IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHILIPPINE NEW URBAN AGENDA

NATIONAL REPORT 2025

BAGONG PILIPINAS

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Message from Secretary of DHSUD

ENGR. JOSE RAMON ALILING
Secretary
Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development

We, at the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), are pleased to present the Philippine's New Urban Agenda (NUA) Implementation Report. This milestone document is the first progress report prepared on the commitments made by the Philippine Government to sustainable urbanization through the implementation of the NUA during the 2016 United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). This report re-affirms our commitment to continuously advance both the NUA and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which are critical to the country's long-term development.

As the primary institution responsible for the management of housing, human settlement, and urban development in the country, the DHSUD has taken the lead role in preparing this report which was a result of a series of meetings and consultations with relevant government agencies, civil society organizations, development organizations, and representatives from the private sector. I wish to thank all our partners, foremost the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), for providing the necessary technical expertise, guidance, and support in crafting this report.

The Philippine NUA Implementation Report paints a picture of the current state of urban development in the Philippines, including past and current programs, accomplishments on key indicators, notable practices and initiatives. More importantly, it identifies challenges and corresponding recommendations to fast-track our progress towards achieving the commitments in the NUA and SDGs.

This report provides a strong basis for us to enhance policy, program, and project alignment and complementation in the housing and urban development sector. Moreover, we are submitting this report to the United Nations (UN) as our country's input to the UN Secretary General's Quadrennial Reports that measure global implementation of the New Urban Agenda and SDG 11.

Moving forward, I urge all stakeholders to work closely together to achieve the vision of the Philippine NUA towards a "Better, Greener, Smarter Cities in an Inclusive Philippines".

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

A

ABC	Association of Barangay Council
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADMU	Ateneo de Manila University
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
ALS	Alternative Learning Systems
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASENSO	Access of Small Entrepreneurs to Sound Lending Opportunities
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
ATI	Agricultural Training Institute
AWS	Automated Weather Stations

B

BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BMB	Biodiversity Management Bureau
BERDE	Building for Ecologically Responsive Design Excellence
BFP	Bureau of Fire Protection
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
BSP	Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

C

CAR	Cordillera Administrative Region
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCAM	Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CDO	Cagayan de Oro City
CDP	Comprehensive Development Plan
CES	Clean Energy Scenario
CEST	Community Empowerment thru Science and Technology
CGAP	Career Guidance Advocacy Program
CLUP	Comprehensive Land Use Plan
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
COA	Commission on Audit
COP	Climate Change Conference
CSF	Credit Surety Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CTRM	Committee on Tariff and Related Matters

D

DA	Department of Agriculture
DBFTA	Doing Business in Free Trade Areas
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DBCC	Development Budget Coordination Committee
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DEPDev	Department of Economy, Planning, and Development
DHSUD	Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development
DICT	Department of Information and Communications Technology
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DND	Department of National Defense
DOH	Department of Health
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DOTr	Department of Transportation
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DRCC	Disaster Response Command Center
DRRM	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
DRRMP	Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DU	Distribution Utility

E

EMB	Environmental Management Bureau
ENGP	Enhanced National Greening Program
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
EVAP	Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines
ExCom	Executive Committee

F

FIES	Family Income and Expenditure Survey
FTA	Free Trade Agreements

G

GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAP	Green Energy Auction Program
GFI	Government Financial Institutions
GFPS	GAD Focal Point System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIP	Government Internship Program
GMMA	Greater Metro Manila Area
GOCC	Government-Owned and -Controlled Corporations
GovNet	Government Network
GP	Galing Pook
GVA	Gross Value Added

H

HDMF	Home Development Mutual Fund
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HPBS	High Priority Bus System
HSAC	Human Settlements Adjudication Commission
HUC	Highly Urbanized City
HUDCC	Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council
HVCDP	High Value Crops Development Program

I

IAEG-SDG	Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators
ICC	Investment Coordination Committee
ICCs	Independent Component Cities
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRR	Integrated Disaster Risk and Reduction
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
IfSAR	Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar
ILO	International Labour Organization
InfraComm	Committee on Infrastructure
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
ISFs	Informal Settler Families
IRIS	Industry and Startups
IRR	Implementing Rules and Regulations

J

JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JMC	Joint Memorandum Circular

K

KM	Kilometer
KRA	Key Result Area
KSA	Key Shelter Agencies
KWh	Kilowatt-hour

L

LCCAP	Local Climate Change Action Plan
LCP	League of Cities of the Philippines
LDIP	Local Development Investment Program
LDRRMC	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
LDRRMF	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund
LDRRMP	Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LEP	Ladderized Education Program
LFEWS	Local Flood Early Warning Systems
LFS	Labor Force Survey
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
LGC	Local Government Code
LGU	Local Government Unit
LiDAR	Light Detector and Ranging
LMI	Labor Market Information
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LPRAPs	Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans
LPTRP	Local Public Transport Route Planning
LRT	Light Rail Transit
LST	Life Skills Training
LTFRB	Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board

M

MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MMDA	Metropolitan Manila Development Authority
MMSP	Metro Manila Subway Project
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MRF	Materials Recovery Facility
MRT	Metro Rail Transit
MSMEs	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
MtCO2e	million metric tons of CO2 equivalent
MW	Megawatt
MWSS	Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System

N

NAP	National Action Plan
NAPC	National Anti-Poverty Commission
NCACL	National Council Against Child Labor
NCCAP	National Climate Change Action Plan
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NCMF	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos
NCR	National Capital Region
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NDRRMF	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
NDRRMF	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NEP	National Expenditure Program
NFSCC	National Framework Strategy on Climate Change
NGA	National Government Agencies
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
NGP	National Greening Program
NHA	National Housing Authority
NHMFC	National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation
NHSB	National Human Settlements Board
NHUDSP	National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan
NIPAS	National Integrated Protected Areas System
NISUS	National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy
NMS	National Migration Survey
NOAH	Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards
NOV	Notices of Violation
NSC	National Steering Committee
NSCR	North-South Commuter Railway
NSRP	National Skills Registration Program
NSS	National Spatial Strategy
NSWMC	National Solid Waste Management Commission
NSWMP	National Solid Waste Management Plan
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUDHF	National Urban Development and Housing Framework
NUPAP	National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program
NWRB	National Water Resources Board

O

O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OCD	Office of Civil Defense
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
OTOP	One Town, One Product

P

PAGASA	Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration
PAMB	Protected Area Management Board
PBSAP	Philippine Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan
PCAARRD	Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development
PCE	Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship
PCF	Performance Challenge Fund
PCUP	Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor
PDP	Philippine Development Plan
PDPFP	Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan
PEIS	PESO Employment Information System
PEP	Philippine Energy Plan
PHIVOLCS	Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology
PIDS	Philippine Institute for Development Studies

PITC	Philippine International Trading Corporation
PMRCIP	Pasig–Marikina River Channel Improvement Project
PMS	Presidential Management Staff
PNP	Philippine National Police
PNUA	Philippine New Urban Agenda
PPA	Programs, Projects, and Activities
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PRA	Philippine Reclamation Authority
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
PSF/PQF	Philippine Skills and Qualifications Frameworks
PSG	Policy Standards and Guidance
PUV	Public Utility Vehicle
PUVMP	Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program
PWDs	Persons with Disability

R

RDC	Regional Development Councils
RDP	Regional Development Plans
RE	Renewable Energy
RGHSF	Resilient and Green Human Settlements Framework
RIICs	Regional Inclusive Innovation Centers
RLAs	Regional Line Agencies
RM	Results Matrix

S

SAP	Social Amelioration Program
SC	Steering Committee
SDC	Social Development Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SER	Socioeconomic Report
SETUP	Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SGH	Seal of Good Housekeeping
SGLG	Seal of Good Local Governance
SHFC	Social Housing Finance Corporation
SLP	Sustainable Livelihood Program
SOA	School-On the Air
SPES	Special Program for the Employment of Students
SRC	Special Regional Committees
SSF	Shared Service Facilities
SUC	State Universities and Colleges
SWMP	Solid Waste Management Plan

T

Tech4ED	Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TOD	Transit-oriented Development
TSD	Treatment, Storage, and Disposal
TTI	Technical Training and Internship
TUPAD	Tulong Pangkabuhayan para sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers
TWG	Technical Working Group

U

UCCA	Urban Carrying Capacity Assessments
UCCT	Unconditional Cash Transfers
UDHA	Urban Development and Housing Act
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UVVRP	Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program

V

VAWC	Violence Against Women and Children
VCF	Value Chain Financing
VNR	Voluntary National Review

W

WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WEAP	Water Evaluation and Planning
WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
WESM	Wholesale Electricity Spot Market
WHO	World Health Organization
WRI	World Risk Index
WRMO	Water Resource Management Office

Executive Summary

The Philippines remain steadfast in achieving its commitments in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) by implementing policies, programs, and initiatives aimed at creating better, greener, and smarter cities by promoting sustainable, resilient, and inclusive development in urban areas. Achieving the Philippine NUA involves tackling inter-related issues and concerns and thus requires a whole-of-government approach. The *Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development* (DHSUD), created by virtue of Republic Act No. 11201 in 2019, takes a leadership role in pursuing the PNUA. DHSUD actively engages national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), academic and research institutions, private sector, and other stakeholders through dialogues and consultations. DHSUD has also been at the forefront in providing technical assistance to provincial, city, and municipal LGUs in formulating urban policies, developing their respective local resource management plans, as well as capacitating urban planners and other LGU staff, among others.

The Philippine Government recognizes the importance of ensuring that the Philippine NUA is integrated in both the national and local development planning processes. The Philippine NUA is aligned with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, which is considered the country's national blueprint that guides the government's socioeconomic policies and development strategies. The NUA is specifically framed under the sub-chapter "establish livable communities" under the pillar to "Promote Human and Social Development". Given the interconnected nature of the development strategies, NUA priorities are reflected in other chapters of the PDP such as expanding and upgrading infrastructure and reducing vulnerabilities. At the same time, the Philippine NUA is aligned with the National Urban Development and Housing Framework (NUDHF), which serves as the country's urban policy and development framework. It depicts the urbanization and spatial policies of the PDP and links with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the National Framework for Physical Planning. Together, the NUA and NUDHF comprise the national urban policy of the Philippines. As the Philippines work towards fulfilling the NUA, ensuring alignment across all these national development plans as well as the derivative sectoral and local plans will ensure coherence in policies and strategies, synergies in the programs and initiatives across government agencies, and promote collaboration among national government, local governments, and non-state actors.

> The Philippines remains committed in achieving its targets in the New Urban Agenda to create better, greener, and smarter cities that are inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

Over the years, significant progress has been made across the five thematic areas of the Philippine New Urban Agenda. On urban demography, the Philippines continues to invest in improving equitable access and enhancing the quality of education to capture the youth dividend. It continues to increase funding for educational institutions to build classrooms and school facilities, hire and train teachers, purchase books and learning materials, and conduct educational research towards the goal of improving learning outcomes. Appropriations for the education sector has increased consistently in both nominal terms and as a percentage of national government appropriations in the past decade, although still below the recommended Education Framework 2030 Agenda benchmark of 15%–20%. The Philippine Government also strengthened targeted support programs such as scholarships for marginalized students, conditional cash transfers for indigent families that incentivize sending children to school, parallel learning system for out-of-school youth as well as adults who are unable to access formal education, and specialized education programs for learners with disabilities. Moreover, the *Technical and Vocational Education and Training* (TVET) was strengthened to expand both the number of certifications covered as well as the number of trainees, with more than 9.6 million graduates from 2017 to 2022.

To foster a spatially and regionally balanced development across regions, the Philippine Government endeavored to strengthen institutional coordination

among the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev), Regional Development Councils (RDCs), and local government units (LGUs) through coordination in the development planning process. Strategies on urban development are integrated in the respective Regional Development Plans (RDP) 2023-2028 across all regions.

On urban planning, DHSUD and other national government agencies provides targeted technical assistance to local governments to develop responsive local development plans that will guide urban development. LGUs are required to integrate climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures into their Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) to ensure that urban development will be resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change. Risk and climate data and projections are analyzed and used as important considerations into the planning process. Stakeholders from local communities, government agencies, civil society, and other stakeholders are intentionally consulted and engaged throughout the planning process to ensure that all sectors' diverse perspectives and needs are well considered and that the resulting plan will be inclusive. As of 2025, almost 40% all LGUs have risk-informed CLUPs while the rest are currently updating or formulating their plans to integrate climate and disaster risk assessments.

The country is also promoting transport-oriented development through the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities that are centered on efficient mass public transportation systems such as integrated rail systems, bus rapid transit systems, intermodal passenger terminals, and bus interchanges. Master plans for cities like Metro Manila have emphasized transit-oriented development to reduce congestion while promoting walkability. To date, there are numerous ongoing and planned transport development initiatives in the Philippines that are in line with the principle of transport-oriented development. These infrastructure projects are in different stages of implementation.

On environment, further efforts have been undertaken towards boosting the capacity for effective climate change actions and disaster risk reduction and management, improving urban waste management programs, monitoring and enhancing air quality, and improving access to clean and safe water in urban areas.

Manila, Philippines
Photo by Alexes Gerard
August 24, 2020

All local governments are mandated to formulate their own *Local Climate Change Action Plan* (LCCAP) that outlines the specific climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies to be implemented at the local level as well as *Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (LDRRMP*) which focuses on disaster prevention, preparedness, and response. As of March 2024, a total of 1,496 LGUs accounting to 87.23% of all LGUs in the Philippines have submitted their respective LCCAPs. Across the country, several LGUs implement various climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives such as investing in renewable energy like solar-powered streetlights and solar panels for schools and government buildings; promoting active transportation to reduce reliance in motorized vehicles, ease urban traffic congestion, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and nature-based solutions such as rain gardens in public parks, mangroves and beach forests for coastal areas, and urban reforestation initiatives.

Many local governments are also increasing urban green spaces such as parks, community gardens, green corridors, ecological parks, and urban botanical gardens. These green spaces provide a myriad of benefits such as reducing urban heat, providing spaces for outdoor recreation, and serving as habitat for wildlife in the rapidly developing urban communities. Moreover, specialized plans that target specific disasters were also formulated to guide a comprehensive and coordinated response across key stakeholders. This includes the Metro Manila Earthquake Contingency Plan focusing on the coordinated preparation for a potential 7.2 magnitude earthquake from the West Valley Fault that would significantly endanger 13 million residents in the National Capital Region (NCR).

On urban governance, the Philippine Government has undertaken massive efforts to utilize information and communications technology (ICT), including social networking, to expand access to government services, further promote transparency and accountability, enhance efficiency of urban governance mechanisms, and improve citizen engagement. The Philippine Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) is implementing the Philippine Government Network (GovNet) which aims to enhance government interconnectivity by providing high-speed broadband connection to government offices. Many government agencies, schools, and public hospitals are already connected in pilot provinces like Davao and Ilocos Norte. The DICT is actively working to expand GovNet's reach across the country as a key tool for promoting efficient governance as well as facilitating data sharing and collaboration among government agencies, which will greatly aid urban planning and governance. At the same time, a total of 35 cities across the Philippines have adopted eLGU systems. These systems facilitate business permitting, collection of local taxes and fees, and filing of requests and permits, enabling local governments to enhance internal operational efficiency as well as improve the delivery of vital government services for their constituency. These systems also include platforms that improve public financial management, ensuring that urban development projects are financially sustainable and effectively managed.

On urban economy, the government supports cities to enable them to continue to grow, generate jobs, and provide better living conditions for its communities. While Metro Manila remains the capital of the country, major urban centers like Cebu and Davao have flourished and serve as economic, cultural, and administrative hubs in their respective regions. These cities attract investments, create job opportunities, and serve as models for innovative and sustainable urban development. Additionally, the continued growth of secondary cities like Puerto Princesa City, Cagayan de Oro City, Iloilo City, Batangas City, Tagbilaran City, Zamboanga City, General Santos City, Legazpi City, and Tacloban City in the past decade helps reduce concentration of economic activities in Metro Manila. In terms of financing, the resource base of LGUs have grown following the full implementation of the 2019 Mandas-Garcia Supreme Court ruling, which increased the National Tax Allotment shares of LGUs. This policy took effect in 2022. Increased financing will enable LGUs to improve local governance and improve their services. This also means improving the LGUs' capacity to implement urban programs to realize the PNUA and attain SDGs at the local level. To further support LGUs, several capacity-building support programs have been provided for LGUs to enhance their public financial management capabilities and enhance operational efficiency.

Lastly, on housing and basic services, the Philippines is actively working towards reducing the housing backlog and improving living conditions in urban areas. The proportion of urban population in the Philippines who live in slums remained at 3.2% from 2015 to 2020 (PSA, 2025). Investments in socialized housing and basic services particularly in urban communities must be accelerated to attain the country's target of reducing this to less than 1% by 2030. As of 2022, at least 47 LGUs have slum upgrading programs with housing projects. Moreover, at least 311 LGUs across the country have approved Local Shelter Plans that integrate housing policies and regulations in their local development plans as of 2021.

The Philippine New Urban Agenda

The Philippine New Urban Agenda (NUA) serves as the national framework for localizing the global New Urban Agenda adopted during the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held in 2016 in Quito, Ecuador. Habitat III emphasizes the renewal of international commitments to sustainable urban development, with the NUA serving as the guiding framework for action at multiple levels of governance.

Anchored on the theme "Better, Greener, Smarter Cities in an Inclusive Philippines," the Philippine NUA was developed through a consultative and consensus-building process involving thematic, regional, and multi-sectoral workshops. This approach ensured the integration of diverse stakeholder perspectives and the contextualization of international commitments to national priorities. The Philippine NUA brings together key dimensions of urban transformation—urban demography, spatial planning, environmental management, housing and services, governance systems, and inclusive urban economies. It provides a coherent policy foundation to guide investment, regulation, and institutional coordination at all levels of government.

In alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements, the Philippine NUA underscores the intrinsic link between urbanization and sustainable development. It also integrates the three core transformative commitments of the global NUA: **leaving no one behind, ensuring sustainable and inclusive urban economies, and promoting environmental sustainability.** Advancing these commitments contributes not only to SDG 11 but also to the broader objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

THIS REPORT

This **Philippine New Urban Agenda (PNUA) National Implementation Report** serves as the country's official contribution to the global review process of the New Urban Agenda. Coordinated by the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), this Report responds to the commitment of Member States to undertake periodic, inclusive, and transparent assessments of progress in advancing the principles and priorities set forth in the Agenda.

This report draws from both quantitative and qualitative data sources. In the process of preparing this report, DHSUD has developed a list of indicators based on the Philippine SDG indicators and other nationally recognized indicators and administrative data provided by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and key national government agencies to measure progress made on specific PNUA commitments. To the extent possible, indicators used in the report are common to, or aligned with, existing global monitoring frameworks (i.e. Global Urban Monitoring Framework).

Where available, local data and voluntary inputs from LGUs have been incorporated, with case studies sourced through the League of Cities of the Philippines to highlight localized best practices. Moreover, DHSUD serves as the primary repository of data for NUA indicators.

The preparation of this Report involved technical consultations with national government agencies (NGAs), LGUs, CSOs, and private sector representatives. Specifically, policy coherence workshops were organized by DHSUD in 2022 and 2023 with support from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to gather data from various NGAs on relevant NUA indicators and their respective program, and project accomplishments.

Furthermore, several meetings and consultations were conducted with NGAs to develop an overall guide for the formulation of the PNUA Report. Key institutions such as the DEPDev, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) contributed thematic inputs aligned with their mandates. DHSUD, as the national lead agency, provided guidance, reporting templates, and coordination support throughout the process.

In partnership with the UN-Habitat, the draft report was also presented during the Philippine Urban Forum in October 2023 which also served as a venue for more stakeholders to provide their insights and additional inputs to the document.

Finally, the format of this Report is largely adopted from the UN-Habitat's Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation of the NUA. However, some sections have been modified to better present information on the current state of urbanization, policies and initiatives of the country on implementing the PNUA and its other urban development policies and plans.

CHAPTER 1

Urbanization in the Philippines

The Philippines is a Southeast Asian archipelagic country comprising 7,641 islands. Geographically, the country is divided into three major island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. As of 2020, its population was estimated at 109 million and was projected to reach 114 million by 2025 according to the Philippine Statistics Authority.

The National Capital Region (NCR), located in Luzon, serves as the administrative, political, and economic center of the country, with an estimated population of 13 million accounting for 12% of the national population.

The country is endowed with abundant natural resources, including mineral deposits, forest products, and marine assets, which collectively contribute roughly 19% to its gross domestic product (GDP). Although the Philippine economy has diversified over time, agriculture remains to be a critical sector, especially in rural areas, with agribusiness, aquaculture, and forestry serving as key sources of livelihood and food security.

Demographically, the country maintains a predominantly young population. In 2020, the median age was recorded at 25.3 years. Approximately 64% of the population belonged to the working-age group (15 to 64 years), in which individuals aged 15 to 30 comprised 28.9% of the household population. Senior citizens—those aged 60 and above—accounted for 8.5%. The dependency ratio was 57. The country is administered under 18 regional groupings, composed of 82 provinces or 1,642 cities and municipalities. Barangay, or village, is the basic political unit implementing government policies and plans. **Figure 1** presents a map of the Philippines with its 18 administrative regions.

Philippines at a Glance

Land Area	**300,000 km²**
Population[a]	**109,035,343** (2020 Census) **112,729,484** (2024 Census)
Population Density[b]	**363/km²** (as of 2020)
GDP (constant 2015 US$)[c]	**US$ 454.72 billion** (as of 2024)
GDP per capita (constant 2015 US$)[c]	**US$ 3,925.3** (as of 2024)
Gini[d]	**39.3** *moderate inequality* (as of 2023)
Human Development Index (HDI)	**0.720** *117th globally* (as of 2023)

Notes and Data Sources:

a. **Population** – Proclamation No. 1179 dated July 6, 2021 and Proclamation No. 973 dated July 11, 2025
b. **Population density** – PSA, Highlights of the Population Density of the Philippines 2020 Census of Population and Housing, July 22, 2021 (https://psa.gov.ph/)
c. **GDP** – World Bank (https://data.worldbank.org/)
d. **Gini** – Countries with Gini index from 30-40 are considered moderate inequality based on country grouping by World Bank. Data sourced from World Bank (http://data.worldbank.org)
e. **HDI** – UNDP, Human Development Insights (https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/country-insights/) and UNDP, 2025 Human Development Report, May 6, 2025

Map 1. Administrative Regions of the Philippines

Map 2.

