionally Produced Persistent Organic Pollutants (U-POPs) emissions.

VIII. How the International Community Can Help

Leverage ICT to reduce the digital divide and inequalities. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is expected to create an impact on the skills and employment landscape. There is a need to spur discussions on how technological advancements can reshape education systems and potentially cause a further digital divide across countries and regions. Lagging countries in this area, such as the Philippines, would need additional support not only to keep up, but also to adopt and maximize the potential of these technologies in enhancing pedagogy. Specifically, the Philippines needs more productive international partnerships that would capacitate educators and institutions, such as *twinning arrangements* (dual courses/programs, cross-border education), *knowledge sharing activities*, and *research and development ventures*. Such programs will enhance educators' awareness, and expand global perspectives of students and colleagues at home and host communities to positively affect the quality of instruction.

Knowledge sharing activities would be helpful for the Philippines to determine innovative pedagogical approaches to improve learning. While the Philippines has been pouring efforts in curricular reforms and expanding ICT access in schools, more developed countries have already made substantial improvements in developing and adopting new pedagogical practices such as artificial intelligence-enabled education, innovative classrooms, and gamification of learning, among others. Learning experiences from these countries would help the Philippines identify and replicate innovative practices appropriate to the country's context.

Pursue labor trade agreements to facilitate trade in services. While the Philippines has recently embarked on processes to reference the *Philippine Qualifications Framework* with the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQR), referencing with other countries and regions needs to be continuously pursued to improve student and labor mobility. This will complement and maximize opportunities brought by labor framework arrangements for facilitating trade in services, such as the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements.

Pursue international technology transfer to accelerate the empowerment of vulnerable sectors. For example, improving the availability of assistive devices can help persons with disability access information, services, and facilities needed to effectively participate in development work.

Use development assistance to address subnational development gaps. The provision of aid to close the development gap in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao will be helpful in ensuring the successful implementation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

Address the huge financing gap in implementing CCAM and DRR initiatives especially at the local level. In light of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change findings on the impact of 1.5°C warming, the country would need greater international support in the form of financing, capacity-building, and technology transfer to enhance its resilience to the growing risks posed by climate change, to respond to its impact, and to contribute to the effort at reducing global carbon emissions. Developed countries should provide enhanced climate finance that is adequate, predictable, continuous, and scalable to fill in the needs and priorities of climate-vulnerable countries, including the implementation of the NDCs. Some of the country's adaptation and mitigation priorities are: (a) enhancing resilience of vulnerable sectors including agriculture, coastal and marine, health, water and forestry; (b) developing capabilities and maximizing the use of core and emerging climate-resilient and low-carbon technologies; (c) maximizing access to risk financing and risk transfer mechanisms; (d) establishing climate and disaster-resilient structures; and (e) developing, maintaining, and ensuring the accessibility of climate and geospatial information and services. More funds are also necessary to scale up and replicate best practices.

Strengthen international cooperation to address cybercrimes and transnational crimes. The government needs to strengthen bilateral, regional and international partnerships and cooperation to boost the capacity and capability of the security sector to address these emerging security threats.

Maximize the South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC) as means for knowledge sharing and promoting the replicability of good development experiences between countries of similar development capacities. Despite its potential, SSC/TrC has not been fully utilized as a modality for development cooperation due to the absence of a mapping of the south countries' needs and also their competencies and advantages. The international community can address this dearth in information by providing a platform for the matching of the development needs of one country with the competencies of another to better facilitate the exchange of resources, knowledge, and technology among members of the global south.

IX. Means of Implementation and Next Steps

This section describes the implementation mechanisms to be put in place to achieve the SDGs. Specifically, it describes the mechanisms for resource mobilization, stakeholder engagement, localization of the SDGs, and further development of statistical monitoring of the SDGs, and some online resources on the work for the SDGs in the Philippines.

Resource mobilization

The Philippines will establish a *Sub-Committee on the SDGs*³⁵, which will be subsumed under the Development Budget Coordinating Committee (DBCC)³⁶. The Sub-Committee will be chaired by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) as Co-Chair. This institutional arrangement is strategic and will provide a platform to link planning and budgeting to ensure that SDG-supportive programs and projects are adequately funded.

The Philippines shall sustain its cooperation and partnership with international development and funding organizations. These partnerships will be crucial for capacity building and technology transfers in line with the SDGs.

Domestic resources dominate the Philippines' financing landscape. Domestic public financing and domestic private investment each account for over a third of all resources. Domestic private investment, although significant, has remained constant as a proportion of GDP since 2010, and could be further leveraged. Recent trends in business practice around corporate social value and inclusive business models point to the potential of local private actors to contribute to the SDGs, if the enabling environment is strengthened (Sustainability Reporting Guidelines for Publicly Listed Companies).

The Philippines is the largest recipient of remittances in the ASEAN. As such, directing these funds to SDG-supportive activities is imperative. The Overseas Filipino Remittances for Development (OFReD) has been established to support policies that transform overseas remittances for development, savings and investments, and build a viable collective remittance fund.