Administrative Regions of the Philippines

National Capital Region (NCR)

Regional Center: Manila
Land Area: 636 km^2
Population: 13,484,462
Density: 20,247 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)

Regional Center: Baguio
Land Area: 19,422 km^2
Population: 1,791,121
Density: 89 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

Ilocos Region (Region I)

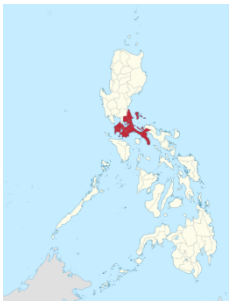
Regional Center: San Fernando
Land Area: 13,012.6 km^2
Population: 5,292,297
Density: 386 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

Cagayan Valley (Region II)

Regional Center: Tuguegarao
Land Area: 28,228.8 km^2
Population: 3,679,748
Density: 122 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

Central Luzon (Region III)

Regional Center: San Fernando
Land Area: 22,014.6 km^2
Population: 12,387,811
Density: 510 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

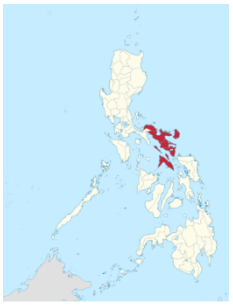


CALABARZON (Region IV-A)

Regional Center: Calamba
Land Area: 16,873.3 km^2
Population: 16,139,770
Density: 854 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

MIMAROPA (Region IV-B)

Regional Center: Calapan
Land Area: 29,620.9 km^2
Population: 3,212,287
Density: 100 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon



Bicol Region (Region V)

Regional Center: Legazpi
Land Area: 18,155.8 km^2
Population: 6,067,290
Density: 319 persons/km^2
Island Group: Luzon

Western Visayas (Region VI)

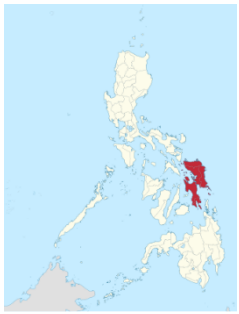
Regional Center: Iloilo City
Land Area: 12,750.6 km^2
Population: 4,730,771
Density: 371 persons/km^2
Island Group: Visayas

Negros Island Region (NIR)

Regional Center: Bacolod and Dumaguete (interim/de facto)
Land Area: 13,525.6 km2
Population: 4,760,340
Density: 352 persons/km^2
Island Group: Visayas

Central Visayas (Region VII)

Regional Center: Cebu City
Land Area: 10,114.5 km^2
Population: 6,545,603
Density: 647 persons/km^2
Island Group: Visayas



Eastern Visayas (Region VIII)

Regional Center: Tacloban
Land Area: 23,251.1 km^2
Population: 4,531,512
Density: 191 persons/km^2
Island Group: Visayas

Zamboanga Peninsula (Region IX)

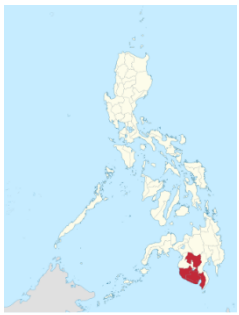
Regional Center: Pagadian
Land Area: 17,056.7 km^2
Population: 3,862,588
Density: 213 persons/km^2
Island Group: Mindanao

Northern Mindanao (Region X)

Regional Center: Cagayan de Oro
Land Area: 20,496 km^2
Population: 5,007,798
Density: 229 persons/km^2
Island Group: Mindanao

Davao Region (Region XI)

Regional Center: Davao City
Land Area: 20,357.4 km^2
Population: 5,223,802
Density: 245 persons/km^2
Island Group: Mindanao

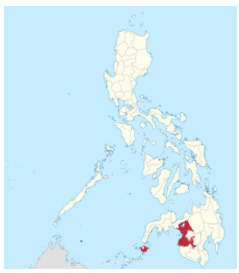


SOCCSKSARGEN (Region XII)

Regional Center: Koronadal
Land Area: 22,513.3 km^2
Population: 4,351,773
Density: 202 persons/km^2
Island Group: Mindanao

Caraga Administrative Region (Region XIII)

Regional Center: Butuan
Land Area: 21,478.4 km^2
Population: 2,795,340
Density: 121 persons/km^2
Island Group: Mindanao



Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

Regional Center: Cotabato City
Land Area: 11,935.7 km^2
Population: 3,944,692
Density: 330 persons/km^2
Island Group: Mindanao

Region IV-A (CALABARZON) holds the largest share of the national population at approximately 16 million or roughly 15%. The National Capital Region follows, with about 12%. The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), located in northern Luzon, has the smallest regional population at approximately 1.7 million, representing about 1.6% of the national total. Outside of NCR, the most populated urban centers are Davao City in Mindanao, with around 1.63 million residents, and Cebu City in the Visayas, with approximately 908,000. Notably, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) recorded the fastest annual population growth at 3.26%. Despite a continued decline in fertility rates, population growth in urbanizing and historically underserved regions is projected to continue rising, with implications for infrastructure, service delivery, and inclusive development.

1.1. URBAN POPULATION

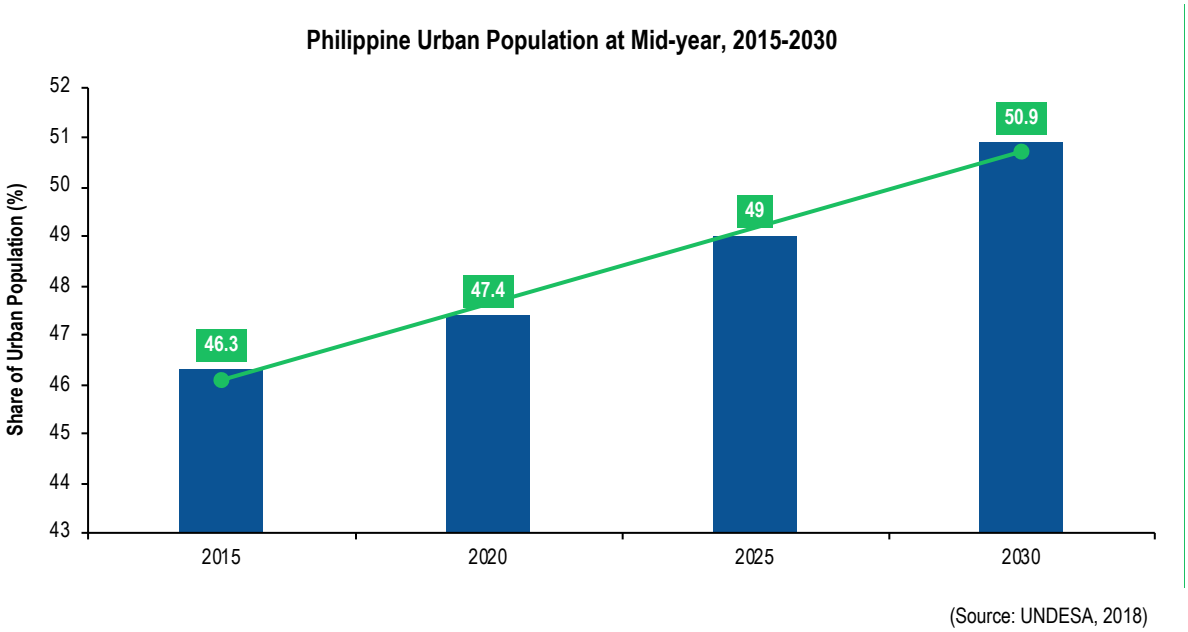
Urbanization in Asia—particularly in Southeast Asia—has been closely tied to economic transition and increasing integration into the global economy. Many cities in the region have become key destinations for foreign direct investment, primarily through the outsourcing of manufacturing activities by multinational corporations headquartered in developed countries. This process has positioned urban areas as strategic sites for export-oriented growth and industrial clustering. As manufacturing sectors matured, labor gradually shifted from agriculture and industry toward services and knowledge-based industries. Urban centers have emerged as the principal drivers of national growth, supported by investments in infrastructure, digital connectivity, and market accessibility. Most of Asia's major economic hubs are characterized by high levels of urbanization and economic concentration, highlighting the intrinsic link between urban agglomeration and economic competitiveness.

Urbanization levels are expected to rise across all regions in the coming decades, although the pace and scale will vary. Within ASEAN, rapid urban development has been fueled by a combination of natural population growth, rural-to-urban migration, and in-situ transformation of rural settlements into urban areas.
As of 2020, approximately 50.1% of the ASEAN population resided in urban areas (ASEAN, 2022). This proportion is projected to increase to 55.7% by 2030, at which point the urban population is expected to reach nearly 405 million out of a total regional population of approximately 726 million.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) defines a barangay as urban based on specific criteria that capture demographic and economic activity thresholds. A barangay is considered urban if it meets any of the following: (1) it has a population of at least 5,000 residents; (2) it hosts an establishment with a minimum of 100 employees; or (3) it has at least five establishments each employing ten or more individuals. In cases where such establishments are located outside the barangay, proximity is still considered– specifically, within a two-kilometer radius from the barangay hall. These indicators are not mutually exclusive and often overlap in practice. This framework continues to serve as the basis for classifying barangays as either urban or rural.

In 2020, an estimated 58.9 million Filipinos or 54% of the country's population lived in urban areas. This is higher compared to 51.2% in 2015. Within the broader context, the Philippines is viewed as a rising urban country. According to The World Bank, it ranks second in terms of urban population density among countries in East Asia and the Pacific. Moreover, Metro Manila, designated as a megacity since 2010, is among the top 20 largest urban agglomerations in Asia.

Following UNESCAP's classification, megacities are defined as urban centers with populations of 10 million or more. These cities often act as key nodes of national development, hosting institutions of higher education, diverse cultural communities, and significant concentrations of commercial and financial activity.



(Source: UNDESA, 2018)

Figure 1. Share of Philippine Urban Population, 2015-2030

Urbanization trends in the country have been dynamic but uneven. PSA data shows that the average annual urban growth rate was 2.4% between 2015 and 2020, a marked slowdown from the 4.6% observed between 2010 and 2015. Nevertheless, the urban landscape has undergone visible transformation, characterized by spatial expansion, densification, and the increasing complexity of urban systems. As of 2020, 47.4% of the population resided in urban areas, with projections indicating that this figure will increase to 50.9% by 2030. Over the 15-year period from 2015 to 2030, the total urban population is expected to grow by 4.6%, signaling a steady but moderate urban transition.

Region IV-A (CALABARZON) recorded the highest population at 16.20 million, followed by the National Capital Region (NCR) with 13.48 million, and Region III (Central Luzon) with 12.42 million. These three adjacent regions in the central part of Luzon collectively accounted for 38.6% of the national population, underscoring the spatial concentration of people in the country's primary growth corridor.

In line with global trends, urbanization in the Philippines has continued to advance. As of the 2020 Census of Population and Housing, 58.93 million Filipinos—or 54.0% of the total population—were residing in barangays classified as urban. This marks an increase of 7.20 million urban residents since 2015, when the urban population was recorded at 51.73 million. Conversely, the rural population stood at 50.10 million or 46.0% of the national total, reflecting a narrowing urban-rural population gap.

NCR is the only fully urbanized region. It is followed by Region IV-A with an urbanization level of 70.5%, and by Region XI at 66.8%. In contrast, several regions remain predominantly rural. Region VIII (Eastern Visayas) registered the lowest level of urbanization at 14.7%, followed by Region II (Cagayan Valley) at 19.5%, and Region V (Bicol Region) at 23.8%.

At the provincial level, 11 provinces were identified as having relatively high levels of urbanization (**Table 2**). Rizal Province ranked first with 94.6% of its population residing in urban barangays—largely due to its proximity to Metro Manila and its role in the broader metropolitan expansion. This was followed by Bulacan at 85.7% and Laguna at 79.3%, both of which are part of the extended urban corridor of Central Luzon and CALABARZON.

Table 1. Level of Urbanization by Region, 2015 and 2020

Region	Total Population		Urban Population		Level of Urbanization (%)	
	2015 [a]	2020 [b]	2015 [a]	2020 [b]	2015 [a]	2020 [b]
Philippines	**100,979,303**	**109,033,245**	**51,728,697**	**58,930,729**	**51.2**	**54.0**
Luzon						
NCR	12,877,253	13,484,462	12,877,253	13,484,462	100.0	100.0
CAR	1,722,006	1,797,660	524,672	598,688	30.5	33.3
Region I – Ilocos Valley	5,026,128	5,301,139	1,029,562	1,351,205	20.5	25.5
Region II – Cagayan Valley	3,451,410	3,685,744	663,695	717,788	19.2	19.5
Region III – Central Luzon	11,218,177	12,422,172	6,914,703	8,230,254	61.6	66.3
Region IVA – CALABARZON	14,414,774	16,195,042	9,564,515	11,415,742	66.4	70.5
Region IVB – MIMAROPA	2,963,360	3,228,558	905,666	1,138,021	30.6	35.2
Region V – Bicol Region	5,796,989	6,082,165	1,344,903	1,447,370	23.2	23.8
Visayas						
Region VI – Western Visayas	7,954,723	7,954,723	3,353,205	2,868,795	38.1	42.2
Region VII – Central Visayas	8,081,988	8,081,988	4,196,639	3,656,628	49.4	51.9
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	4,547,150	4,547,150	666,473	529,902	11.9	14.7
Mindanao						
Region IX – Zamboanga	3,875,576	3,875,576	1,489.443	1,373,274	37.8	38.4
Region X – Northern Mindanao	5,022,768	5,022,768	2,528,239	2,272,01	48.5	50.3
Region XI – Davao	5,243,536	5,243,536	3,504,533	3,108,872	63.5	66.8
Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN	4,360,974	4,360,974	2,418,843	2,031,361	50.1	55.5
Region XIII - Caraga	2,804,788	2,804,788	1,027,223	869,195	33.5	36.6
BARMM	4,944,800	4,944,800	1,362,601	1,193,700	27.9	27.6

(Source: PSA, 2020 Census of Population and Housing)

Notes:
a The 2015 total population and urban population exclude 2,134 Filipinos in Philippine embassies, consulates, and missions abroad
b The 2020 total population and urban population exclude 2,098 Filipinos in Philippine embassies, consulates, and missions abroad

By 2050, the urban population of the Philippines is projected to reach approximately 102 million, accounting for over 65% of the country's total population. Within a total land area of approximately 300,000 square kilometers, this demographic trend has translated into steadily rising population densities.

Between 2015 and 2020, national population density increased from 337 to 363 persons per square kilometer—an 8.0% rise over five years. Population density is most pronounced in Metro Manila, where the City of Manila recorded 73,920 persons per square kilometer, followed by Mandaluyong (45,830) and Pasay (31,543), reflecting the high concentration of population in the capital region.

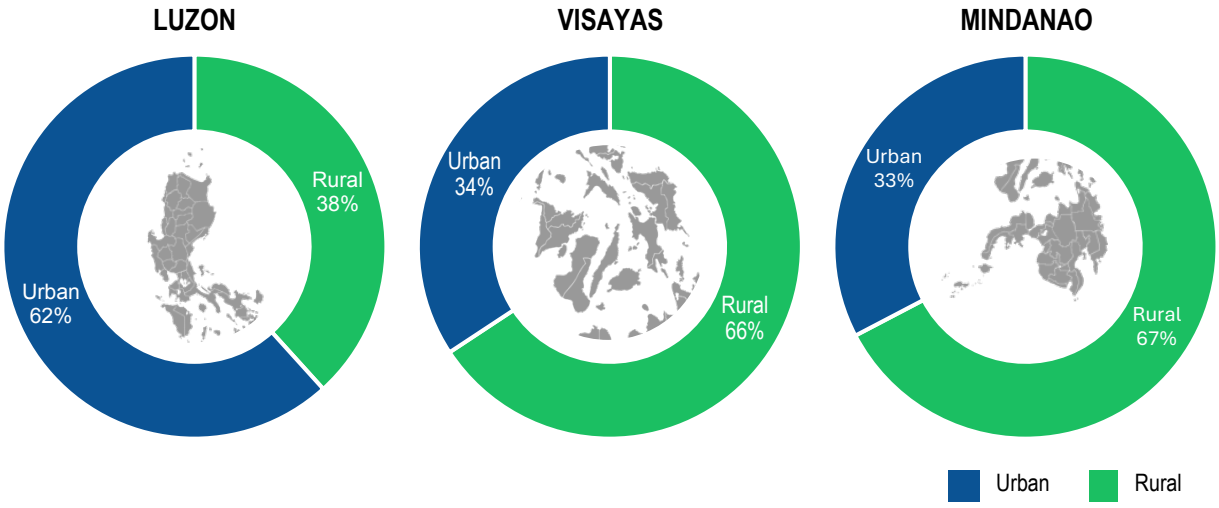


Figure 2. Share of Urban Population by Major Island Group, 2020s

Table 2. Highly Urbanized Provinces, 2020

Rank	Province	Total Population	Urban Population	Level of Urbanization (%)
Philippines [1]		**109,033,245**	**59,022,292**	**54.0**
1	Rizal	3,330,143	3,151,809	94.6
2	Bulacan	3,708,890	3,177,147	85.7
3	Laguna	3,382,193	2,681,317	79.3
4	Cavite	4,344,829	3,341,490	76.9
5	Pampanga *	2,437,709	1,827,312	75.0
6	Davao del Norte	1,125,057	768,298	68.3
7	Negros Occidental	2,623,172	1,698,366	64.7
8	South Cotabato *	975,476	606,989	62.2
9	Bataan	853,373	506,668	59.4
10	Benguet *	460,683	260,130	56.5
11	Bukidnon	1,541,308	836,243	54.3

(Source: PSA, 2020 Census of Population and Housing)

Notes:

1 The 2020 total population and urban population exclude 2,098 Filipinos in Philippine embassies, consulates, and missions abroad

* Excludes the total population and urban population in highly urbanized cities

Urbanization in the Philippines has evolved in parallel with economic expansion, serving as both a product and driver of national development. Cities have extended beyond traditional administrative boundaries, forming contiguous urban corridors and economically active clusters. At the national level, the economy expanded by 7.6% in 2022, a recovery from the previous year's growth of 5.7 percent. All 16 major industry groups recorded growth. Nine regions outpaced the national average: Western Visayas (9.3%), Cordillera Administrative Region (8.7%), Davao Region (8.15%), Central Luzon (8.11%), Bicol Region (8.06%), Cagayan Valley (8.0%), CALABARZON (7.8%), Central Visayas (7.64%), and Ilocos Region (7.60%). Together, these regions contributed over 70% of the country's total GDP in 2022.

Urbanization in the Philippines remains concentrated in only a limited number of regions, partly because of the country's archipelagic geography, which has constrained physical connectivity and the diffusion of urban growth. As of 2020, only five (5) regions recorded urbanization levels above the national average of 54.0%: the National Capital Region (100.0%), CALABARZON (70.5%), Davao Region (66.8%), Central Luzon (66.3%), and SOCCSKSARGEN (55.6%).

Urbanization is intrinsically linked to the three (3) dimensions of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. When informed by long-term demographic and spatial trends, urbanization can generate significant development benefits through agglomeration effects, improved access to services, and higher productivity. These benefits, however, are contingent on the capacity of urban systems to absorb population growth while managing land use, infrastructure demand, and environmental risks.

Both globally and in the Philippine context, urbanization exhibits a clear positive correlation with economic efficiency. This correlation largely stems from agglomeration economies– advantages arising from urban density, including accelerated structural economic transformation, enhanced productivity, optimized resource allocation, and expanded innovation capabilities. Building resilience must be central to the future of urban development. This entails strengthening economic resilience through innovative fiscal sustainability frameworks, promoting societal resilience through universal social protection mechanisms, and ensuring environmental resilience through strategic green investments. Crucially, achieving resilience depends on strong governance and effective institutional collaboration, fostering integrated multi-level partnerships capable of proactively addressing emerging urban challenges and disruptions.

1.2. URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Population growth and demographic shifts significantly influence urban development patterns in Philippine cities and municipalities. Historically, Philippine urban centers developed predominantly along coastal areas, initially established as colonial settlements designed for efficient governance. Post-colonial infrastructure development and suburbanization have subsequently contributed to urban decay in many traditional city centers. This phenomenon is exemplified in Metro Manila, where suburban growth during the 1960s gave rise to prominent areas like Makati City, Quezon City, and Mandaluyong City, followed by northern Quezon City, Caloocan, Pasig, Parañaque, Las Piñas, and Alabang in the 1980s. Today, extensive peri-urban expansion or urban sprawl continues to characterize urbanization patterns, increasingly affecting smaller cities through rapid conversion of agricultural lands into residential and commercial developments. Such conversions threaten the country's biocapacity by permanently reducing agricultural productivity and exacerbating environmental degradation.

Several indicators underscore the Philippines' accelerating urbanization. Economic opportunities primarily drive migration to developed urban centers. The National Migration Survey (NMS) indicates that employment motivates approximately 46% of internal migration, with the NCR and CALABARZON emerging as prime destinations due to their economic vitality and employment opportunities. Data from PSA in 2021 shows NCR's significant contribution, accounting for about 30% of national employment, particularly concentrated in Quezon City and Manila. Additionally, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), urban areas contribute between 75 to 80% of the Philippines' GDP, with Metro Manila alone generating approximately one-third of national economic output.

1.3. NETWORK OF SETTLEMENTS

According to the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022, the Philippines' urban settlement network is structured into three tiers based on population trends, service catchments, and economic activities: metropolitan centers, regional centers, and sub-regional centers.

a. Metropolitan Centers

Metropolitan centers serve as economic hubs within the country's primary island groups, driving innovation, advanced services, culture, tourism, education, research, transportation, trade, manufacturing, and technological development. Currently, there are three major metropolitan centers. The National Capital Region (NCR) acts as the central metropolitan hub for Luzon and the entire country, serving as the seat of the national government. Metro Cebu, the second-largest metropolitan area, serves as a pivotal economic, commercial, and logistics center in the Visayas with substantial domestic and international connectivity. Metro Davao is Mindanao's primary metropolitan area, renowned for its role as an international gateway, major commercial and service hub, and significant tourism destination.

Metro Manila

Population (2020): 13,484,462
Land Area: 636.00 km^2

LGUs Covered:

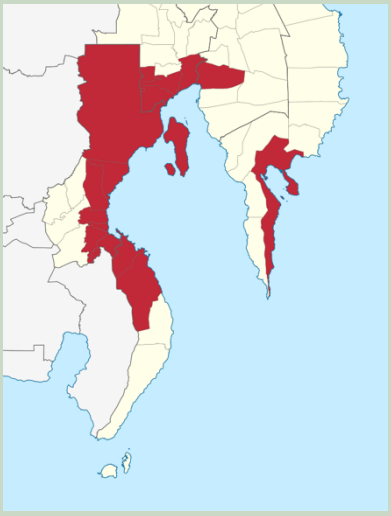
- 16 HUCs (Manila, Caloocan, Las Piñas, Makati, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig, Quezon City, San Juan, Taguig, Valenzuela)
- 1 Municipality (Pateros)

Metro Cebu

Population (2020): 3,165,799
Land Area: 1,062.88 km^2

LGUs Covered:

- 7 Cities (Cebu City, Carcar, Danao, Lapu-Lapu, Mandaue, Naga, Talisay)
- 6 Municipalities (Compostela, Consolacion, Cordova, Liloan, Minglanilla, San Fernando)



Metro Davao

Population (2020): 3,339,284
Land Area: 6,492.84 km^2

LGUs Covered:

- 5 Cities (Davao, Panabo, Tagum, Samal, Digos)
- 9 Municipalities (Santa Cruz, Hagonoy, Padada, Malalag, Sulop, Carmen, Maco, Malita, Santa Maria)

Map 3. Metropolitan Centers in the Philippines

b. Regional Centers

Regional centers function as important markets and service providers across several provinces. These centers have substantial economic capacity, fostering diverse services and investments, maintaining strong economic connections with metropolitan hubs, and often functioning as regional administrative centers, international gateways, and popular tourism areas.

c. Sub-regional Centers

Sub-regional centers fulfill essential roles by serving as market catchment areas for regional centers. They connect smaller provincial and local centers, and as they expand, often integrate with adjacent regional centers, forming larger metropolitan regions, exemplified by interconnected areas like NCR, CALABARZON, and Central Luzon.

Table 3. Network of Settlements in the Philippines

	Network	Region / Province / City / Municipality		
1.	Metropolitan Centers	• NCR • Metro Cebu	• Metro Davao • By 2025, Metro CDO (CDO City, Jasaan, Villanueva, Tagoloan, Claveria, Manolo Fortich, Opol, El Salvador, Alubijid, Laguindingan, Gitagum, Libertad, Initao)	
2.	Regional Centers	• Laoag City • Tuguegarao City • Tabuk City • Santiago City • San Fernando City (La Union) • Baguio City-La • Trinidad-Itogon-Sablan-Tuba-Tublay Cabanatuan City • Tarlac City • Subic-Olongapo City • Balanga City • Angeles City	• Baliuag • Malolos City • Dasmariñas City • Antipolo City • Calamba City • Batangas City • Lucena City • Calapan City • Puerto Princesa City • Legazpi City • Naga City (Camarines Sur) • Iloilo (Iloilo City- Pavia-Oton- Leganes, Santa Barbara- San Miguel)	• Bacolod (Bacolod City-Talisay City-Silay City) • Tagbilaran City • Tacloban City • Ormoc City • Zamboanga City • General Santos City • Butuan City • Cotabato City • Dipolog City • Jolo • Surigao City • Pagadian City • Koronadal City • Tagum City
3.	Sub-regional Center	• Alfonso Lista (Potia) • Banaue • Bangued • Bauko • Besao • Bontoc (Mountain Province) • Danglas • Flora • Kiangan • La Paz (Abra) • Lamut • Langiden • Luna (Apayao) • Peñarrubia	• San Jose City • San Jose del Monte City • San Miguel (Bulacan) • Santa Maria (Bulacan) • Bacoor City • Baras (Rizal) • Biñan City • Cabuyao City • Cainta • Gen. Mariano Alvarez • General Trias City • Imus City • Lipa City • Nasugbu • Rodriguez (Montalban)	• Kabankalan City • Estancia • Dumangas • San Jose (Antique) • Miag-ao • Catbalogan City • Calbayog City • Jordan • Kalibo • Dumaguete City • Bogo City • Toledo City • Tubigon • Iligan City • Panabo City

Network	Region / Province / City / Municipality		
	• Pidigan • Pudtol • Sadanga • San Isidro (Abra) • Santa Marcela • Tayum • Tubo • Alaminos City • Dagupan City • Cauayan City • Ilagan City • Santa Ana (Cagayan) • Arayat • Capas • Concepcion (Tarlac) • Hagonoy (Bulacan) • Lubao • Mabalacat City • Marilao • Mariveles • Mexico • Meycauayan City • San Fernando City (Pampanga) • San Ildefonso (Bulacan)	• San Mateo (Rizal) • San Pablo City • San Pedro City • Santa Rosa City • Sariaya • Silang • Tanauan City • Tanza • Taytay (Rizal) • Boac • Romblon (Capital) • San Jose (Occi. Min) • Daet • Iriga City • Ligao City • Masbate City • Matnog • Pili • Sorsogon City • Tabaco City • Virac • Roxas City • Malay • San Carlos City (Negros Occidental)	• Marawi City • Ozamiz City • Malaybalay City • Valencia City • Digos City • Polomolok • Midsayap • Mati City • Kidapawan City • Gingoog City • Bislig City • Tandag City • Tacurong City • Bongao • Parang (Maguindanao) • San Francisco (Agusan del Sur) • Tubod (Lanao del Norte) • Maramag • Ipil • Glan (Saranggani) • Malita • Laguindingan • Isabela City - Lamitan • Aurora (Zamboanga del Sur)

(Source: Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022)

Given their high concentration of businesses and services, mobility within urban centers is prioritized, relying heavily on both public and private transportation. However, traffic congestion remains a significant challenge, causing substantial daily economic losses. In Metro Manila, high vehicular volumes result in chronic congestion and associated economic losses. The MMDA estimated vehicular volume at 3.6 million vehicles daily in 2024, higher than the 2.9 million per day volume in 2020. This is expected to increase in the coming years (PCO, 2024). Overall, the number of vehicles per capita in the Philippines is projected to increase more than five-fold from 114.7 vehicles per 1,000 people in 2020 to 672.9 vehicles per 1,000 people by 2050 (World Bank, 2023). To manage traffic volumes, the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program (UVVRP), or Number Coding Scheme, restricts vehicle access to major roads on weekdays based on plate number. Additionally, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) launched a public utility vehicle (PUV) modernization program aimed at replacing traditional jeepneys with larger, air-conditioned units to improve commuter experience and operational efficiency.

Urbanization has also intensified challenges related to waste management and pollution. To address these, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Law was enacted, requiring large-scale producers to manage the lifecycle of plastic products. Additionally, several LGUs have implemented ordinances banning single-use plastics.

Metro Manila's spatial development over the last two decades has been largely uncoordinated, as noted in the Habitat III: Philippines' National Report. This pattern has compromised the delivery of essential services such as waste management, air quality control, and transportation. Informal settlements have expanded across the metropolis, particularly in environmentally vulnerable locations like riverbanks, esteros, and under bridges. These areas are often occupied by low-income families who lack access to affordable formal housing.

Government responses to informal settlements have evolved. Initial relocation efforts moved informal settler families (ISFs) to peri-urban areas in provinces such as Laguna and Bulacan. However, these relocations often disrupted livelihoods. In response, policy has shifted toward in-city or near-city resettlement to minimize socio-economic displacement and maintain access to urban opportunities. Biometric registration systems were introduced to authenticate ISF eligibility and deter program misuse by so-called “professional squatters”.

The rapid urbanization of Metro Manila has placed considerable strain on its transport infrastructure. With millions of commuters traveling daily across the region’s roads and bridges for work and other transactions, severe traffic congestion has become a persistent issue, resulting in billions of pesos in economic losses due to reduced productivity. To alleviate road congestion and limit the number of passenger and cargo vehicles in operation, the MMDA implemented the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program (UVVRP), commonly referred to as the "number coding" scheme. This policy restricts the use of public and private vehicles on major thoroughfares during weekdays based on the last digit of their license plate numbers, excluding public holidays. In parallel, the construction of Metro Rail Transit Line 7 (MRT-7), connecting Bulacan to Quezon City, is underway to expand the capacity of the urban transit system.

Other pressing urban management concerns have also surfaced, particularly in waste governance. Improper solid waste disposal remains a persistent challenge across urban localities. The Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2001 (Republic Act No. 9003) mandates all LGUs to establish materials recovery facilities, enforce segregation at source, and implement waste diversion measures. While compliance in Metro Manila has been relatively advanced– with most LGUs establishing their own systems and jointly operating landfills in San Mateo and Payatas– performance remains uneven across jurisdictions.

Outside Metro Manila, particularly in other HUCs, wastewater treatment infrastructure is critically lacking. Most LGUs do not have centralized or decentralized wastewater systems, resulting in untreated domestic and commercial effluents being directly discharged into water bodies. This not only reflects gaps in local infrastructure planning and financing but also indicates limited alignment between national policy and actual local implementation capacity.

Urbanization in the Philippines remains spatially uneven, with growth increasingly concentrated along the peripheries of Metro Manila– a clear manifestation of ongoing peri-urbanization. The adjacent regions of CALABARZON and Central Luzon have experienced rapid urban and industrial expansion, reinforcing Southern Luzon’s primacy in the national urban hierarchy. These regions maintain strong economic and infrastructural linkages with Metro Manila, emerging as key destinations for internal migrants seeking employment, enterprise opportunities, and improved livelihoods. The accelerated growth of CALABARZON and Central Luzon reflects the outcomes of spatial development strategies aimed at decongesting the capital through the promotion of industrial corridors, freeport areas, and special economic zones (SEZ). Within Luzon, SEZs have been established in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon (CALABARZON), as well as in Bulacan and Pampanga (Central Luzon), facilitating investment inflows and employment generation beyond Metro Manila’s core.

Internal migration, particularly rural-to-urban, continues to be a principal driver of urban growth. Migration is predominantly economically driven, shaped by persistent disparities in employment opportunities, income levels, and access to basic services between rural and urban areas. Structural mismatches between educational attainment and labor market demand further exacerbate this trend, often resulting in the early urban migration of young women. Lacking sufficient skills or land-based livelihoods, many enter domestic service roles in urban households, where the pressures of urban living generate high demand for such support.

Social networks and existing migrant communities in destination cities frequently facilitate the relocation process, reducing the economic and psychological barriers to migration. In addition to voluntary migration, forced displacement due to environmental disasters has contributed to urban expansion. The 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo, for instance, displaced hundreds of thousands from Central Luzon, many of whom

eventually settled in informal areas within Metro Manila and its outskirts.

The functional interlinkages between urban and rural communities are increasingly evident in major metropolitan regions such as Metro Manila, Cebu, and Davao. A significant share of the urban workforce in these areas comprises individuals who reside in rural barangays or peri-urban fringes, often occupying lower-cost or temporary housing arrangements. This commuting and settlement pattern has contributed to the accelerated growth of smaller towns and peri-urban zones– many of which are now expanding at faster rates than the core cities themselves. These emerging areas, while smaller in scale than HUCs or provincial capitals, are evolving into critical nodes for regional development. As they take on the roles of market towns and administrative centers, they offer strategic opportunities for spatial redistribution, environmental decongestion, and the reduction of the ecological and carbon footprints of dominant urban cores. With appropriate planning and investment, these peri-urban settlements have the potential to develop into more inclusive, resilient, and economically dynamic secondary urban centers.

1.4. FUTURE GROWTH TRENDS AND KEY CHALLENGES

The realization of efficiency gains from urbanization in the Philippines has been constrained by persistent structural challenges, broadly categorized under the dimensions of density, distance, and division.

DENSITY. The rapid growth of urban population, particularly in metropolitan areas such as Metro Manila, has not been matched by proportional investments in infrastructure and basic urban services. Inadequate land use planning, underdeveloped utility systems, and institutional fragmentation in urban governance have resulted in congestion diseconomies. These manifest in the form of land and housing scarcity, insufficient access to clean water and sanitation, overstretched transport systems, heightened exposure to environmental hazards, and deteriorating air and water quality. Commuting costs and travel times have escalated, undermining both productivity and quality of life in high-density urban zones.

DISTANCE. Geographic and infrastructural fragmentation continue to impede spatial integration across the urban network. The country's archipelagic layout, compounded by weak inter-urban transport infrastructure and logistical bottlenecks, limits the movement of people, goods, and services across cities and regions. High domestic transport costs widen the economic distance between production and consumption centers, hinder agglomeration benefits, and constrain urban areas from developing competitive sectoral specializations or engaging in inter-city trade. This undermines the intended network effect of urbanization on national economic growth.

DIVISION. Socioeconomic and spatial exclusion remains deeply entrenched, as evidenced by the persistent proliferation of ISFs in substandard living conditions with limited or no access to essential urban services. These divisions reflect broader inequities in wealth, opportunity, and spatial inclusion, and inhibit the emergence of a robust urban middle class. The underdevelopment of this segment—whose consumption and demand patterns are key drivers of a modern service-based economy—further dampens inclusive urban growth.

In line with the *National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan* (NHUDSP) 2040 Technical Report, several cross-cutting issues and opportunities have been identified, including the following:

a. Urban Population and Urban Growth

As of 2020, 54% of the Philippine population resided in urban areas (PSA, 2020). Urban growth has remained heavily concentrated in the 16 most populous cities, resulting in rapid and often unregulated spatial expansion that places increasing strain on infrastructure, environmental resources, and basic services, particularly in peri-urban and fringe areas. This urban expansion is primarily driven by migration toward centers of employment and economic activity, underscoring the role of cities as engines of opportunity.

Urban areas, particularly HUCs and metropolitan centers, have consistently accounted for 75% to 80% of national GDP since 2000. Metro Manila alone contributes nearly one-third of the country's GDP. The services sector—comprising trade, communications, and business services—dominates urban economies and continues to be the fastest-growing sector, reinforcing the attractiveness of cities, especially to the youth population.

The Philippine population is projected to increase from 111 million (2020) to approximately 142 million (2045), despite a declining average annual growth rate of 0.65% during 2040–2045. This demographic shift will be characterized by a high proportion of working-age individuals (76.5%), a relative decline in the share of young dependents, and a significant rise in the elderly population. Specifically, children under five are projected to decrease from 11.6% (2010) to 6.7% in 2045, while those aged 0–14 will account for 21% of the total population, or roughly 30 million. In contrast, the population aged 65 and over is expected to nearly triple, from 4.3% in 2010 to 11.4% in 2045.

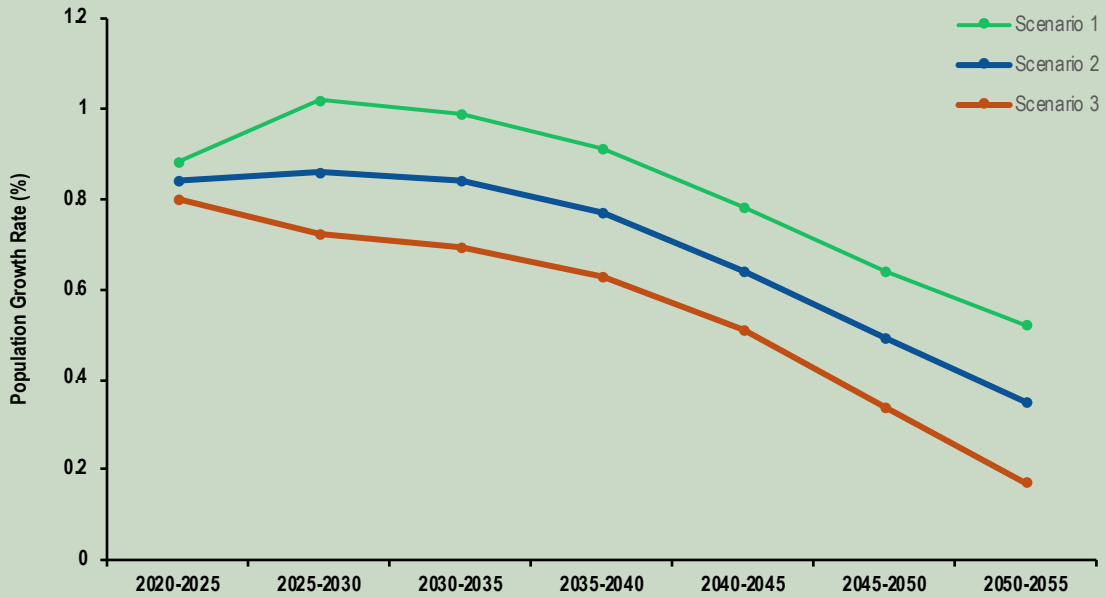


Figure 3. Projected Population Growth Rates of the Philippines by Scenario, 2020-2055

These demographic and spatial trends present both challenges and opportunities for human settlements and urban development. The increasing concentration of people and economic activity in urban centers necessitates a dual approach: (1) managing population growth and human activity in a way that minimizes environmental stress and resource degradation and (2) harnessing spatial agglomeration to enhance economic efficiency, resilience, and inclusion. National and local development planning should therefore aim to integrate ecosystem-based approaches, reduce spatial inequalities, and promote balanced urban-rural linkages. This includes ensuring that the benefits of urbanization are not confined to primary cities but distributed throughout a network of interconnected settlements across the country's diverse regions.

b. Climate, Disaster, and Public Health Risks

The Philippines remains among the most disaster-prone countries in the world, with significant exposure to both natural hazards and climate-related risks . Between 2011 and 2018, the country incurred over PHP 388 billion in damages due to disasters (UN Habitat, 2023). Separately, World Bank estimates indicate that climate-related disasters between 2009 and 2014 resulted in economic losses amounting to at least USD 18.6 billion (equivalent to approximately PHP 799 billion). Notably, 85% of the country's GDP is generated from areas highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Rising temperatures, shifts in precipitation patterns, and changes in hydrological cycles are expected to further exacerbate these vulnerabilities, threatening long-term economic growth, food security, public health, and human settlements—particularly in densely populated urban and coastal areas.

In addition to climate and geophysical risks, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragility of the country's health systems and urban infrastructure. As of January 2022, COVID-19 had claimed the lives of 51,570 Filipinos (WHO, 2022). Beyond its health impacts, the pandemic has amplified pre-existing development challenges, straining the capacity of institutions responsible for public health, urban mobility, housing, and social protection.

Planning must respond to these multidimensional risks with resilience-oriented strategies that cut across sectors and spatial scales. Strengthening adaptive capacity, supporting ecosystem-based approaches, and integrating risk reduction into urban development processes are essential. Equally important is ensuring that recovery and growth are inclusive and sustainable anchored in systems that reduce exposure, strengthen institutions, and protect the most vulnerable.

c. Urban Planning and Design

Urban areas in the Philippines have continued to grow at a faster rate than rural areas, primarily due to internal migration toward centers of employment and economic opportunity. From 2007 to 2010, the urban population grew at an average annual rate of 3.59%, while the rural population declined by 0.33 percent. Between 2010 and 2015, both urban and rural populations increased, but urban areas maintained a slightly higher growth rate of 1.82 percent. As of 2015, the level of urbanization reached 51.2%, equivalent to approximately 51.7 million individuals. Estimates for 2020 suggest that this share has risen to around 70 percent.

Urbanization has been closely linked to economic concentration. Since 2000, urban areas have contributed between 75 and 80% of the country's GDP, with Metro Manila alone accounting for nearly one-third. The services sector, which includes trade, communications, and business services, continues to be the fastest-growing, making urban areas increasingly attractive, particularly for the working-age population and youth.

National projections estimate that the population will increase from 111 million in 2020 to approximately 142 million by 2045, despite a gradual decline in the average annual growth rate to 0.65% by 2040–2045. The population structure will shift significantly, with 76.5%t expected to fall within the working-age group. The proportion of children under five is projected to decline from 11.6% in 2010 to 6.7%by 2045, while the share of children aged 0 to 14 years is expected to comprise roughly one in five persons, or about 30 million. At the same time, the population aged 65 and older is projected to increase from 4.3% in 2010 to 11.4% in 2045.

Urban planning and design must be responsive to accelerating urbanization, evolving demographic profiles, and increasing climate and health risks. Spatial strategies should prioritize compact, connected, and climate-resilient urban development, supported by coherent policies on public space, land use, inclusive

mobility, and metropolitan governance. Translating these strategies into practice requires technically sound planning frameworks, context-sensitive design tools, and institutional mechanisms that enable local governments to plan, implement, and sustain urban development interventions. Capacity development and intergovernmental coordination will be essential in ensuring long-term continuity and coherence of urban design efforts—beyond political transitions—while enhancing the overall resilience, equity, and functionality of Philippine cities.

d. Shelter

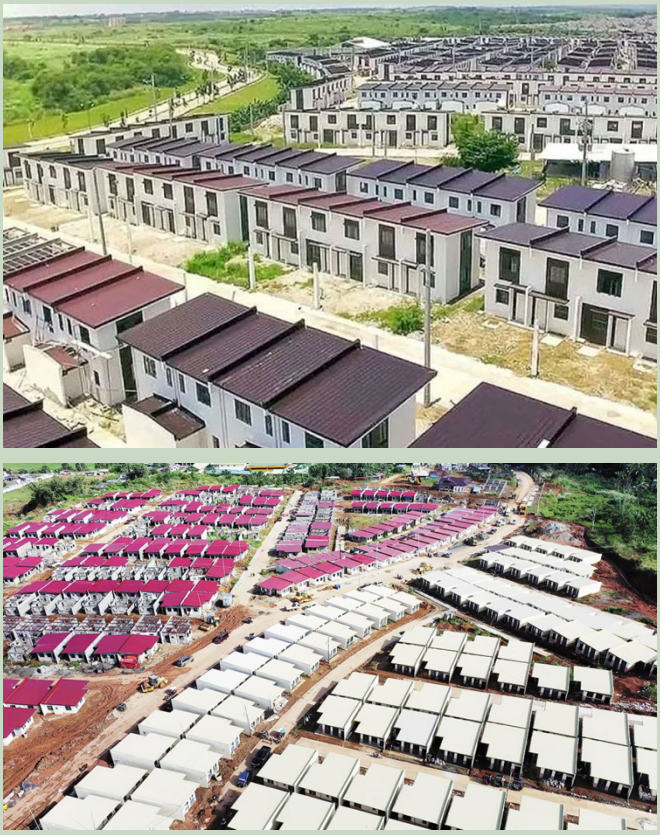
Housing remains one of the most critical challenges in the urban development sector. Over 40% of urban families reside in informal settlements characterized by substandard housing, insecure tenure, inadequate infrastructure, and heightened exposure to public health risks. Nationwide, an estimated 1.4 million informal settler families (ISFs) remain underserved, nearly 544,000 of whom are in the National Capital Region.

According to the PDP 2023–2028, total housing need for the period 2017–2022 was estimated at 6.8 million units. This backlog is particularly acute in the socialized housing segment, where affordability constraints severely limit access.

From 2017 to 2020, only 96,269 socialized housing units were approved or formally demanded—underscoring a significant affordability gap. Historical data from 2001 to 2018 shows that only 10.16% of total housing supply was allocated to the socialized segment, with shares on a downward trend.

Production and delivery of socialized housing face persistent bottlenecks, including limited and underutilized financing, lack of available land, and protracted permitting and clearance processes. The National Housing Authority (NHA), the lead agency for housing production, recorded an average budget utilization rate of just 61.38 percent between 2016 and 2022. Utilization was particularly low in 2019 (19.13%) due to institutional inefficiencies, and in 2020 (23.03%) because of pandemic-related disruptions.