Localization

Attainment of the SDGs requires concerted, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder efforts both at the national and local levels. The implementation strategies required to achieve the SDGs, which are found in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) and the subsequent sectoral plans, are mainstreamed and localized through the RDP and Comprehensive Development Plans (CDP) at the regional and local level.

On November 26, 2018, the Department of the Interior and Local Government and NEDA signed Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 1 series of 2018 entitled "Guidelines on the Localization of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 Results Matrices and the Sustainable Development Goals."

The guidelines are being issued to ensure that programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) implemented by local governments contribute to the achievement of targets of PDP priority sectors and areas. The

³⁵ The Sub-Committee was created through the Social Development Committee Resolution No. 2, entitled "Enjoining the Development Budget Coordinating Committee to Create the Sub-Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals"

³⁶ The DBCC is mandated to recommend the approval of the annual government expenditure program and the proper allocation of expenditures for each development activity.

formulation of RMs at the regional, provincial, and city/municipal levels reflective of, and/or consistent with, the targeted outcomes of the PDP and budgeting of PPAs that contribute to the achievement of the RM targets are seen to ensure vertical linkage of national, regional, and local priorities.

Stakeholder Engagement

Given the critical role of non-government and private organizations in the attainment of the SDGs, the Sub-Committee on the SDGs shall hold stakeholder chambers to take stock of non-government and private sector initiatives and then direct these projects to current development gaps. There will also be pledging sessions where non-government and private sector organizations signify their commitment and identify specific areas where they can contribute. The performance of these projects can also be monitored through the Sub-Committee.

The VNR consultations of the Philippines has roused the interest of different stakeholders and created a demand for information on the national implementation on the SDGs and spaces for participation. The feedback from the different consultations shall be used as inputs for consideration in the midterm updating of the PDP. The Sub-Committee on the SDGs shall serve as a regular and institutionalized space for engagement among government, private sector, civil society, academia, media, trade and labor unions, among others.

Monitoring

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Philippine Statistical System will continue its efforts to improve the data-monitoring framework for the SDGs. As such, efforts will focus on addressing the regularity of collection and inclusion of new questions to national surveys to be able to report Tier 2 indicators as Tier 1. A review of the Tier 1 indicators is also in the pipeline to improve the correspondence of the targets with the national indicators.

An SDGs Annex of the Philippines Annual Socioeconomic Report – the reporting mechanism of the PDP – is currently being developed. This Annex will reflect the relevant sectoral initiatives that contribute to the attainment of the SDGs.

As there is a need for better data granularity, the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) – the government's central identification platform for all citizen and resident aliens of the Philippines – will contribute in identifying the status of marginalized needed to assess the progress in the achievement in the SDGs.

The SDG Website and SDG Watch

There are two government-initiated online sources of SDG information in the Philippines: the SDG Website of NEDA (sdg.neda.gov.ph) and the SDG Watch of PSA (psa.gov.ph/sdg). The SDG Website aims to provide an online platform to engage different stakeholders on the SDGs and aims to serve as a tool for policy coordination. The main sections are the programs for the 17 goals³⁷, policy coordination and mainstreaming, and stakeholder engagement. The SDG Website also expounds on the VNR report, more details on the achievement of the focus goals are in the website. The website can be accessed through the QR Code on the right.



The SDG Watch of PSA provides statistical information on the SDGs in the Philippines. It provides a listing of the Tier 1 indicator and baseline information for these indicators. A report on the pace of progress of the achievement of each target based on the national numerical targets of the SDGs is also in the pipeline.

³⁷ It lists the 17 goals and the major programs designed for its achievement, in the future private and non-government initiatives will also be featured in the website.

X. Conclusion

The SDGs present a bold commitment to finish what has been started through the MDGs. The Global Goals are described as a “universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.” Pursuing them requires an ambitious approach that gets everyone behind the goal of leaving no one behind. Involving the different stakeholders today in a very concrete way will determine the attainment of the SDGs in the remaining 11 years, and on to 2040.

In line with the 2019 VNR Theme: *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*, the Philippines’ VNR process served as a platform to engage stakeholders and revitalize commitments to cooperate for the SDGs, with clearly defined targets. Through the VNR, the Philippines will continue to dedicate its work in the next 11 years to meeting nationally owned numerical targets.

Integration of the SDGs into the Philippine Development Plan is key to its implementation. The necessary platforms for coordination and monitoring, though still in its early stages, have been set. In the implementation of programs and projects, particular attention has been accorded to “*leaving no one behind*.” Concrete actions have been taken to deliver services and provide economic opportunities to the sectors that would otherwise be left behind under a “business as usual” growth process. Moving forward, it is important to measure the extent to which the country is able to leave no one behind. Better data granularity is imperative in this respect. The Philippines’ second VNR emphasizes the synergies between government and non-government actions required to empower people and ensure inclusiveness and equality. In the next few years, concurrent with the mainstreaming of the SDGs into policies, the Philippines will also focus on ensuring that the programs, activities, and projects that support the SDGs are funded and effectively localized. A whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach requires that human and financial resources from government, the private sector, and non-government actors are directed towards sustainable development that leaves no one behind and realizing the Philippine *AmBisyon* of a life that is *matatag* (strong family and community ties), *maginhawa* (comfortable), and *panatag* (peaceful and secure).