Housing stock is also vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters. Between 2016 and 2021, nearly 500,000 dwellings were damaged by hazard events, further exacerbating the housing gap. These compounding risks, together with public health lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, highlight the urgent need to reassess housing location criteria, design standards, and the integration of open spaces to reduce vulnerability, improve health outcomes, and enhance livability.



Decent and affordable housing projects for low-income households is important to prevent the increase of informal settler families particularly in urban areas where population growth is high

Top photo from Business World, March 19, 2025
Bottom photo from DHSUD, May 29, 2025

The total housing backlog is projected to rise to approximately 22 million by 2040. Addressing this scale of need will require a paradigm shift in housing delivery—leveraging innovative, inclusive, and climate-responsive strategies. Expanding public rental housing options for those unable to access homeownership will be essential, particularly given fiscal constraints, affordability barriers, and the limited absorptive capacity of existing

institutions. A coordinated, well-financed, and demand-responsive approach will be key to closing the housing gap and supporting inclusive urban development.

Securing access to land and affordable housing remains the central challenge in addressing the shelter deficit. Expanding tenure security options for poor households and ISFs is critical, particularly through inclusive, participatory approaches that enable integration into livable and well-planned settlements. Beyond the provision of physical shelter, housing interventions must also ensure safety and resilience to natural hazards, climate change, and public health risks. This requires not only the construction of disaster-resilient housing units, but also the enhancement of household and community adaptive capacity—especially through access to sustainable livelihoods, infrastructure, and social services. The success of these efforts depends significantly on adequate public investment. There is a pressing need to increase the sector's budget allocation to reflect the government's prioritization of human settlements and urban development, and to strengthen institutional capacities for effective implementation at both national and local levels.

e. Urban Economy and Finance

The Philippine economy remains heavily concentrated in urban regions. The NCR accounts for 37.5% of the GDP, and when combined with adjacent urbanizing cities such as Antipolo, Lucena, Angeles, and Olongapo, the larger urban agglomeration contributes approximately 63% of national output. Urban centers in the Visayas and Mindanao generate an additional 27%, while the remaining 10% is produced by regions such as Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, the Cordilleras, and MIMAROPA.

Despite their outsized economic role, many urban areas face structural and institutional constraints that limit their ability to translate growth into inclusive development. Insufficient infrastructure, fragmented service delivery, and weak local fiscal capacities contribute to growing spatial inequality.

Poverty is increasingly becoming urbanized. The absolute number of poor families in highly urbanized areas is expected to rise, driven by persistent informality, inadequate social protection, and limited access to affordable housing and decent employment. This shift–commonly referred to as the urbanization of poverty–highlights the need to rethink the spatial and institutional dimensions of economic inclusion.

A resilient urban economy is essential to building inclusive and sustainable settlements. Interventions that support local economic development, particularly those that benefit marginalized communities should be prioritized. Strengthening the fiscal capacity of local governments, through expanded revenue sources and improved access to financing, will enable them to invest in infrastructure and services. Cities and municipalities must be positioned as platforms for diverse and inclusive economic activity.

f. Infrastructure

Rapid urbanization, limited budgets, and weak governance continue to strain already inadequate infrastructure systems and service delivery in urban areas.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). Only 36% of the country's river systems are viable for public water supply. Moreover, 58% of groundwater samples show coliform contamination, contributing to 31%t of illness cases linked to waterborne diseases. Urban areas experience seasonal water shortages, and coverage has declined from 95% in 1990 to 87% in 2004, with disparities more pronounced in informal settlements.

Energy. The Philippines has committed to a 70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, with key contributions expected from the energy, transport, waste, forestry, and industry sectors. While the country has significant renewable energy potential i.e. hydropower, geothermal, biomass, solar, wind, and ocean, these sources remain underutilized due to limited infrastructure and investment.

Drainage. Infrastructure development has not kept pace with urban expansion. Many drainage systems lack proper interconnections, especially between subdivisions and main channels. Encroachment on natural waterways, through development or informal settlements, restricts water flow, increasing flood risk and the spread of waterborne diseases, particularly in low-income areas.

Waste and Water Management. Urban areas face persistent challenges in both solid and liquid waste

management, driven by limited space, inadequate infrastructure, and weak regulatory enforcement. The siting and development of sanitary landfills remain financially and technically demanding, especially in dense urban environments. Many LGUs struggle to comply with national solid waste management standards, and waste diversion remains minimal in most cities.

Sewerage infrastructure is similarly underdeveloped. While the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and its concessionaires have advanced investments in wastewater treatment within the National Capital Region, sewerage systems outside NCR remain sparse serving less than 5% of the national population. Informal settlements and unregulated developments often discharge untreated wastewater directly into water bodies.

Groundwater quality remains a critical concern, with 58% of samples intended for drinking found to contain coliform bacteria. National data show that among 127 sampled freshwater bodies, only 47% met good water quality standards, while 13% were classified as poor. The deterioration of water sources is further exacerbated by limited treatment infrastructure, fragmented service provision, and encroachment on waterways by residential and commercial development.

Information and Communication Technology. While internet penetration reached 72.7% in 2020 (with 77.8 million smartphone users), service reliability remains a key issue. The sector continues to be constrained by dropped calls, slow connection speeds, and intermittent service. With the number of internet-enabled users projected to grow to 84 million by 2025, infrastructure investments will need to scale with demand.

System Linkages. Urban transport suffers from inadequate planning, with a disproportionate focus on private vehicular infrastructure and insufficient support for public transport, pedestrians, and active mobility. This imbalance contributes to traffic congestion, inefficient energy use, and loss of public space. Inter-city and intra-city connectivity is weak, particularly outside major metro regions.

Traffic congestion is particularly severe in Metro Manila and emerging urban regions such as Metro Cebu and Metro Angeles. In 2023, traffic congestion in Metro Manila was rated by TomTom's Traffic Index as the worst globally out of 387 cities across 55 countries. In 2024, Metro Manila ranked 15th out of 500 cities according to the same traffic index (TomTom, 2024).

Without effective intervention, traffic-related economic losses are projected to increase from PHP3.5 billion per day based in 2017 to PHP5.4 billion per day by 2035 based on estimates from a JICA study. This is projected to reach PHP 6 billion per day by 2030. Forecasts also project a 13% increase in traffic demand and continued rise in transport costs, underscoring the urgency of integrated and sustainable urban mobility solutions.

Due to rapid urbanization and economic growth, traffic congestion in Metro Manila and other urban areas are expected to increase in the coming years without effective intervention

Top photo from Business World, February 22, 2025
Bottom photo from ABS CBN News, October 20, 2023

Infrastructure investments must address critical service delivery gaps in water and sanitation, energy, transport, and waste management. These systems should be integrated into inclusive settlement development to ensure access across all segments of society. The growing importance of information and communications technology—especially during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic—underscores the need to mainstream digital infrastructure as part of resilient urban systems. Digitalization must be harnessed not only to support economic activity but also to strengthen urban governance, planning, and service delivery.

g. Urban Governance

Urban governance in the Philippines continues to face systemic challenges, including overlapping institutional mandates, limited implementation capacity, and weak policy integration across sectors and levels of government. Gaps in the Local Government Code and the fragmentation of sectoral and area-based planning frameworks hinder coherence in local development planning and service delivery.

Redundancy in programming and unclear roles among implementing agencies contribute to inefficiencies, particularly at the local level. Land governance remains a critical gap, with LGUs often lacking the technical and institutional capacity to manage land use effectively. Conflicting land administration functions and outdated or incomplete land information systems have led to land use disputes—including encroachments on ancestral domains and protected areas, and irregular titling practices.

Community participation in urban planning and development remains limited. While frameworks for participatory governance exist, their application is uneven, especially in decisions involving housing, public space, and urban design. Strengthening urban governance requires not only institutional reform and capacity building, but also the systematic integration of inclusive, community-driven planning approaches in human settlements development.

Legislative and policy coherence is essential for effective urban development and housing governance. This calls for a comprehensive review—and where necessary, amendment—of existing laws and frameworks to ensure alignment across institutions and sectors. A more enabling policy environment will support the implementation of responsive and integrated urban programs. Improved planning tools, clearer guidelines, and strengthened coordination and participation mechanisms are also needed, particularly at the local level. Enhancing the technical capacity of local governments is critical, especially in addressing emerging urban challenges such as climate resilience, digitalization, and public health integration in spatial planning and design.

CHAPTER 2

Policies and Frameworks on Human Settlements, Urban Development, and Sustainable Development

Urban planning serves as a strategic instrument for steering national development toward spatial equity, resilience, and sustainability. However, the lack of coherence across sectors and governance levels often leads to institutional fragmentation, inefficient land use, and socially or environmentally regressive outcomes.

The policy environment governing human settlements and urban development in the Philippines is shaped by a combination of international commitments and national frameworks. These frameworks provide the normative, legal, and operational foundations for aligning spatial planning with broader sustainable development goals, and for integrating sectoral policies within a coherent development strategy.

2.1. NEW URBAN AGENDA (NUA) AND PHILIPPINE NUA

The **New Urban Agenda (NUA)**, adopted during Habitat III in Quito, Ecuador in 2016 provides a global framework for sustainable urbanization, emphasizing the spatial and governance dimensions of development. It outlines the strategic role of cities in achieving the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 11, through compact urban form, integrated planning, environmental sustainability, and inclusive economic systems.

The NUA is anchored on three transformative commitments:

a. **Leave no one behind**, by ending poverty, ensuring public participation, equal rights and opportunities, socioeconomic and cultural diversity, and integration in the urban space, enhancing livability, education, food security, health, ending the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, promoting safety and eliminating discrimination and all forms of violence, providing equal access for all to physical and social infrastructure and basic services, as well as adequate and affordable housing;

b. **Ensure sustainable and inclusive urban economies** by leveraging the agglomeration benefits of well-planned urbanization, productivity, competitiveness, innovation, by promoting full and productive employment, equal access for all to economic and productive resources and opportunities, preventing land speculation, promoting secure land tenure and managing urban shrinking, where appropriate; and

c. **Ensure environmental sustainability** by promoting clean energy and sustainable use of land and resources in urban development, by protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, including adopting healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature, by promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, by building urban resilience, reducing disaster risks and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Mechanisms for advancing the NUA have direct implications for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, which calls for close alignment in the implementation of both the NUA and the SDGs, particularly SDG 11.

As part of its participation in the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held in Quito, Ecuador in 2016, the Philippines developed its **Philippine New Urban Agenda (PNUA)**, also referred to as the Habitat III Report. The PNUA contextualizes the global principles of the NUA within the Philippine setting, aligning international commitments with national and local priorities on housing, urban planning, and sustainable development.

Anchored on the theme *"Better, Greener, Smarter Cities in an Inclusive Philippines,"* the PNUA articulates the aspirations of Filipino communities for more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban development. It translates the NUA's vision into six key action areas that encompass urban demography, land and urban planning, the urban environment, urban governance, the urban economy, and housing and basic services.

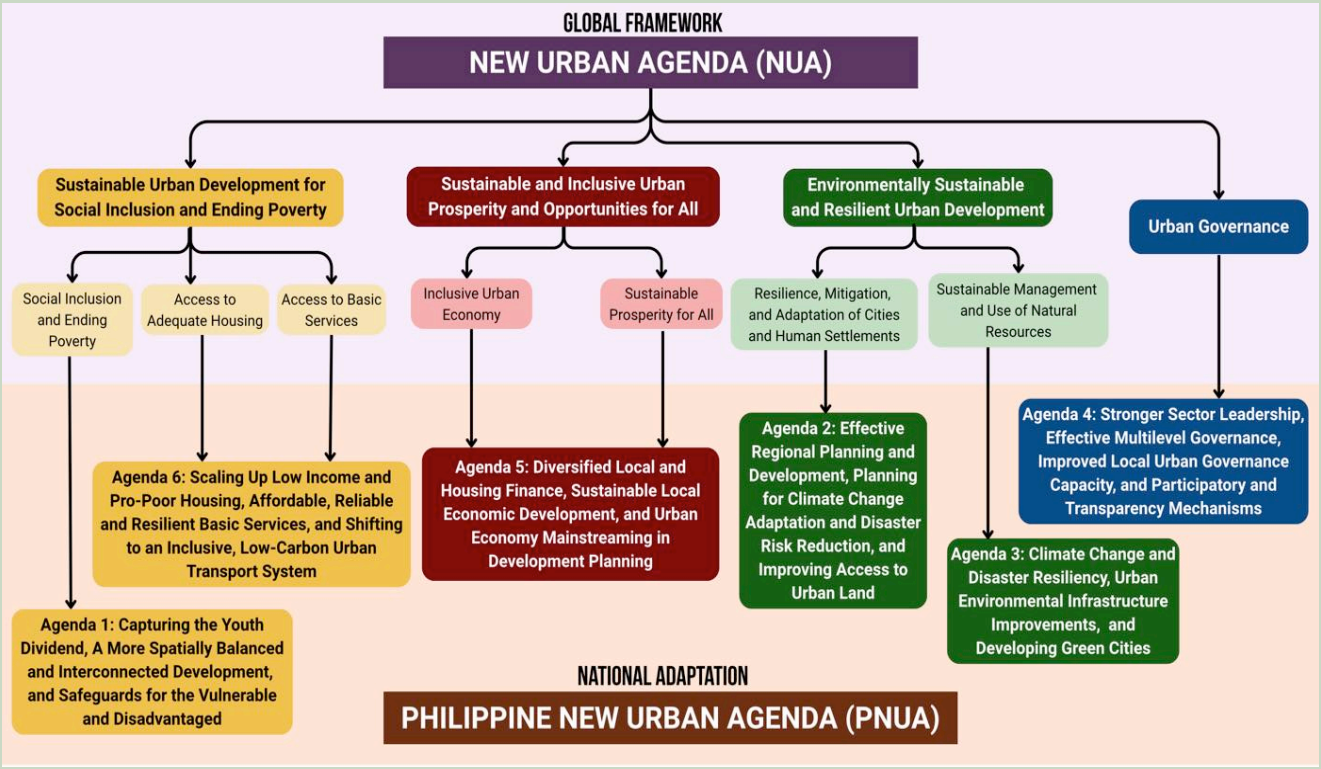


Figure 4. Philippine's Adaptation of New Urban Agenda Global Framework

Figure 5.

Core Elements of the Philippine New Urban Agenda

Agenda 1
Urban Demography

A. Capturing the Youth Dividend
B. A More Spatially Balanced & Interconnected Development
C. Safeguards for the Vulnerable & Disadvantaged

Agenda 2
Land and Urban Planning

D. Effective Regional Planning and Development
E. Planning for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction
F. Improving Access to Urban Land

Agenda 3
Urban Environment

G. Climate Change and Disaster Resiliency
H. Urban Environmental Infrastructure
I. Developing Green Cities

Agenda 4
Urban Governance & Legislation

J. Stronger Sector Leadership
K. Effective Multilevel Governance
L. Improved Local Urban Governance
M. Participatory and Transparency Mechanisms

Agenda 5
Urban Economy

N. Diversified Local and Housing Finance
O. Sustainable Local Economic Development
P. Urban Economy Mainstreaming in Development Planning

Agenda 6
Housing and Basic Services

Q. Scaling Up Low Income and Pro Poor Housing
R. Affordable, Reliable, & Resilient Basic Services
S. Shift to Inclusive, Low Carbon Urban Transport System

2.2. AGENDA 2030 AND THE PHILIPPINE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, adopted in September 2015 by all 193 United Nations Member States, provides a global framework of 17 SDGs and 169 targets aimed at eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities, fostering inclusive economic growth, and addressing environmental challenges—all under the principle of leaving no one behind.

Although the SDGs are universally applicable, implementation is nationally determined. Member States are expected to localize targets based on institutional capacities, resource availability, and development contexts. This includes integrating the SDGs into national planning, policy, and budgetary systems through established governance mechanisms.

Although all goals intersect with urban development, SDG 11—*Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable*—is especially central to the human settlements and urban development sector.

The SDGs are interdependent and indivisible, and while global in nature, their implementation must reflect national contexts. The 2030 Agenda explicitly recognizes the need to respect different national realities, capacities, levels of development, and policy priorities. Each country is expected to establish its own nationally defined targets and indicators, guided by the global framework but adapted to local conditions, through the integration of the SDGs into national planning, budgeting, and monitoring systems.

The PNUA serves as a primary driver not only for achieving SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), but also for advancing the broader 2030 Agenda by recognizing the interconnectedness of all 17 SDGs. Every urban intervention – from building resilient housing (contributing to SDG 1, 10, 11) to developing sustainable transport systems (impacting SDG 3, 9, 11, 13) and promoting green spaces (supporting SDG 3, 11, 15) – creates ripple benefits. These ranges from poverty alleviation and improved health outcomes, gender equality, climate resilience, and strengthened partnerships for development.

2.3. NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING FRAMEWORK (NUDHF)

Following the adoption of the PNUA, the government updated its national urban policy through the **National Urban Development and Housing Framework (NUDHF)**—a planning instrument that operationalizes the PNUA's principles into actionable sector strategies and policy recommendations.

Now in its fourth iteration since 1993, the updated NUDHF is aligned with the SDGs, particularly SDG 11, and draws heavily from the New Urban Agenda introduced at Habitat III. It is also informed by the National Framework for Physical Planning (2001–2030) and the PDP, which collectively emphasize social equity, inclusive growth, spatial resilience, and economic competitiveness. Through this convergence, the NUDHF ensures that urban development strategies are aligned both with national priorities and international commitments. The framework also supports the vision of AmBisyon Natin 2040 and continues to advance the goal of *"Better, Greener, Smarter Urban Systems in a More Inclusive Philippines."*

The NUDHF is underpinned by a set of principles that provide strategic direction for sustainable urban development and housing:

1. Urbanization as catalyst for inclusive growth;
2. Climate change resilience as a base for spatial and sectoral development;
3. Spatially and sectorally integrated settlements within coherent and efficient urban systems and forms;
4. Urban spaces as platforms for social and economic opportunity, cultural expression, and innovation;
5. People's participation and empowerment as foundation of urban governance, facilitating sustainable resource use, planning, management, and finance; and
6. Sustainable urban environment as a core development condition.

2.4. NATIONAL INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS UPGRADING STRATEGY (NISUS)

The **National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy (NISUS)**, formulated in 2014, serves as the Philippine government's national framework for addressing urban informality. It sets the goal of providing at least one million ISFs with "a life of more dignity" by 2025. The strategy envisions delivering quality housing, improved infrastructure and social services, and enhanced access to employment, transport, capital, and livelihoods—targeting an average of 100,000 ISFs annually over a ten-year period.

NISUS promotes an integrated approach to land development and informal settlements upgrading, recognizing the need to situate these efforts within the broader context of city-wide urban development, while accounting for climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) considerations.

Figure 6. Strategies under the National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy (NISUS)

1 Mainstream informal settlements upgrading with secure tenure within an urban renewal framework

This entails establishing a national program where cities implement urban renewal strategies that integrate ISF upgrading with income and employment generation programs.

2 Design and direct subsidies based on household income levels

This includes adopting capital subsidies for both ISF upgrading and new affordable housing, eliminating interest rate subsidies, and aligning government housing finance with market-based mechanisms to improve efficiency and targeting.

3 Introduce rights-based, negotiable instruments as tenure alternatives

These instruments offer a pathway to secure tenure without full land titling, helping to accelerate upgrading efforts and facilitate ISFs' access to housing finance.

4 Reinforce the leadership role of local governments

LGUs are positioned as the primary implementers of urban renewal and ISF housing. The strategy calls for capacity building in city-wide planning, CCA/DRRM, estate management, informal settlements upgrading, and PPPs. It also proposes a performance-based, competitive funding mechanism for LGUs to access national financing.

5 Build the capacity of civil society actors

NGOs, community-based organizations, homeowners' associations, cooperatives, and microfinance institutions must be empowered to participate in ISF upgrading, microfinance, estate management, and enforcement of laws against illegal land occupation and informal construction—working in collaboration with LGUs.

6 Enhance sectoral leadership and institutional coordination

This includes strengthening the capacity of DHSUD (formerly HUDCC), DILG, and key shelter agencies (KSAs) to plan, design, and implement strategic urban development and ISF housing programs.

2.5. NATIONAL HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SECTOR PLAN (NHUDSP)

The **National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP)** serves as the central planning and policy platform for harmonizing programs, projects, and strategies under the leadership of DHSUD. It seeks to foster innovation, institutional coordination, and collective action across government and development partners, aligning sectoral interventions with the vision of AmBisyon Natin 2040 and broader sustainable urban development goals.

Anchored in DHSUD's mandate, the NHUDSP is cognizant of the diverse efforts being undertaken by other national agencies, local governments, and civil society actors. It addresses both persistent and emerging issues in housing and urban development, with particular focus on informal settler families, climate- and disaster-vulnerable households, and other marginalized urban communities. The NHUDSP aims to ensure that these populations benefit not only from ongoing programs but also from a rationalized and sequenced design of sectoral interventions over time.

The NHUDSP plays a key role in consolidating and institutionalizing innovative approaches that have emerged through policy recommendations and pilot initiatives. By integrating these into formal programming, the Plan allows them to be mainstreamed, scaled, and sustained across communities and jurisdictions.

The Plan draws from foundational policy documents including the PNUA, the National Urban Development and Housing Framework (NUDHF), and the National Informal Settlements Upgrading Strategy (NISUS). A comprehensive review of these references helped identify strategies to be translated into concrete programs, projects, and activities (PAPs), along with the institutional, regulatory, and financial requirements for their operationalization.

Covering the entirety of the housing and urban development sector, the NHUDSP is structured around thematic subsectors consistent with national planning frameworks. It ensures strategic alignment with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP), the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), and other relevant instruments to maintain coherence across development goals and spatial hierarchies.

The Plan adopts existing spatial structuring systems—including cities and municipalities, ecosystems and watersheds, and settlement networks as defined in the NSS—but also proposes responsive actions for emerging urban configurations such as metropolitan areas, inter-LGU clusters, and bioregions. It provides a geographic distribution of priority PAPs, particularly those under DHSUD's banner programs, to guide coordinated implementation at the national and local levels.

2.6. RESILIENT AND GREEN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FRAMEWORK (RGHSF)

The **Resilient and Green Human Settlements Framework (RGHSF)** is a national policy framework that guides the development, management, and evaluation of human settlements in the Philippines through the integrated lens of climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and green development. It offers a systems-based perspective to help assess and improve how settlements function, with the goal of supporting safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable communities.

The RGHSF is grounded in key national policies on climate and disaster resilience and human settlements development. These include the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) Act, the Philippine New Urban Agenda (PNUA), the National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP), the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework (NDRRMF) and Plan (NDRRMP), the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change (NFSCC), the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP), and the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, among others.

Central to the RGHSF is a systems view of human settlements as composed of interconnected physical, spatial, functional, and organizational elements that enable and sustain life. This perspective highlights the complex challenges faced by Philippine settlements—including limited local capacity, insecure land tenure, inequitable access to shelter and services, fragmented connectivity, informality, economic vulnerability,

environmental degradation, climate impacts, and emerging health risks.

The RGHSF recognizes that these challenges are compounded by the country's high exposure to natural hazards and climate-induced risks. It underscores the need for integrated planning approaches that acknowledge how these risks intersect with long-standing development issues, and how they must be addressed to support sustained recovery, spatial equity, and systems resilience.

At its core, the RGHSF defines resilience as the ability of a system, community, or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform, and recover from their effects in a timely and efficient manner. This includes maintaining or restoring essential functions through proactive risk management. The framework translates this definition into spatial and programmatic strategies that embed resilience and green development as foundational principles in human settlements planning and implementation.

Core elements of the RGHSF:

ABSORB
A settlement can receive the negative effect of hazards. While it cannot control the hazards' magnitude, it can manage the effects by implementing hazard-specific positive actions that minimize or limit losses.

ACCOMMODATE
A settlement can make room for, or control expected hazard impacts so that it will not be negatively affected. By deliberately allowing and incorporating the hazard into its spaces and functions, a settlement may be able to not only avoid losses, but even positively thrive.

RECOVER
A settlement can, in a timely manner, address negative effects and losses from shocks or disasters, and regain stability through building back better using resilience-building strategies.

ADAPT
A settlement can modify its conditions with the central aim of maintaining its integrity or essence (including existing form and function) and maximizing opportunities for the people in the community. It is forward- looking, wherein adjustments are designed and implemented such that they are also suited to new or projected conditions.

TRANSFORM
While related to adaptation, transformation is more focused and more purposive, predicated on an improved understanding of risks and vulnerabilities. It involves changing the fundamental attributes of a settlement and considering the larger natural and socio-economic systems in promoting sustainable development. At its core, transformation entails paradigm shifts.

GREEN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
In addition to the above resilience abilities, the concept of "green human settlements" is specifically added to ensure that environmental sustainability is core to settlement development. Green human settlements will create opportunities to mitigate GHG emissions and use ecosystem services in settlement development to address vulnerabilities and risks.

To operationalize these principles, RGHSF identifies a set of Key Result Areas (KRAs) that define the enabling conditions required across development sectors relevant to human settlements. These KRAs include *Resilient Population; Resilient and Green Land Use and Urban Planning; Balanced, Interconnected, and Climate-responsive Sustainable Development; Transformative Multilevel Climate Governance; Blue, Green, and Circular Economy;* and *Revitalized Housing and Basic Services*. Each KRA articulates broad policy approaches, strategies, and desired outcomes aligned with the resilience abilities defined in the framework.

The KRAs provide a basis for understanding the sectoral and operational dimensions of resilient and green human settlements. They also correspond to the thematic areas set out in the NUDHF and the PNUA, ensuring greater policy coherence and alignment in implementation across institutions and levels of governance.

In addition, the RGHSF identifies enabling actions that correspond to both the resilience abilities and the KRAs. These actions support the integration of inputs from relevant sectors and institutions, grounded in existing capacities. They also serve to guide the design of implementation and monitoring tools, institutional capacity development programs, and inter-agency coordination mechanisms.

Finally, the RGHSF promotes a whole-of-government approach to implementation. This is reflected in strategies such as the development of agency-specific action plans and reporting protocols, the crafting of a mainstreaming guide, and the establishment of institutional mechanisms for inter-agency collaboration. These components are essential for translating the framework into practice and sustaining its application across the full range of human settlements development efforts.

2.7. NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY (NSS)

As a key spatial component of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP), the **National Spatial Strategy (NSS)** provides the geographic lens through which inclusive and balanced development is pursued. It describes the spatial implications of economic, demographic, environmental, and institutional dynamics and offers a framework for directing growth, investment, and resource management.

The NSS defines the spatial setting for policies related to urban development, infrastructure, disaster risk reduction, and environmental protection, and supports the establishment of sustainable settlements, efficient production systems, and effective service delivery.

The NSS is grounded on several core principles of spatial development, including:

a. Integration of leading and lagging areas and urban-rural linkages through transportation networks;
b. Improvement of access to social services;
c. Identification of locations of major infrastructure to maximize their benefits;
d. Improvement of local, national, and international connectivity; and
e. Promotion of sustainable development and resiliency.

Recognizing that economic activity and population patterns shape the spatial form of cities and municipalities, the NSS positions cities as engines of growth and as platforms for inclusive development and poverty reduction. It also emphasizes the role of infrastructure in enabling functional networks of urban and rural communities. One of its key objectives is to decongest Metro Manila by directing growth toward other key regional centers that can benefit from economies of agglomeration, while also creating stronger spatial linkages between fast-growing and lagging regions.

The NSS is structured into three main components:

1. **Regional Agglomeration**
   Builds on the efficiencies and maximizes the benefits of economies of scale and agglomeration, particularly in fast-growing regional centers. It emphasizes:
   a. Efficient management of regional hubs and the spreading of agglomeration benefits to surrounding areas through access to large markets, labor pools, and innovation opportunities (hub-and-spokes model);

b. Support for regional development through physical and social infrastructure, improved access to services, and effective urban management.

2. **Connectivity** – Aims to enhance linkages among settlements and key production areas by connecting rural areas to growth centers. This component:

    - Increases access to employment and services and directs growth toward high-potential areas through efficient transport networks;
    - Seeks to equalize opportunities across space through infrastructure and investment in human capital, especially in conflict-affected and disadvantaged areas (e.g., peacebuilding, education, health, and social services);
    - Promotes interaction between leading and lagging regions to avoid inefficiencies linked to uniform dispersal of development;
    - Highlights the need for appropriate infrastructure, affordable housing, and social services to manage urban growth and mitigate congestion and vulnerability;
    - Requires strong transportation and telecommunications networks to integrate production zones and settlement areas effectively.

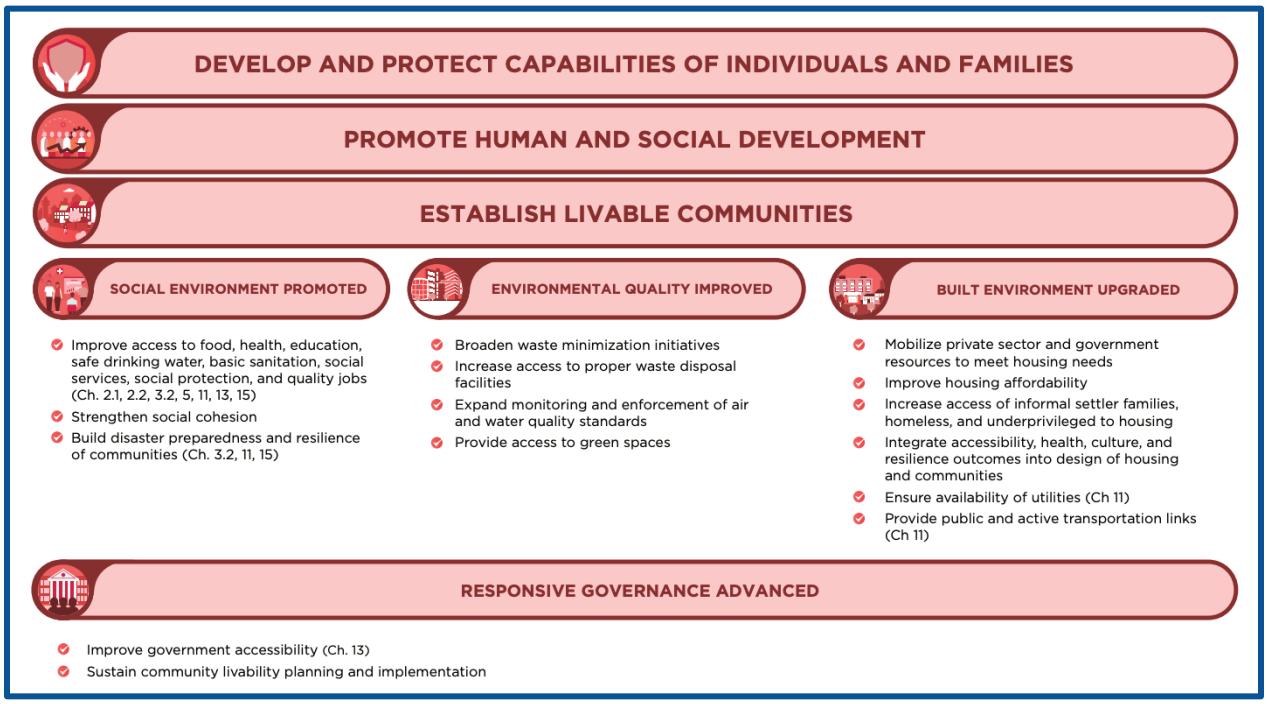
3. **Reduction of Vulnerability** – Recognizes vulnerability reduction as integral to development planning. It involves:

    - Prevention and mitigation measures to reduce the impacts of climate change and disasters on communities;
    - Spatial interventions such as redundant transport routes and alternative access to ensure connectivity in hazard-affected areas;
    - Enhanced capabilities for impact analysis, incorporating geophysical and urban development-related risk factors;
    - Reduced exposure and vulnerability of communities to climate and disaster risks through risk-informed spatial planning.

2.8. PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP) 2023-2028

The **Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023–2028** positions the development of **livable communities** as integral to inclusive, equitable, and resilient national growth. This vision is pursued by improving the social environment, enhancing environmental quality, and upgrading the built environment—each interlinked and guided by the principles of equity, inclusivity, resilience, and sustainability. Promoting the social environment entails addressing basic needs such as access to food, health care, education, social protection, and decent employment, while fostering a strong sense of community and social cohesion. Environmental quality improvement enables communities to thrive in clean, green, and accessible spaces that promote public health and ecological balance. Upgrading the built environment ensures that settlements are supported by adequate infrastructure, housing, and service systems that are spatially integrated with public and active transport networks. These efforts are supported by an accessible and accountable governance system that ensures continuity, coordination, and sustained improvements in the livability of communities.

Figure 7. Strategy Framework to Establish Livable Communities



Source: Adapted from Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028

The PDP outlines several key strategies to establish livable communities:

Improve access to food, health, education, safe drinking water, basic sanitation, social services, social protection, and quality jobs

Access to these essential services shall be expanded and improved. Communities will benefit from national programs aimed at scaling up quality job creation, including upskilling to increase employability and expanding

opportunities in agriculture, agribusiness, industry, services, and sustainable resource-based livelihoods.

Strengthen social cohesion

Social cohesion shall be enhanced by broadening community participation, ensuring safety, promoting gender- and culture-responsive interventions, and safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable groups. This includes women, children, older persons, indigenous peoples (IPs), and individuals identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or transsexual, queer or questioning, intersex, allied, asexual, aromantic, or agender (LGBTQIA), among others. Efforts will also focus on preventing acts of discrimination and violence.

Build disaster preparedness and resilience of communities

All community members shall be capacitated and empowered to prepare for, respond to, and recover from multiple types of hazards—hydro-meteorological, geological, human-induced, and public health emergencies. This must be a continuous and inclusive process, particularly in livable communities that may attract migrants unfamiliar with local risks.

Broaden waste minimization initiatives

Recycling and other waste recovery programs—including community composting and the recovery of rare metals from waste electrical and electronic equipment (urban mining)—shall be intensified. These initiatives will improve resource efficiency and support the transition to a circular economy by encouraging public and private investments in green technologies, materials recovery facilities, and production systems using secondary raw materials.

Increase access to proper waste disposal facilities

Solid, organic, health care, and hazardous wastes shall be effectively managed to prevent adverse health, environmental, and economic impacts. LGUs will be supported to expand waste management service coverage, making proper waste disposal accessible to a larger population. The approval and implementation of local Solid Waste Management plans shall be fast-tracked.

Provide access to green spaces

The “Adopt-a-City” approach will be piloted to engage the business sector in supporting urban greening. Successful practices will be replicated in more LGUs. Technical and financial assistance will be made available to enable the establishment of green and open spaces through programs such as the Urban Biodiversity Program, National Greening Program, and Green, Green, Green.

Mobilize private sector & government resources to meet housing needs

DHSUD targets the development and financing of one million housing units annually to reduce the national housing deficit. This requires the mobilization of substantial resources from both national and local governments, as well as from government financial institutions and private banks. The government will engage these stakeholders to expand lending for homeowners and developers, including the provision of real estate mortgages and development loans. The availment of fiscal incentives under the Urban Development and Housing Act (Republic Act No. 7279) shall be facilitated to encourage private sector participation in socialized housing.

Increase access of informal settler families, the homeless, and the underprivileged to housing

Idle government lands shall be fully inventoried, and a centralized database will be established to identify potential resettlement sites. On-site, in-city, and near-city resettlement approaches shall be adopted to minimize social disruption. Vertical housing will be prioritized in metropolitan areas and highly urbanized cities (HUCs) where land availability is limited. The National Resettlement Policy Framework will be operationalized through local resettlement plans and programs to ensure that communities are livable, and livelihoods are restored.

Integrate accessibility, health, culture, and resilience into the design of housing and communities

Housing standards under Batas Pambansa 220 shall be reviewed and updated to incorporate minimum health and accessibility standards, cultural appropriateness, climate and disaster resilience, energy efficiency, green spaces, active mobility options, and innovative construction technologies.

The design of communities shall reflect emerging housing preferences, such as halfway homes, accommodations for first-time homebuyers and young professionals, and permanent family housing. Implementation of open space requirements—such as parks, playgrounds, and community facilities—shall be strictly enforced and leveraged as multifunctional green spaces.

Provide public and active transportation links

LGUs shall incorporate the development of local roads that support walking, cycling, and other forms of active mobility into their land use and infrastructure plans. Public transport route plans shall include accessible and inclusive transit options, particularly for relocated communities. LGUs are encouraged to adopt the use of electric vehicles and establish solar-powered charging stations to service residential areas sustainably. Mechanisms shall also be introduced to mitigate increased transport costs associated with relocation.

Ensure availability of utilities

The government will assess and improve the effectiveness of programs aimed at expanding access to water supply and sanitation services, especially in underserved and waterless municipalities. The operation of water service providers as LGU-run or public–private economic enterprises shall be promoted to increase sustainability and efficiency in service delivery.

Improve government accessibility

Local governments shall adopt national digitalization platforms and align their systems with those of relevant national agencies. This includes digitalizing business processes, improving access to information and early warning systems, and enhancing transparency in licensing and permitting procedures—particularly those related to housing. LGUs will also invest in digital literacy and capacity-building to strengthen the participation and engagement of constituents in governance.

Sustain community livability planning and implementation

Community-driven planning shall be institutionalized and integrated with national housing, urban development, and regional spatial strategies. LGU participation in the planning, financing, and implementation of housing and settlement programs shall be accelerated. Livability planning shall be closely linked to CLUPs, which must account for multi-sectoral needs and anticipate population growth through carrying capacity assessments. As livable communities are established and strengthened, enhanced interlocal cooperation is expected to support the development of functional metropolitan areas.

2.9. NATIONAL RESETTLEMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

The DHSUD adopted the **National Resettlement Policy Framework** (NRPF) to institutionalize resettlement and relocation policies while exhorting the protection of human rights through humane relocation of ISFs. The NRPF was developed in response to the need for more sustainable solutions to the growing informal settlements in cities, particularly in Metro Manila, and the plight of ISFs (DHSUD, 2022). The NRPF provides an overarching framework and outlines common procedures and guidelines guiding how to resettle ISFs, especially those living in hazardous and vulnerable areas. The framework is intended to be used by all government agencies and other key stakeholders involved in the implementation of resettlement and socialized housing plans for families affected by natural calamities, emergency situations, and human-made conflicts. By clarifying responsibilities between national government agencies, particularly key shelter agencies, and LGUs, the framework addresses policy gaps and supports more proactive and structured resettlement planning. The framework also provides valuable information for the private sector, non-government organizations, the academe, and other stakeholders on the national resettlement and housing strategies of the government, fostering synergy and collaboration.

The NRPF aims to promote an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient housing development and resettlement program. It aims to accomplish the following:

- Build quality and affordable housing and sustainable resettlement areas
- Minimize adverse impacts of relocation and resettlement
- Promote and facilitate inclusive relocation and resettlement processes
- Stronger local government role in relocation and resettlement programs
- Build institutional arrangements and synergies and forge multi-stakeholder partnerships

The NRPF has been formally adopted through DHSUD Department Order No. 2022-004, establishing it as the national policy guide for the planning and implementation of humane, rights-based, and development-informed resettlement programs in the Philippines.

2.10. POST DISASTER SHELTER RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

The **Post-Disaster Shelter Recovery Framework** aims to ensure better coordination among and between agencies and local governments, optimize the use of resources, and align various policies to reduce the impact of the disaster. This framework is developed to improve the results of shelter recovery programs and projects for Filipinos affected by disasters, either human-induced or natural calamities in nature.

The operationalization of the Post-Disaster Shelter Recovery Framework (PDSRF) has advanced with the issuance of DHSUD Department Order No. 2023-004, which institutionalizes the adoption and implementation of the framework across national and local levels. This policy issuance provides the formal basis for aligning shelter recovery efforts with established disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) protocols, ensuring more coordinated, efficient, and sustainable post-disaster housing responses.

2.11. LOCAL PLANNING GUIDES

At the municipal and city levels, the Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991, a landmark legislation on decentralization in the Philippines—mandates the preparation of a **Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP)**. The CLUP is a ten-year spatial plan that defines the type, intensity, and location of development within a city or municipality. It is implemented through a zoning ordinance to rationalize land use and ensure the sustainable and equitable management of land resources.

The CLUP determines the designated uses of land and other physical and natural resources (both public and private) within the local government's territorial jurisdiction. This includes areas co-managed with the national government, and where applicable, management plans for ancestral domains, critical watersheds, river basins, and protected areas. The CLUP must delineate actual on-the-ground boundaries and reflect the desired land use patterns at the barangay, city, or municipal level. It also serves as a spatial integration platform for sectoral plans and provides land use policies across the four major land use planning categories: settlements development, production land use, protection land use, and infrastructure development.

The spatial direction established by the CLUP serves as the foundation for the formulation of the **Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)** and the **Local Development Investment Program (LDIP)** of the LGU.

In parallel, the LGC also requires the preparation of a Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)—a six-year, multi-sectoral plan that articulates the LGU's development vision, goals, objectives, and medium-term strategies across sectors. The CDP outlines the programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) needed to operationalize these strategies, forming the basis for local investment programming, resource allocation, and annual budgeting processes.

The CDP serves as the LGU's action plan for translating its development agenda into sectoral and cross-sectoral interventions that are spatially grounded and responsive to local needs. It effectively "puts flesh on the skeleton" of the CLUP, enabling gradual, phased implementation toward the desired physical, economic, and social development outcomes over time. This approach is consistent with the principle of planning as a form of public control over the pattern of development, ensuring that growth is managed, inclusive, and sustainable.

CHAPTER 3

Implementation of Urban Development and Sustainability Policies

Since the formal adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the Philippines has consistently demonstrated its commitment to the 2030 Agenda. As an active member of the global community, the country has engaged in cooperative efforts to pursue and localize the 17 SDGs, promoting inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development. The Philippines has embedded the SDGs into its policies, which also includes the integration of SDG indicators in national and local development plans and outcomes.

3.1. GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR IMPLEMENTING SDGS

Following a performance audit conducted by the Commission on Audit (COA) in 2018 to assess national preparedness for SDG implementation, the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) was identified as the lead agency in coordinating the long-term integration of the SDGs into national policy and planning. In line with COA's recommendations, the Subcommittee on SDGs was established under the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) to ensure that SDG-related programs are adequately tagged, monitored, and financed through a centralized mechanism.

As the government's lead socioeconomic planning agency, the DEPDev hosts the SDG Secretariat, which is tasked with aligning national and sub-national policies, plans, and programs with the SDG framework. The Secretariat coordinates across line agencies and engages non-government stakeholders, including civil society organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and development partners. To further enhance policy coherence and operational integration, Technical Working Groups (TWGs) have been established for each of the major SDG dimensions: social, environmental, economic, peace, security and governance (PSG). These TWGs are composed of domain experts responsible for coordinating, monitoring, and overseeing the implementation, integration, and reporting of the SDGs across the country.

DEPDev's central role is supported by its institutional memory and long-standing coordination experience, particularly through its management of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from 2000 to 2015. With this foundation, DEPDev continues to lead the monitoring, evaluation, and localization of the SDGs in the Philippines. Given the ongoing and evolving nature of sustainable development, it is expected that DEPDev's role in coordinating inter-agency efforts and stakeholder partnerships will extend well beyond 2030.

a. Organizational Structure

i. **Development Budget Coordination Committee – Subcommittee on SDGs (DBCC SC-SDG)** – The DBCC Subcommittee on SDGs serves as the lead coordinating and oversight body for the implementation, monitoring, and advocacy of the SDGs in the Philippines. It is chaired by DEPDev and co-chaired by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

The SC-SDG is mandated to:

- Provide strategic support and guidance in integrating the SDGs into the PDP and other sectoral and thematic plans;

- Identify and address policy and programmatic gaps that hinder SDG progress; and
- Coordinate the financing and resource mobilization needed to implement SDG-aligned programs.

ii. **SC-SDG Technical Working Groups (TWGs) –** Operating as subgroups under the SC-SDG, these Technical Working Groups focus on the thematic dimensions of sustainable development—Social, Environment, Economic, and Peace, Security, and Governance. The TWGs support the mainstreaming of SDGs into policy decisions, and provide platforms for issue identification, solution development, and coordinated action among sectoral agencies and partners.

iii. **Stakeholders' Chamber on the SDGs –** The Chamber serves as a collaborative platform for non-government stakeholders committed to sustainable development. It enables better coordination and resource sharing across various sectors to advance the SDGs. The Chamber includes representatives from the private sector, non-government organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), academe, media, trade unions, youth organizations, and other vulnerable sectors. It functions as a mechanism to amplify stakeholder voices and contributions in SDG planning and implementation.

iv. **Special Regional Committees or Regional Committees on the SDGs (SRC-SDGs / RSC-SDGs) –** Established under the Regional Development Councils (RDCs), these committees localize the SDG agenda by:
- Identifying regional-level gaps in SDG-related policies and programs;
- Facilitating the alignment of regional development strategies with national SDG targets; and
- Reviewing and approving local programs, partnerships, and policies that aim to accelerate SDG achievement at the subnational level.

b. Policy Mainstreaming of SDGs

- ***SDGs and AmBisyon Natin 2040***

AmBisyon Natin 2040 represents the collective long-term vision and aspirations of the Filipino people for themselves and for the nation by the year 2040. It articulates the kind of life Filipinos aim to lead and the society they envision. The vision statement reads:

> *"By 2040, the Philippines will be a prosperous, predominantly middle-class society where no one is poor; our people will live long and healthy lives, be smart and innovative, and will live in a high-trust society."*

As such, AmBisyon Natin 2040 serves as the overarching anchor for development planning across at least four presidential administrations. It provides a unifying framework for long-term national development efforts and aligns closely with the principles and timeline of the SDGs.

While the SDGs are targeted for achievement by 2030, their attainment is considered foundational to realizing the broader objectives of AmBisyon Natin 2040. The long-term vision emphasizes inter-generational equity, which is fully aligned with the SDG principle of "leaving no one behind." The concept of sustainable development—where present progress must not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs—is a prerequisite for achieving the Filipino aspiration of being *matatag* (strongly rooted), *maginhawa* (comfortable), and *panatag* (secure).

- ***SDGs and the PDP***

The PDP serves as the government's primary development blueprint, translating the priorities of the political leadership into a coherent policy and strategic framework, and subsequently into concrete programs and projects. From policy formulation to implementation, the PDP integrates the 17 SDGs across its chapters, ensuring that national strategies are aligned with global development commitments.

The integration of the SDGs into the PDP is vital, as the PDP guides national budget planning and appropriations, which are deliberated annually through Congressional Budget Hearings. Hence, actions undertaken to achieve the SDGs are not standalone efforts but are complementary—and in many cases, concurrent—with the implementation of the PDP.

The current PDP remains anchored on the administration's Zero-to-Ten Point Socioeconomic Agenda and is directed toward the realization of AmBisyon Natin 2040, which envisions a *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay para sa lahat*. Moreover, the Updated PDP responds to emerging risks and uncertainties affecting the country's growth trajectory, serving as a guide for post-crisis economic recovery and long-term resilience.

- ***SDGs and the Socioeconomic Report***

The implementation of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) is monitored and reported annually through the Socioeconomic Report (SER). The SER presents an assessment of accomplishments related to PDP outputs and outcomes, provides analysis on performance gaps and bottlenecks, and recommends policy directions moving forward. The SER also functions as a monitoring platform for related instruments such as the PDP Results Matrix (RM) and the Public Investment Program (PIP). The RM tracks outcome and output indicators, while the PIP contains a rolling list of priority programs and projects to be implemented by national government agencies, government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), government financial institutions (GFIs), and other instrumentalities over the medium term (e.g., 2017–2022). These programs are aligned with the PDP's societal goals and contribute directly to SDG outcomes.

As of April 20, 2018, 68 indicators (including one reflected in two chapters) out of the 155 initial SDG indicators monitored by the Philippines were already integrated into the PDP and Results Matrix. The remaining indicators are to be incorporated in subsequent sectoral plans and reporting cycles.

To further strengthen the SDG-PDP alignment, the SDG Annex was introduced in the 2018 Socioeconomic Report. Since the PDP serves as the de facto implementation mechanism for the SDGs, and the SER is its primary monitoring tool, the SDG Annex enables a systematic tracking of how national programs and policies contribute to global commitments.

Specifically, the SDG Annex aims to:

- Identify the PPAPs that contribute to the attainment of the SDGs;
- Support the alignment of the chapters of the PDP with the SDGs and identify the relevant initiatives per sector;
- Identify the SDG targets where there is no specific intervention designed towards its attainment and propose a corresponding PPAP; and
- Ascertain that the 2030 targets are continually provided interventions until 2030 through the inclusion of the SDG Annex in the future editions of the PDP and the SER.

c. Implementation

- ***Linking Planning and Budgeting Through the Sub-Committee on the SDGs –*** Through Social Development Committee (SDC) Resolution No. 2, Series of 2019, the SDC enjoined the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) to issue a resolution establishing the Sub-Committee on the SDGs (SC-SDG) under the DBCC. This Sub-Committee is tasked with assisting in the coordination, implementation, and monitoring of the SDGs in the Philippines, particularly by strengthening the linkage between planning and budgeting.

The SC-SDG is chaired by the Undersecretary for Planning and Policy of DEPDev, with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) serving as Co-Chair. The membership of the Sub-Committee is jointly determined by DEPDev and DBM.

At the subnational level, the SDC also enjoins DEPDev Regional Offices to establish Regional Sub-Committees on the SDGs (RSC-SDGs) to support

advocacy, coordination, and implementation of SDG initiatives in the regions. These sub-committees are mandated to conduct regular quarterly meetings, with special meetings convened as necessary to respond to urgent or emerging issues.

To further support the SC-SDG, Technical Working Groups (TWGs) are organized across four thematic areas: Economics; Environment; Social Development; and Peace, Security, and Governance. These TWGs are composed of technical experts who provide analytical inputs, evidence-based policy recommendations, and programmatic guidance to the SC-SDG.

In addition, a dedicated SDG Secretariat has been created to provide technical and administrative support to both the SC-SDG and its TWGs. The Secretariat also plays a critical role in assisting DEPDev in coordinating and overseeing matters related to SDG implementation, policy alignment, and inter-agency collaboration.

- ***Nationally Determined Numerical Targets (2030) for the SDGs –*** In line with the principle of national ownership, the Philippines—through the DEPDev, in partnership with the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS)—conducted a series of consultation and validation workshops with both government and non-government stakeholders. These engagements aimed to determine and reaffirm the country's numerical commitments toward achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

  The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) provide an expanded platform through which the Philippines seeks to enhance global cooperation and secure access to critical resources such as climate finance and technology transfer. The NDCs go beyond mitigation and are geared toward addressing broader development concerns, including adaptation, resilience-building, and the protection of vulnerable sectors. The Philippines' NDC supports core national development priorities, such as: (a) Sustainable industrial development; (b) Poverty eradication and universal access to basic services; (c) Social and climate justice; (d) Energy security.

  The NDC outlines a total GHG emissions reduction target of 75% by 2030, of which 2.71% is unconditional—to be met through domestic resources—and 72.29% is conditional, contingent on support via international means of implementation (e.g., finance, technology, capacity building) from developed countries.

  a. **Aspirational Peaking** – endeavor to peak its emissions by 2030 in the context of accelerating a just transition to its sectors into a green economy;
  b. **Climate Change Adaptation** – the Philippines shall undertake adaptation measures across but not limited to, the sectors of agriculture, forestry, coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity, health and human security;
  c. **International cooperation & market and nonmarket mechanisms** – The benefits of market & non-market mechanisms under Article 6 of the PA will continue to be explored, consistent with national circumstances and sustainable development aspirations;
  d. **Circular Economy** – the country's climate change mitigation actions shall strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of the country, especially on the implementation of NDC policies and measures, and the uptake of circular economy and sustainable consumption and production practices; and
  e. **Traditional knowledge, education and public awareness** – the Philippines recognizes the importance of traditional knowledge, education and public awareness and enhancement of climate actions through measures embodied in Article 12 of the PA.

d. Localization

- ***Guidelines on the Localization of the PDP 2017-2022 Results Matrices and the SDGs***

  To promote the localization of the SDGs and ensure alignment with the country's long-term vision (AmBisyon Natin 2040), the DILG takes the lead in advocating and institutionalizing the SDGs at the local level. In support of this mandate, the DILG has conducted a series of regional and provincial

workshops to strengthen the capacity and functionality of LGUs in mainstreaming both the SDGs and AmBisyon Natin 2040 into their local plans, programs, and investment priorities.

Recognizing that the attainment of the SDGs requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, implementation strategies articulated in the PDP and subsequent sectoral plans are operationalized at the subnational level through the Regional Development Plans (RDPs) and the CDPs. These are further supported by the corresponding Results Matrices (RMs) and Local Development Investment Programs (LDIPs), enabling vertical alignment across national, regional, and local planning frameworks.

As of March 2018, SDG localization workshops—excluding those in the then-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)—have been conducted in all regions, 76 provinces, and 1,373 municipalities. These workshops aim to increase awareness and build institutional ownership of both the SDGs and AmBisyon Natin 2040, while also encouraging their integration into LGU development planning.

Further, DEPDev, in partnership with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and DILG, is exploring the inclusion of SDG-related indicators and assessment criteria in the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG). This is seen as a mechanism to incentivize performance, accountability, and outcome-oriented governance at the local level.

To guide the systematic integration of the SDGs and PDP Results Matrices into local planning and budgeting, Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 1, Series of 2018, was issued by DILG and DEPDev. Entitled "Guidelines on the Localization of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017–2022 Results Matrices and the Sustainable Development Goals", the JMC provides a framework for ensuring that local programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) contribute directly to national and sectoral targets.

The guidelines emphasize the formulation of Results Matrices at the regional, provincial, city, and municipal levels, ensuring consistency with PDP sectoral outcomes and enabling a performance-based approach to local budgeting and investment programming. This approach enhances vertical linkage and policy coherence between national, regional, and local development priorities.

The JMC also affirms the principle of decentralization under the Local Government Code and strengthens the planning–budgeting–implementation interface across levels of government. It highlights the following key operational principles:

- Adoption of a geographic-based planning perspective by provinces, encompassing all component cities and municipalities within their administrative jurisdiction—including HUCs and independent component cities (ICCs) located within their peripheries;
- Exercise of provincial oversight in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of local development plans;
- Strengthening of province–city/municipality interface and coordination mechanisms for planning and investment programming; and
- Improvement of local data management systems, enabling evidence-based policy and program development.

- ***Localizing the PDP-RM and the SDGs***

  The attainment of the SDGs requires coordinated, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder efforts at both the national and local levels. Implementation strategies outlined in the PDP and its accompanying sectoral plans are mainstreamed and localized in the Regional Development Plans (RDPs), Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plans (PDPFPs), Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs), and other local plans to ensure that national priorities are reflected in sub-national contexts. The DILG continues to lead the localization of the SDGs, conducting a series of regional and provincial workshops to enhance the functionality of LGUs in integrating the SDGs and AmBisyon Natin 2040 into their respective development plans and programs.
  As of March 2018, these workshops—excluding those in ARMM—had been conducted in all regions, 76 provinces, and 1,373 municipalities. In parallel, DEPDev, in collaboration with PSA and DILG, has explored the inclusion of SDG implementation criteria

in the SGLG, aiming to promote alignment between local performance incentives and the SDG framework.

Efforts are also underway to localize national and regional indicators by identifying corresponding provincial and municipal-level indicators that operationalize and contribute to achieving the PDP 2017–2022 outcomes and the SDGs.

To institutionalize this process, JMC No. 1, s. 2018, titled "Guidelines on the Localization of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017–2022 Results Matrices and the Sustainable Development Goals," was signed by DILG and DEPDev on November 26, 2018. The guidelines aim to ensure that PPAs implemented by LGUs are aligned with the targets of PDP priority sectors and that these efforts are translated into budgeted interventions at the regional, provincial, city, and municipal levels.

The JMC reinforces the principle of decentralization under the Local Government Code and strengthens vertical integration across government levels in both planning and budgeting. It emphasizes:

- The adoption of a geographic-based planning and investment programming approach by provinces, which includes all cities and municipalities within their jurisdiction—HUCs and ICCs included;
- The exercise of provincial oversight in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of development interventions;
- The strengthening of the provincial–city/municipality interface, ensuring effective coordination and dialogue; and
- The enhancement of local database management systems at the provincial, city, and municipal levels to support data-informed planning and decision-making.

- ***PDP and SDG-Supportive Local Initiatives***

  As with the implementation of the MDGs, local governments play a critical role in the realization of the PDP and the attainment of the SDGs. In this context, it is important to provide LGUs with a menu of tested, effective local initiatives that align with national and global development objectives. Among these, programs recognized by the Galing Pook (GP) Awards—also known as Gawad Galing Pook—stand out as exemplary models of local innovation and impact.

  The GP Awards is the first national program that identifies, and honors innovative and exemplary practices implemented by LGUs. Launched on October 21, 1993, as *Gantimpalang Panglingkod Pook* through a collaboration between the Local Government Academy–DILG, the Ford Foundation, and governance advocates, the program has since evolved into a flagship recognition initiative. To ensure sustainability, the Galing Pook Foundation was established in early 1998 as an independent awards body. Each year, the Foundation recognizes ten outstanding local governance programs, except during the years 2001, 2006, 2013, and 2016.

  In line with this, a study was initiated to assess and identify local government programs and projects—particularly GP awardees—that support the objectives of the PDP and the SDGs. The study also aims to establish a baseline for the possible institutionalization of a future SDG-aligned awards scheme, reinforcing recognition and incentivization of local excellence in sustainable development.

- ***Regional Best Practices***

  Despite the Philippines' archipelagic geography, LGUs and regional development stakeholders continue to make coordinated and strategic contributions toward the attainment of the SDGs. The country's 17 regions have demonstrated strong collective commitment in mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into their development priorities and plans.

  To document and recognize these efforts, DEPDev, through its national and regional Sub-Committees on the SDGs, launched the first national call for SDG-aligned best practices in late 2021 through early 2022. This open call invited submissions from a wide range of stakeholders, including regional line agencies (RLAs), state and local universities and colleges (SUCs and LUCs), LGUs, and civil society organizations. The response was overwhelming, with a substantial number of programs, activities, and

projects (PAPs) submitted from across sectors and regions.

This initiative aimed to highlight practices that not only demonstrate localized SDG implementation, but also hold potential for replication, scaling, or policy adoption, particularly at the subnational level.

The featured SDG best practices were selected based on the following criteria:

- Alignment with specific SDG targets
- Results-oriented implementation
- Inclusive and accountable approaches
- Sustainability of outcomes
- Potential for replication and scale-up

Table 4 presents the list of best SDG practices in the Philippines by Region. Many of these are implemented by or through coordination with national government agencies, but several of the best practices are led by LGUs across the country. For instance, in Region 5, Naga City pioneered a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of SDGs as part of its innovative People's Budget Ordinance. A VLR is a process through which LGUs voluntarily undertake a review of their progress on the 2030 SDGs. The initiative aims to enable the City Government to listen to the people's needs and reflect them into local policymaking as well as to institutionalize a data-driven process for local action planning and budgeting (DEPDev, n.d.). Naga City has adopted the VLR as a monitoring tool for its new 2022-2030 Comprehensive Development Plan as well as other plans of the city. It also adopted the SDGs in measuring annual performance of the City Government under its City Ordinance No. 2017-072 (the "People's Budget Ordinance of Naga City"), in partnership with the Naga City People's Council (Naga City Government, 2014).

Table 4. List of Best SDG Practices in the Philippines

Region	Program	SDG Addressed
Region I	Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD)/Emergency Employment Program	Goal 1 (No Poverty) – 1.3 Implement social protection systems to the poor
	Regular Conditional Cash Transfer (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program)	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 2 (Zero Hunger); Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being); Goal 4 (Quality Education); Goal 5 (Gender Equality); and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institution)
Region II	Project Classhome	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 2 (Zero Hunger); Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being); Goal 4 (Quality Education); Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institution); and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)
Region III	Education Policy Development Program	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	The Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development (Tech4ED) Project	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	International Coastal Cleanup Activity	Goal 14 (Life Below Water)

Region	Program	SDG Addressed
	1 Million Trees for 1 Bataan (1M41B) Challenge	Goal 15 (Life on Land)
	Iskolar ng Bataan College Scholarship Program	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	Fishfarmers Field School (FFS) on Improved Brackishwater Polyculture using Greenwater Technology	Goal 14 (Life Below Water)
	Tulong Pang-Edukasyon Gabay ng Bagong Henerasyon Scholarship Program	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	The BPC Learning Management System: BPC e-Learning	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	Project SYMPLE (Supporting Young Minds Program for Learning the Essentials)	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	Project TABLET (Technology Application to Boost Lifelong Skills and Enhance learning Tarlaqueño Learners)	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	Forestry Program – Forest Development and Protection of ANZAP and Other Forestry Programs	Goal 15 (Life on Land)
Region V	Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of SDGs in Naga City, Camarines Sur	Goal 4 (Quality Education); Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities); Goal 13 (Climate Action); and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)
	Great Women Project 2	Goal 5 (Gender Equality) – 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life – 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions – 5.5s1 Percentage of firms owned by women (through business permits and licenses systems)
	Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP)	Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) – 9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capacities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development (R&D) workers per 1 million people and public and private R&D spending. – 9.5.1 R&D expenditure as a proportion of GDP
	Bicol Regional Food Innovation and Commercialization Center	Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) – 9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capacities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing

Region	Program	SDG Addressed
		the number of research and development (R&D) workers per 1 million people and public and private R&D spending. – 9.5.1 R&D expenditure as a proportion of GDP
	Abaca Technology Innovation Center (ATIC)	Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) – 9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capacities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development (R&D) workers per 1 million people and public and private R&D spending. – 9.5.1 R&D expenditure as a proportion of GDP
	Crabmeat Processing and Canning Facility (CPCF)	Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) – 9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capacities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development (R&D) workers per 1 million people and public and private R&D spending. – 9.5.1 R&D expenditure as a proportion of GDP
	Queen Pineapple NICER Project	Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) – 9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capacities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development (R&D) workers per 1 million people and public and private R&D spending. – 9.5.1 R&D expenditure as a proportion of GDP
	Mapping of Inventory of Government Lands for Resettlement, Housing and Urban Development	Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) – 11.1: By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums
Region VII	Family Planning Mobile Application	Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) – 3.7 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs
Region IX	Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP)	Goal 14 (Life Below Water)
	National Greening Program (NGP)	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 2 (Zero Hunger); and Goal 15 (Life on Land)
	Community Empowerment Thru Science and Technology (CEST)	Not Stated
	Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP)	Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)
	Sustainable Development Intervention Program (SDIP)	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 2 (Zero Hunger); and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)
	Mobilizing and Upskilling JUANAs for Economic Resiliency (MUJER)	Goal 5 (Gender Equality); Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); and Goal 10 (Reducing Inequalities)

Region	Program	SDG Addressed
Region X	Provincial Livelihood Program – Corn Seeds and Fertilizer Distribution Program	Goal 1 (No Poverty); and Goal 2 (Zero Hunger)
	Marine Protected Area (MPA) Management, Strengthening and Networking under Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP)	Goal 14 (Life Below Water)
	National Greening Program (NGP)	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); Goal 13 (Climate Action); and Goal 15 (Life on Land)
	Curriculum Management Support System	Goal 4 (Quality Education)
	Support in the Establishment of Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and Solid Waste Management (SWM) Equipment	SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities); and Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)
	Vulnerability Risk Assessment	Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure); and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)
	Key Chain Project	Not Stated
Region XI	National Greening Program	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 13 (Climate Action); and Goal 15 (Life on Land
	Supporting Women's Economic Empowerment in the Philippines Project or GREAT Women Project 2	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 5 (Gender Equality); and Goal 10 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)
	DavNor Kaagapay Project	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 2 (Zero Hunger); Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth); and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions)
Region XII	COVID-19 Adjustment Measures Program (CAMP) 1 and 2	Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)
	Digital Jobs PH Training	Goals 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)
	Plantation Establishment	Goal 15 (Life on Land)
	Establishment of TESDA Training Centers	Goal 1 (No Poverty); Goal 2 (Zero Hunger); Goal 4 (Quality Education); and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)

(Source: DEPDev)

3.2. PROGRESS ON THE 2030 SDGS

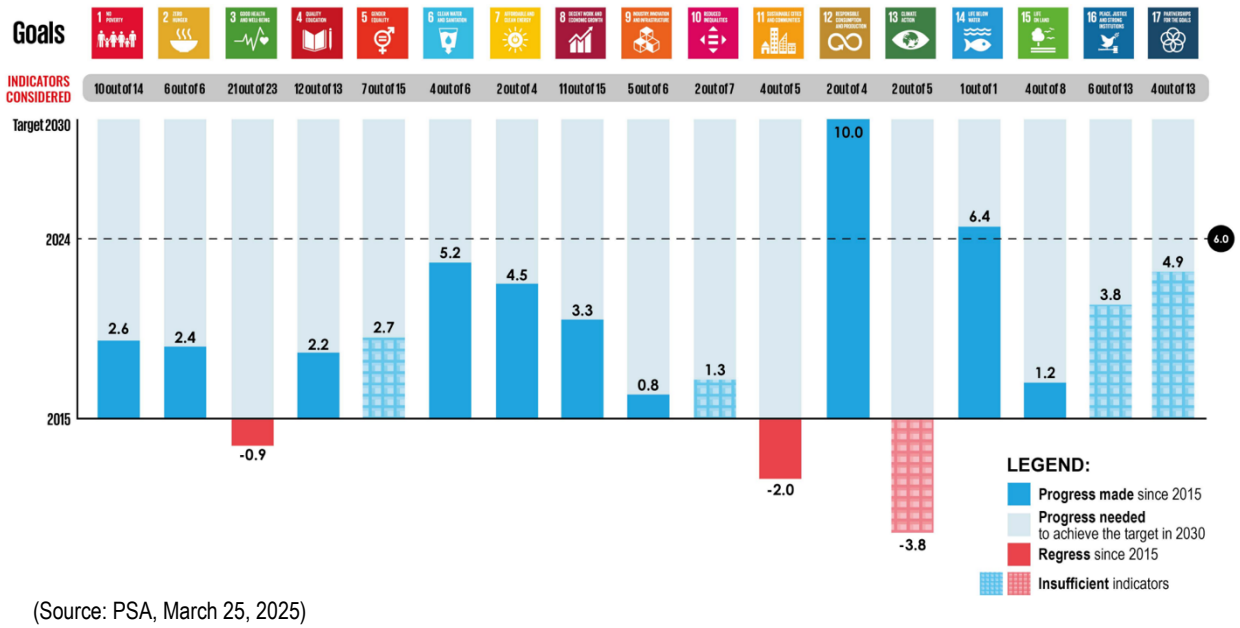
To monitor global and national progress toward the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations Statistical Commission established the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDG). This body developed the SDG Global Indicator Framework, consisting of 232 unique indicators across the 17 goals.

In line with the Philippines' commitment to achieving the SDGs, the PSA Board issued Resolution No. 04, Series of 2016, entitled "Enjoining Government Agencies to Provide Data Support to the SDGs." The resolution mandates all relevant government agencies to provide the necessary data to monitor the country's performance on the SDGs, using an indicator framework jointly determined by DEPDev, PSA, and other concerned agencies. The resolution also formally designates the PSA as the official repository of SDG indicators in the Philippines. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by the United Nations Member States in September 2015, the PSA has been actively monitoring the country's achievement on the SDG.

a. Progress of SDGs since 2000

According to the PSA, achieving the SDGs remains a significant challenge for the Philippines. Despite the government's effort to attain these SDGs, the Philippines still faced some challenges and setbacks like most countries that were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (PSA, 2025). Using the Current Status Index (CSI) as an analytical tool, the PSA reports the following trends on the Goal-level pace of progress:

- Among all 17 Goals, two have already surpassed the index of 6.0 units from the baseline (2015) to current year (2024). These are Goal 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production) and Goal 14 (Life Below Water). However, it may be noted that Goal 14 has only one indicator to measure its progress.
- More than half of the Goals showed progress since 2015. However, this progress is still short to achieve the index expected for 2024 (6.0 units) to ensure that the targets for 2030 will be achieved. The PSA recommended accelerated growth in these goals to achieve the country's commitment by 2030.
- Regression has been noted in Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Efforts in these areas should be intensified to get back on track to reach the target for 2030.



(Source: PSA, March 25, 2025)

Figure 8. Snapshot of the Pace of Progress at the Goal Level Based on the Current Status Index

The country regressed in Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) due to lower scores under SDG Target 11.5 (reduce the adverse effects of natural disasters) and SDG Target 11.6 (air quality and waste management). For Target 11.5, the Philippines measures resilience by focusing on the number of deaths and people affected by disasters as well as the economic losses caused by these disasters relative to the country's GDP. Specifically, the indicators track the number of deaths, missing, and affected persons, as well as the direct economic losses from natural disasters. The latest Pace of Progress report utilized data submitted by NDRRMC for 2023 and compared this with data from baseline year in 2025 (PSA, 2025). In 2023, only 11 tropical cyclones entered the Philippines Area of Responsibility (PAR) compared to an average of 20 tropical cyclones that enters the country's PAR annually. Despite the below average number of tropical cyclones and strong typhoons not making direct landfall that year, the Philippines experienced several natural hazards and disasters, which affected more than 13.7 million people in 2023. Some of the most notable natural disasters include the series of strong earthquakes in Mindanao in December, which caused extensive damage to infrastructures, displacement of people, and loss of lives; the destructive Typhoon Doksuri (locally named Super Typhoon Egay) in July, which brought significant rainfall, widespread flooding, and landslides affecting thousands across multiple provinces; and an eruption of Mayon Volcano in June, which also caused displacement of households in affected areas in Bicol Region (Reliefweb, 2024). For SDG Target 11.6 (air quality and waste management), while the indicator increased, further initiatives need to be done to accelerate progress and be able to reach the 2030 target.

Table 5. SDG Watch Matrix for Target 11.5 and 11.6

	Goal / Target / Indicator	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target (2024)
Target 11.5	**By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations**				
11.5.1	**Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population**				
11.5.1.1	Number of deaths attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	**0.30** (2016)	**0.73** (2022)	**0.50** (2023)	**0.0** (2030)
11.5.1.2	Number of missing persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	**0.04** (2016)	**0.18** (2022)	**0.10** (2023)	**0.0** (2030)
11.5.1.3	Number of directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	**7,320.99** (2016)	**11,303.66** (2022)	**16,501.90** (2023)	**Decreasing** (2030)
Target 11.6	**By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management**				
11.6.2.p1	Percentage of highly urbanized and other major urban centers within ambient air quality guidelines value increased	47.0 (2015)	32.0 (2022)	65.0 (2023)	100.0 (2030)

(Source: PSA, SDG Watch, 2024 and 2025)

b. Achievement of 2030 Nationally Determined Numerical Targets

Based on the report from the PSA on the achievement of the SDGs released on March 25, 2025, out of the 158 indicators, only 97 indicators were able to satisfy the data requirements for the computation of the Anticipated Progress Index (API) of having at least three data points and 2030 numerical target. The API provides a measure of how much additional effort is needed to meet the numerical target by the end of the target year (2030), assuming the pace of progress is sustained.

Based on the results of the Anticipated Progress Index, only 23.7% or 23 out of the 97 indicators are on track or will meet the 2030 numerical target given their current rates or by exerting additional effort to achieve the target. About half or 50 of the indicators needs accelerated efforts to meet the target. Alarmingly, the remaining 24.7% of the targets showed regression and needs to reserve the trend to get back on track and reach the 2030 targets (PSA, 2025).

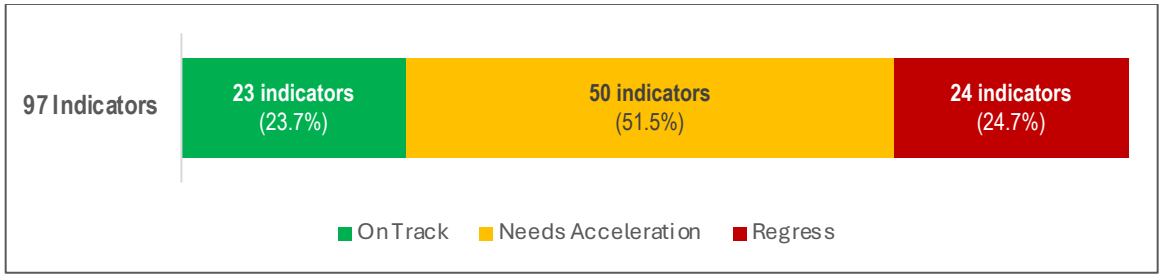


Figure 9. Frequency and Percentage of Indicators with Pace of Progress based on API, 2024

With 97 indicators satisfying the data requirements for the estimation of pace of progress, the Philippines was able to measure 62 targets. Similar with the trend at the indicator level, only 13 or 21% of the 62 targets are on track. For these indicators, the country needs to maintain progress over the years to achieve target. Nearly 52% or 32 indicators will require acceleration, while the remaining 27% or 17 targets will require a reversal of current trends to achieve the desired outcomes by 2030.

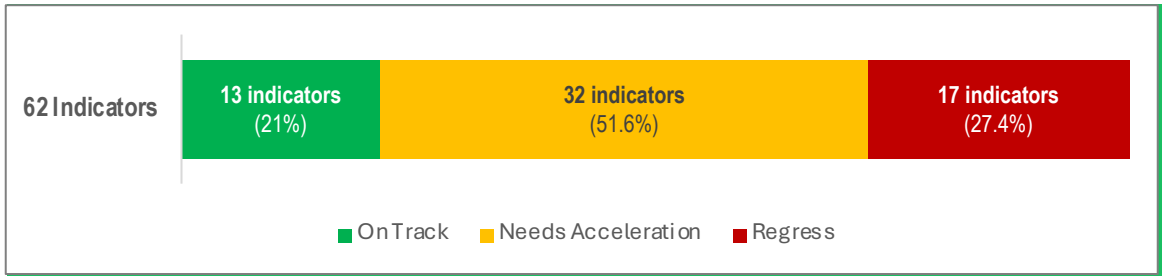


Figure 10. Frequency and Percentage of Indicators with Pace of Progress based on API, 2024

c. **Futures Thinking and Scenario Planning.** The DBCC SC-SDG, through its two TWGs, has adopted strategic foresight and futures thinking tools to support the development of adaptive and forward-looking plans and policies. These approaches aim to future-proof development frameworks, enhance institutional preparedness, and build resilience against emerging risks and shocks.

d. **SDG Mapping of Programs, Activities, and Projects (PAPs).** The SDG Secretariat has initiated comprehensive mapping of SDG-related PAPs and public investments across regions. This initiative provides a clearer picture of how and where SDG efforts are being implemented throughout the country. By revealing complementarities and overlaps, the tool allows policymakers to identify implementation gaps, pinpoint lagging regions, and design targeted interventions to ensure no area is left behind.

e. **Progress Assessment and Planning at the National and Subnational Levels.** At the planning level, DEPDev—through the SC-SDG Secretariat—developed a Progress Tracking and Planning Tool to assist regional and local governments in

advancing SDG targets. The tool was piloted in Regions III (Central Luzon), VIII (Eastern Visayas), and Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN), representing Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, respectively. This tool shifts the focus from merely setting targets to identifying priority gaps and vulnerable sectors, age groups, or geographic areas requiring focused interventions.

f. **Subnational Best Practices on the SDGs.** Several regions have implemented notable PAPs that support SDG attainment on the ground. These best practices vary from service delivery innovations for underserved communities to environmental sustainability initiatives. Examples include:
   - 1Bataan Housing Village (Region III)
   - Inventory Mapping of Government Lands (Region V)
   - Pre-Disaster and Vulnerability Risk Assessment and Support (Region X)
   - Wastewater Treatment System Upgrading Program (WATSUP) (Region XI)

   These initiatives showcase the practical application of SDG principles and demonstrate replicable models for local governments nationwide.

g. **SDG-Related Studies.** The SC-SDG also funds research and technical studies to address knowledge gaps relevant to SDG implementation. Two notable outputs include:
   - The Manual for Urban Carrying Capacity Assessments (UCCA), a planning reference to guide cities in sustainable urban growth and resource management; and
   - The Water Evaluation and Planning (WEAP) Study, which analyzes water security issues in the Cagayan River Basin, projecting current and future water demands for informed resource planning.

h. **Voluntary National Review (VNR) Reports.** The Philippines participates in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) every three years to assess national SDG implementation. In 2025, the country submitted its fourth VNR to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, with a thematic focus on:
   - SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being
   - SDG 5: Gender Equality
   - SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
   - SDG 14: Life Below Water
   - SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

3.3. GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR IMPLEMENTING HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, HOUSING, AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Two key laws form the backbone of urban governance in the Philippines: LGC and the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992. DEPDev serves as the country's highest socioeconomic planning and policy coordinating agency, responsible for formulating integrated, long-term development plans, programs, and policies. In support of the implementation of human settlements, housing, and urban development programs and projects, several institutional mechanisms have been established, including the National Human Settlements Board (NHSB) and the Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR) Cabinet Cluster.

Local Government Code (LGC)

The LGC of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) devolved the responsibility for the effective delivery of low-cost housing, mass dwellings, and other basic services to LGUs, particularly provinces and cities. It also granted LGUs both political and corporate authority, empowering them to function as subdivisions of the national government and as autonomous institutions representing their constituents.

Since its enactment, LGUs have been undertaking their own local planning and implementation through their Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs), Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs), and investment programs, subject to approval by their local councils. While these plans must align with national and regional frameworks, they enable LGUs to shape their political, economic, social, and spatial development.

Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992

The Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992, enacted through Republic Act No. 7279, laid the groundwork for the Philippine government's comprehensive and continuing urban development and housing program. Designed to address the needs of underprivileged and homeless citizens, the UDHA encourages collaboration between national and local government agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations. Rooted in the principle of subsidiarity, the law devolved primary responsibility for implementation to local government units (LGUs), with national support provided by what was formerly the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), the key shelter agencies (KSAs), NGOs, private sector entities, and the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP).

The enactment of the LGC further reinforced the role of LGUs as frontliners in delivering urban development and housing services. To strengthen governance at the local level, institutional reforms have been introduced over time. In 2004, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) established the Local Governance Performance Management System (LGPMS), a tool designed to monitor and evaluate LGU effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery. This system has since covered all provinces, cities, and municipalities.

In 2010, DILG launched the Seal of Good Housekeeping (SGH) to promote greater transparency and accountability. By 2012, a significant majority—84%—of LGUs had been awarded the SGH, demonstrating their administrative readiness and commitment to sound governance. Recognizing the need for a more holistic performance framework, DILG expanded the SGH in 2014 into the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG). The SGLG introduced broader performance criteria that go beyond financial housekeeping, including disaster preparedness, social protection, health responsiveness, education, competitiveness, environmental management, tourism development, and youth engagement, among others.

Moreover, the Seal of Good Local Governance Incentive Fund (SGLGIF), formerly known as the Performance Challenge Fund (PCF), provides performance-based grants to LGUs that meet the SGLG criteria to scale successful initiatives. These reforms not only incentivize innovation and accountability in local governance but also reinforce the implementation of urban development and housing programs at the community level—bringing the goals of the UDHA closer to realization.

Government Coordination Bodies for Socioeconomic and Urban Development

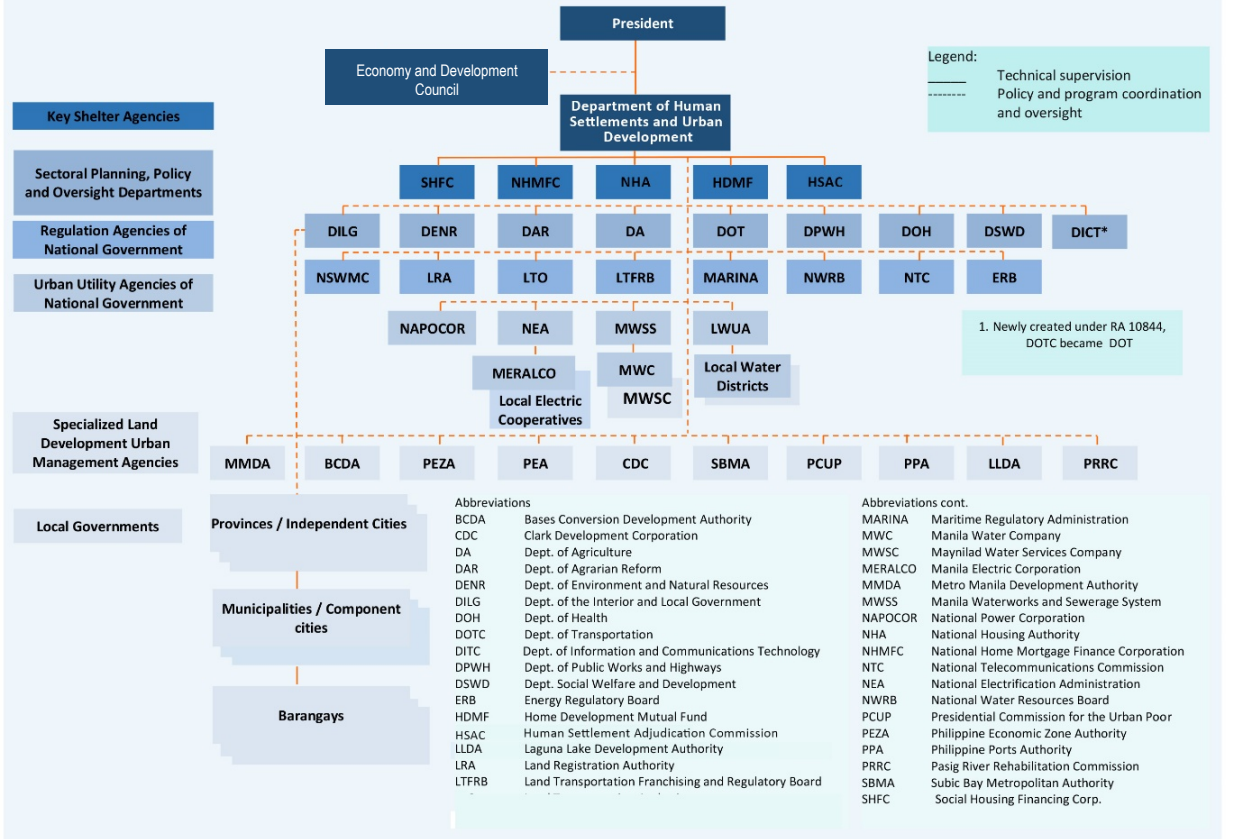
Urban governance in the Philippines is characterized by the involvement of multiple institutions with overlapping mandates, resulting in complex vertical and horizontal coordination mechanisms across planning, implementation, and operations of infrastructure and service delivery systems.

DepDev and the Economy & Development Council

The DEPDev serves as the Philippines' premier socioeconomic development planning and policy coordinating agency. It is principally responsible for formulating continuing, coordinated, and fully integrated social and economic policies, plans, and programs. The authority and decision-making functions of the Department are vested in the Economy and Development Council.

The Economy and Development Council is composed of the President of the Philippines as Chairperson, the Department Secretary as Vice Chairperson, and key Cabinet-level department secretaries as members. This composition ensures high-level interagency coordination and alignment of development priorities with national policy direction.

As stipulated under Administrative Order No. 8, the ExCom is empowered to provide policy direction and resolve cross-sectoral issues involving multiple agencies, especially in cases where convening the full Board is not necessary. It is also mandated to approve development plans and programs that are aligned with the President's policy agenda. Furthermore, the ExCom is authorized to confirm projects approved by the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC), particularly those classified as extremely urgent.



(Source: Habitat III: The Philippine National Report)

Figure 11. Urban Governance Framework of the Philippines

Assisting the Economy and Development Council in carrying out its broad mandate are seven Cabinet-level inter-agency committees, each focused on key dimensions of national development. In each of these committees, the DEPDev Secretary serves as co-chair, ensuring alignment between national planning, policy formulation, and sectoral coordination.

- The **Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC)** is responsible for recommending the annual expenditure levels and ceilings for government spending, including allocations for debt servicing.
- The **Committee on Infrastructure (InfraCom)** provides technical and policy recommendations on priority infrastructure projects, covering transport systems, energy, telecommunications, and disaster mitigation.
- The **Investment Coordination Committee (ICC)** evaluates the macroeconomic implications of major capital projects—including their fiscal, monetary, and balance of payments impacts—and advises the President on the sequencing of implementation, as well as domestic and external borrowings.
- The **Social Development Committee (SDC)** addresses issues related to human capital development, including education, health, housing, human settlements, and social services delivery.
- The **Committee on Tariff and Related Matters (CTRM)** advises on trade-related issues, particularly tariffs and their domestic implications considering regional and global developments.
- The **Regional Development Committee (RDCom)** focuses on formulating and overseeing the implementation of policies aimed at reducing regional disparities and promoting balanced development.
- The **National Land Use Committee (NLUC)** provides guidance on land use policy and physical planning and serves as a dispute resolution body for inter-agency land use conflicts.

Through these inter-agency bodies, the Economy and Development Council ensures that cross-cutting policy issues are addressed systematically, and that sectoral and regional planning efforts are harmonized with national priorities.

National Human Settlements Board (NHSB)

Established under Section 21 of Republic Act No. 11201, or the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Act, the National Human Settlements Board (NHSB) serves as the central policy-making body responsible for setting overall policy directions and guiding program development across all agencies attached to DHSUD. Under Section 22 of the same law, attached corporations are mandated to continue operating under their respective charters, but are now subject to the strategic guidance of the Board. As further articulated in Section 40 of the law's Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), the NHSB is empowered to establish its own rules of procedure and to ensure that the process of policy and program development includes the participation of relevant stakeholders.

The NHSB is envisioned as the "nerve center" of the country's housing and urban development sector–responsible for synchronizing policies and ensuring coherence in implementation across regulatory, financing, and production domains. Its primary function is to facilitate convergence among national government agencies, LGUs, and private sector actors involved in housing and human settlements.

To operationalize its mandate, the NHSB approved three foundational resolutions. First, the Internal Rules of the National Human Settlements Board (NHSB Resolution No. 2020-01) established procedural guidelines for its governance. Second, the Creation of the National Human Settlements Board Technical Working Committee (NHSB Resolution No. 2020-02) formalized the technical support mechanism of the Board. Third, the Guidelines and Procedures for the Nomination of Stakeholders' Representatives to the Technical Working Committee (NHSB Resolution No. 2020-03) institutionalized stakeholder participation—ensuring that all proposals undergo rigorous evaluation and reflect the perspectives of both government and private actors in the housing sector.

In addition to DHSUD, the NHSB is composed of representatives from ten other departments and key shelter agencies. These include the Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF/Pag-IBIG Fund), National Housing Authority (NHA), National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), and the Human Settlements Adjudication Commission (HSAC).

3.4. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, MITIGATION, AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation was first established under Executive Order No. 43, series of 2011. In recognition of the growing urgency to address climate-related risks and disasters, this body was restructured through Executive Order No. 24, series of 2017, into the Cabinet Cluster on Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Disaster Risk Reduction (CCAM-DRR). This institutional evolution signaled a more integrated and strategic approach to responding to the impacts of climate change and enhancing disaster risk governance across the country.

Under Section 10 of Executive Order No. 24, each Cabinet Cluster was mandated to formulate a performance and projects roadmap. The CCAM-DRR Cabinet Cluster Roadmap for 2018–2022 was developed through the leadership of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Presidential Management Staff (PMS). It was based on baseline data related to climatic trends and hazard risks provided by the DOST, particularly through PAGASA and PHIVOLCS. The roadmap also drew from global frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the APEC Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, as well as national strategies including the PDP and the National Strategic Framework on Climate Change.

The roadmap's overarching vision is to foster "climate- and disaster-resilient communities supporting equitable and sustainable development." To this end, it articulates four strategic outcomes: (1) increased adaptive capacities of vulnerable communities; (2) ensured adequate supply of clean air, water, and other natural resources; (3) increased resilience of critical infrastructure; and (4) enhanced knowledge, access to information, and institutional capacities. The roadmap focuses on 22 climate- and hazard-vulnerable provinces, 822 coastal municipalities, and the country's major urban centers—namely Metro Manila, Cebu, Iloilo, and Davao—underscoring the need for targeted and localized interventions in areas most at risk.

3.5. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Regional Development Council (RDC) is the highest policymaking and planning body at the sub-national level and serves as the regional counterpart of the DEPDev/ Economy and Development Council. It functions as the primary coordinating institution for setting the direction of economic and social development in the region. Beyond its planning role, the RDC also provides a platform for aligning local government initiatives with regional and national development strategies. The creation of the RDC addressed the need for a singular planning body focused on the overall socio-economic development of each region. It was established as part of the Integrated Reorganization Plan of 1972, which divided the country into administrative regions and initiated the decentralization of national planning processes. Regional development planning facilitated by the RDC is crucial to addressing the persistent spatial disparities in the country. It reflects the recognition that economic growth has historically been concentrated in a few highly urbanized regions, leaving many areas underserved in terms of infrastructure, services, and opportunity. In recent years, increasing local autonomy has underscored the importance of empowering local chief executives and LGUs to take a leading role in development efforts within their jurisdictions. This shift complements and reinforces the role of the RDC in coordinating these initiatives and accelerating inclusive, regionally anchored socio-economic progress.

In January 2025, Executive Order No. 82 was issued, which reconstituted the RDCs aimed at accelerating socio-economic development. Table 6 presents the updated members of the RDCs based from Executive Order No. 82.

Table 6. Members of the Regional Development Council (RDC)

Council	Composition
Regional Development Council	a. All Provincial Governors; b. All City Mayors; c. Mayors of Municipalities designated as provincial capitals; d. All provincial chapter presidents of the League of Municipalities; e. One (1) regional head from the following agencies: (i) DEPDev; (ii) Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; (iii) Commission on Higher Education; (iv) Department of Agrarian Reform; (v) Department of Agriculture; (vi) Department of Budget and Management (DBM); (vii) Department of Education; (viii) Department of Energy; (ix) Department of Environment and Natural Resources; (x) Department of Foreign Affairs; (xi) Bureau of Local Government Finance; (xii) Department of Health; (xiii) DHSUD; (xiv) Department of Information and Communications Technology; (xv) Department of the Interior and Local Government; (xvi) Department of Migrant Workers; (xvii) Department of Labor and Employment; (xviii) Department of Public Works and Highways; (xix) Department of Science and Technology; (xx) Department of Social Welfare and Development; (xxi) Department of Tourism; (xxii) Department of Transportation; (xxiii) Department of Trade and Industry; (xxiv) Cooperative Development Authority; (xxv) National Commission on Indigenous Peoples; (xxvi) Office of Civil Defense; (xxvii) Technical Education and Skills Development Authority; (xxviii) Philippine Information Agency; and (xxix) such other agencies or instrumentalities that the RDCs deem critical to their respective regions;[1] and f. Private sector representatives selected by RDCs from various sectors of society, including NGOs, and shall comprise one-fourth (1/4) of the regular membership of each RDC.[2]

Table 7. Composition and Function of the Local Development Councils

Local Development Councils	Composition	Function
a. Barangay Development Council	The Barangay Development Council shall be headed by the Barangay Captain and shall be composed of the following members: a. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Operations Officer assigned to the barangay, or if there is none, the DILG Operations Officer assigned to the municipality/city; b. Representatives of government agencies working or assigned in the barangay; and c. Representatives of the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the	The Barangay Development Council shall have the following functions: a. Mobilize citizens' participation in local government efforts; b. Prepare barangay development plan based on local requirements;

[1] Executive Order No. 82, series of 2025, states that each agency shall be represented by only one regional head. In cases where there are several bureaus or units under one agency, the representatives shall be designated by its mother agency.

[2] At least one (1) private sector representative shall be selected each from the labor, agriculture, and infrastructure sector.

Local Development Councils	Composition	Function
	barangay, who shall not be more than one-forth (1/4) of the members of the fully constituted Council and who shall be confirmed by the ex-officio members of the Council in accordance with the rules and regulations that may be prescribed under Section 10 of EO 319.	c. Monitor and evaluate program and project implementation; and d. Perform such other functions as may be provided for by law or competent authority.
b. City Development Council and Municipal Development Council	The City/Municipal Development Council shall be headed by the Mayor and shall be composed of the following members: a. The Barangay Captain; b. The Chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the Sangguniang Panlungsod/Bayan; c. Heads of offices in the city or municipality of departments and agencies represented in the Cabinet: Provided that each Department or Agency shall be represented by only one head of office; and d. Representatives of the private sector and NGOs who shall not be more than one-forth (1/4) of the members of the fully constituted Council and who shall be confirmed by the ex-officio members of the City/Municipal Development Council in accordance with the rules and regulations that may be prescribed under Section 10 of EO 319.	The City Development Council, Municipal Development Council, and Provincial Development Council, shall have the following functions: a. Formulate long-term, medium-term, and annual socio-economic development policies and plans as well as the corresponding budget; b. Formulate medium-term and annual public investment programs; c. Appraise and prioritize the socio-economic development programs and projects; d. Coordinate local investment incentives to promote the inflow and direction of private investment capital; e. Coordinate, monitor and evaluate programs and projects; and f. Perform such other functions as may be provided for by law or competent authority.
c. Provincial Development Council	The Provincial Development Council shall be headed by the Governor and shall be composed of the following members: 1. Mayors of Component Cities and Municipalities; 2. The Chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan; 3. The President of the Provincial Association of Barangay Council (ABC); 4. Heads of offices in the province of departments and agencies represented in the Cabinet: Provided, That each Department or Agency shall be represented by only one head of office; 5. Representatives of the private sector and NGOs who shall not be more than one-fourth (1/4) of the members of the fully constituted Council and who shall be confirmed by the ex-officio members of the PDC in accordance with the rules and regulations that may be prescribed under Section 10 of EO 319.	

Pursuant to Section 2 of Executive Order No. 319, s. 1987, each Local Development Council (LDC) is mandated to create an Executive Committee (ExCom) through a council resolution. The ExCom serves as the principal arm of the LDC in ensuring the continuous, responsive, and effective operation of the council between its full sessions.

The Executive Committee is tasked with several key responsibilities. First, it ensures that the decisions, policies, and programs approved by the full council are faithfully and effectively implemented. It is also authorized to act on urgent matters that require immediate attention or resolution and cannot be deferred until the next council meeting.

In line with the broad principles established by the LDC, the ExCom is empowered to formulate interim policies that align with the council's development objectives. Moreover, it may undertake other functions as specifically delegated to it by the council through formal resolutions.

Table 8. Composition of the Local Executive Committee

Executive Committee	Composition
Provincial Development Council	The Executive Committee of the Provincial Development Council shall be chaired by the Provincial Governor and shall be composed of the following members: a. A representative of the Mayors of component cities within the Province to be chosen by and from among themselves; b. (The Chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan; c. The President of the provincial Association of Barangay Council (ABC); d. The President of the provincial chapter of the Municipal Mayors League; e. One (1) representative of the national agencies, to be chosen from and by the Council; f. One (1) representative from the private/NGO sector to be chosen by the private and NGO sector members of the Council themselves; and g. The DILG Provincial Operations Officer as ex-officio member.
City/Municipal Development Council	The Executive Committee of the City/Municipal Development Council shall be chaired by the City/Municipal Mayor and shall be composed of the following members: 1. The Chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the Sangguniang Panlungsod/Bayan; 2. The President of the City/Municipal Association of Barangay Council; 3. One (1) representative of the National Agencies to be chosen from and by the Council; 4. One (1) representative from the private/NGO sector to be chosen by the private/NGO sector members of the Council themselves; and 5. The DILG City/Municipal Operations Officer as ex-officio member.

CHAPTER 4

Sustainable Urban Development for Social Inclusion and Ending Poverty

At the core of this thematic area is the commitment to build inclusive and equitable urban environments where opportunities and benefits are shared by all. In line with the global NUA, this includes advancing the social inclusion of vulnerable groups—such as women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and migrants—by addressing structural inequalities and barriers to access.

The Philippine adaptation of this global vision is articulated through Agenda 1, which focuses on capturing the youth dividend, fostering spatially balanced and interconnected development, and safeguarding the vulnerable and disadvantaged; and Agenda 6, which aims to scale up low-income and pro-poor housing, ensure reliable and resilient access to basic services, and promote inclusive, low-carbon urban transport systems.

4.1. SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ENDING POVERTY

Social inclusion and the eradication of poverty are foundational commitments of the NUA, which envisions cities as inclusive, safe, and equitable spaces for all. In the Philippine context, these aspirations are localized through Agenda 1 of the Philippine New Urban Agenda: Capturing the Youth Dividend, A More Spatially Balanced and Interconnected Development, and Safeguards for the Vulnerable and Disadvantaged.

Achieving social inclusion and eradicating poverty in the Philippines stand as an arduous challenge, marked by persistent socio-economic disparities and deep-rooted structural inequalities. As the country experiences rapid urbanization, the pursuit of inclusive development remains pivotal. Addressing the multifaceted barriers to equitable access to resources, services, opportunities, and social protection—especially for marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and migrants—is key to fostering a just urban future.

Government-led social safety nets and targeted programs have played a crucial role in this effort. Interventions such as the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), Youth Employability Program, *Tulong Pangkabuhayan para sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers* (TUPAD), Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT), and the Universal Health Care Program aim to mitigate the adverse effects of poverty and vulnerability. These initiatives not only offer immediate relief but also strengthen resilience to socio-economic and environmental shocks through inclusive policies and sustainable financing mechanisms.

a. Invest in People and Capture the Youth Dividend

Harnessing the youth dividend is a strategic imperative for the Philippines, where a significant portion of the population is under 30 years old. This demographic window presents a unique opportunity to catalyze inclusive and sustained economic growth. However, this potential can only be realized through deliberate and sustained investments in human capital—particularly in equipping the youth with the necessary education, skills, and opportunities to thrive in a rapidly evolving urban environment.

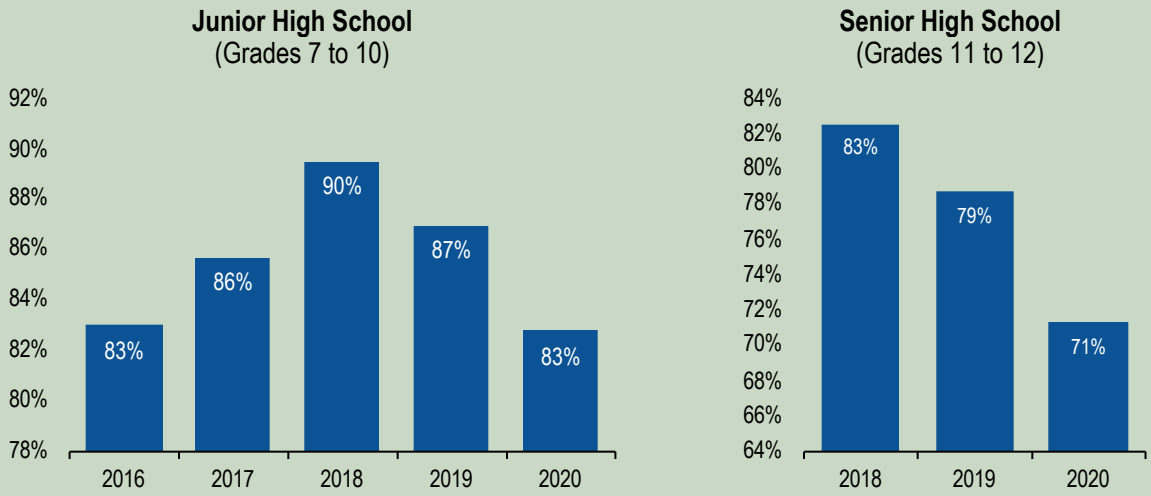


Figure 12. Cohort Survival Rates in Junior High School and Senior High School

- *Proportion of learners completing levels of education from Grade 7 to Grade 12* – The proportion of learners completing levels of education from Grade 7 to Grade 12 is a key metric used to measure the effectiveness of educational systems in ensuring that students' progress through secondary education. While this indicator offers a clear and quantitative understanding of educational retention, a closer examination reveals several underlying complexities and potential areas for improvement.

  This indicator serves as an early gauge of educational system performance in retaining students through lower secondary education. According to DepEd data, the cohort survival rate rose from a baseline of 83% in 2016 to 89.5% in 2018, before experiencing a slight decline to 87.0% in 2019, and then to 82.8% in 2020. These figures reflect a generally strong ability of the system to retain learners through Junior High School. However, the dip in 2020—coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic—suggests vulnerabilities in sustaining learner participation during times of crisis. The decline may be attributed to disruptions in the delivery of education (e.g., shift to remote modalities), compounded by socioeconomic challenges faced by families during the lockdown period.

- *The Grade 7–10 completion rate is a critical milestone in the Philippine basic education system* – Completion of Junior High School marks the end of compulsory education and a gateway to either Senior High School, technical-vocational training, or direct entry into the labor force. Thus, retention through Grade 10 serves as both a measure of system effectiveness and an equity issue—ensuring that all learners, regardless of background, could finish foundational schooling.

- *Proportion of Learners Completing Levels of Education from Grade 10 to Grade 12 (Senior High School)* – As a relatively recent addition to the Philippine basic education system following the K to 12 reform, Senior High School represents a critical extension of formal learning. It offers specialized academic and technical-vocational tracks intended to prepare students for higher education, employment, or entrepreneurship. Tracking completion at this level provides important insight into the system's absorptive capacity, the relevance of Senior High School programs, and the socioeconomic pressures that affect learners' ability to stay in school beyond Grade 10. In theory, successful completion of SHS signals readiness for tertiary education or for workforce entry with a defined skillset.

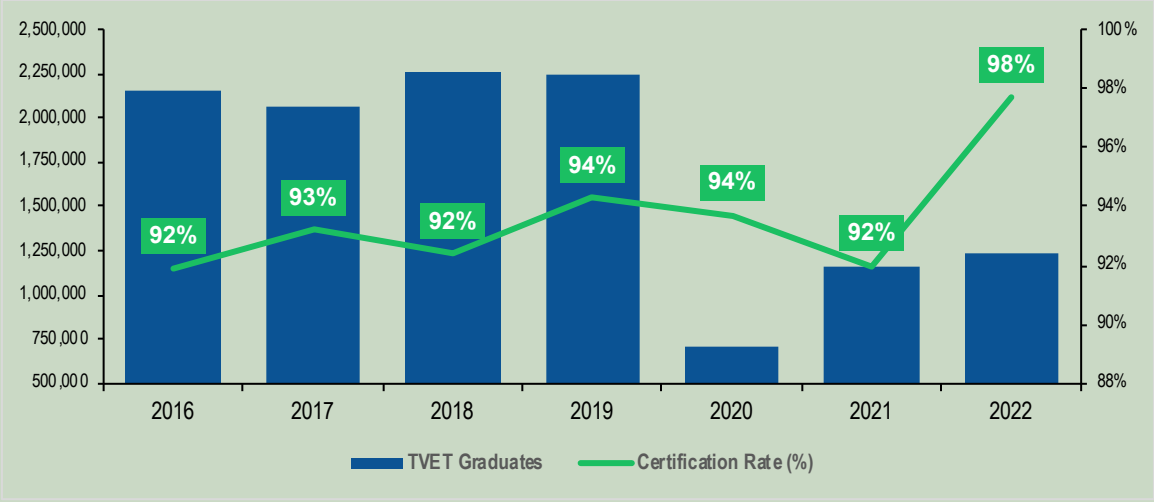


Figure 13. TVET Certification Rates

- *Certification rate of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates (15-24 years old) increased* – The certification rate of TVET graduates measures the proportion of students who successfully complete their training programs and receive a certification upon assessment. This certification is crucial as it signifies that graduates have acquired the specific skills and knowledge necessary for employment or entrepreneurship in their respective fields. In the Philippines, TVET plays a pivotal role in addressing labor market gaps by preparing individuals with practical skills for direct employment. The TVET certification rate has steadily improved from 91.9% in 2016 to 97.7% in 2022. This increase suggests that improvements have been made to the TVET system, such as more relevant curricula aligned with industry needs, enhanced facilities, and more comprehensive support systems for students.

  The total number of individuals trained annually in TVET programs ranged from over 2.2 million in 2016–2019, dropped sharply in 2020 to 715,158—due to pandemic-related restrictions—and partially recovered to 1.2 million by 2022. The post-2020 rebound suggests some resilience in the sector, although it remains below pre-pandemic levels. This trend highlights the vulnerability of skills training systems to external shocks and the importance of adaptive program delivery methods, such as blended or remote learning formats.

- *Youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training* – Based on census data, the proportion of individuals aged 5 to 24 years who were attending school increased from 69.0% in 2015 to 75.0% in 2020, indicating a notable improvement in access and participation in both formal and non-formal education. This rise may be attributed to strengthened policy efforts promoting inclusive education, increased availability of alternative learning systems (ALS), and expanded educational infrastructure. However, the increase also masks persistent barriers for marginalized groups, particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas. Given that the data are census-based and only available every five years, the trajectory between collection periods remains uncertain and should be supplemented by interim monitoring mechanisms.

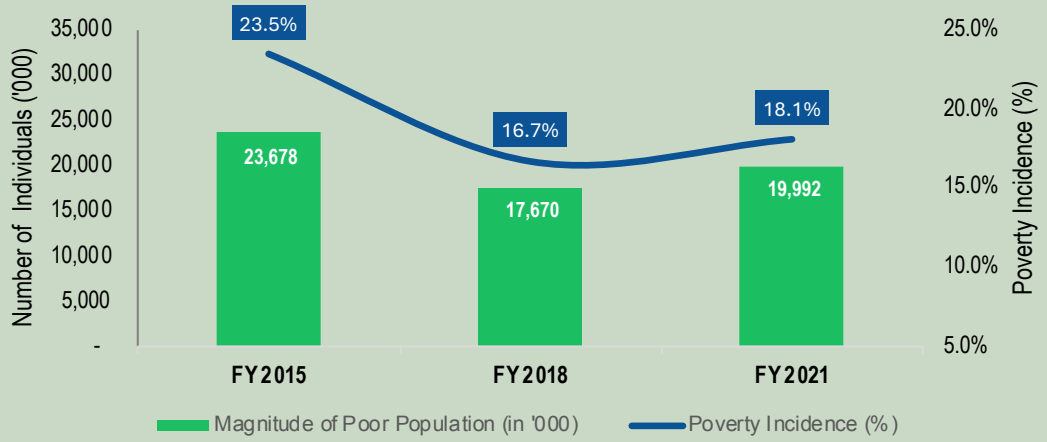
  Sustaining this improvement will require targeted policies addressing barriers to youth education and employment.

c. Pursue a More Spatially and Regionally Balanced Development

Pursuing a more spatially and regionally balanced development involves the formulation and implementation of regionally linked urban and local development strategies that promote balanced growth across various regions. This approach ensures that development opportunities are equitably distributed, with strategies tailored to both national and regional contexts. A crucial aspect of this approach is fostering efficient rural-urban linkages, which facilitate the smooth flow of goods, services, and labor. By improving connectivity and encouraging mutually beneficial partnerships between rural and urban areas, this strategy aims to enhance economic interdependence, support sustainable growth, and create more resilient, integrated regions.

- *Eradicate All Forms of Poverty* – Based on the Preliminary Results of the Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES) in 2021, poverty decreased by 6.8%, benefiting 6 million Filipinos between 2015 and 2018. This can be attributed to Increased social protection measures (e.g., 4Ps, UCT), temporary effects of the TRAIN Law), and higher number of jobs generated within the period. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a slight increase to 18.1% or around 19.99 million Filipinos living below the national poverty line, which is still a higher poverty rate compared to 2018.

  The region with the highest poverty incidence is ARMM/BARMM at 37.2%, while NCR has the lowest at 3.5% as of 2021. This calls for an immediate intervention to poverty alleviation through the empowerment of poor families, particularly the members of the basic sectors.



(Source: PSA, Family Income & Expenditure Survey)

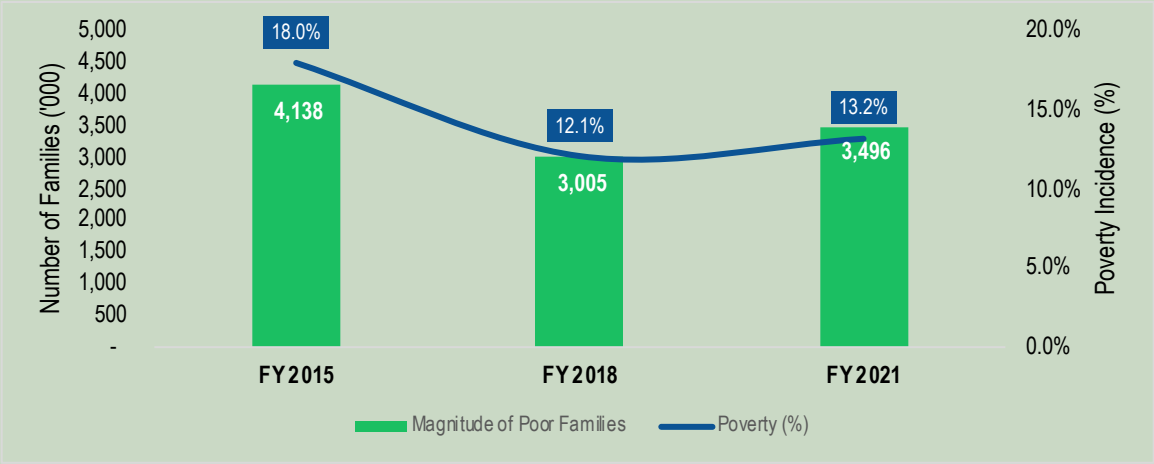
Figure 14. Poverty Incidence among Population, 2015-2021

Table 9. Poverty Incidence among Population

Region	Percent of Population (%)		
	2015	2018	2021
Philippines	**23.5**	**16.7**	**18.1**
Luzon			
National Capital Region	4.1	2.2	3.5
Cordillera Administrative Region	22.7	12.0	9.9
I – Ilocos	18.8	9.9	14.4
II – Cagayan Valley	17.8	16.3	15.4
III – Central Luzon	10.5	7.0	11.4
IV-A – CALABARZON	12.5	7.1	10.2
IV-B – MIMAROPA	25.2	15.1	20.8
V – Bicol	39.8	27.0	29.3
Visayas			
VI – Western Visayas	24.6	16.3	19.0
VII – Central Visayas	29.4	17.7	27.6
VIII – Eastern Visayas	41.3	30.7	28.9
Mindanao			
IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	37.7	32.7	30.1
X – Northern Mindanao	38.7	23.1	26.1
XI – Davao	23.5	19.1	16.8
XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	38.1	28.2	28.1
XIII – CARAGA	39.7	30.5	33.2
ARMM / BARMM	59.4	61.8	37.2

(Source: Philippine Statistics Authority)

Poverty incidence among families decreased by 5.9 percentage points from 2015 to 2018, reducing the number of poor families from 4.138 million to 3.005 million. However, in 2021, it increased by 1.1 percentage points to 13.2%. Further, 491,000 more families were unable to adequately provide their food and non-food needs between 2018 and 2021. The highest poverty incidence among families remains ARMM/BARMM at 29.8%, while NCR has the lowest at 2.2% as of 2021.



(Source: PSA, Family Income & Expenditure Survey)

Figure 15. Poverty Incidence Among Families

Table 10. Poverty Incidence among Families

Region	Percent of Families (%)		
	2015	2018	2021
Philippines	18.0	12.1	13.2
Luzon			
National Capital Region	2.8	1.4	2.2
Cordillera Administrative Region	17.1	8.6	6.9
I – Ilocos	14.0	7.0	11.0
II – Cagayan Valley	13.1	12.5	11.7
III – Central Luzon	8.3	5.2	8.3
IV-A – CALABARZON	9.2	5.1	7.2
IV-B – MIMAROPA	18.0	10.5	15.0
V – Bicol	31.0	20.0	21.9
Visayas			
VI – Western Visayas	18.5	11.9	13.8
VII – Central Visayas	24.9	13.4	22.1
VIII – Eastern Visayas	33.0	23.9	22.2
Mindanao			
IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	29.7	25.4	23.4
X – Northern Mindanao	32.3	17.3	19.2
XI – Davao	18.0	13.9	11.9
XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	31.2	22.4	21.4
XIII – CARAGA	31.1	24.1	25.9
ARMM / BARMM	53.8	54.2	29.8

(Source: Philippine Statistics Authority)

Fisherfolks (30.6%), farmers (30%), children (26.4%), and individuals residing in rural areas (25.7%) remained the poorest sectors in terms of poverty incidence in 2021, according to the merged results of the 2021 FEIS and the January 2022 round of the Labor Force Data. Meanwhile, the least poor sectors are from the migrant and formal sector workers (10.2%), senior citizens (10.3%), and urban residents (11.6%). Observing the trend from 2018, the poverty incidences of all sectors except farmers increased in 2021.

Table 11. Poverty Incidence among Basic Sectors

Region	Percent of Population (%)		
	2015	2018	2021
Fisherfolks	36.9	26.2	30.6
Farmers	40.8	31.6	30.0
Children	33.5	23.9	26.4
Rural Residents	34.0	24.5	25.7
Self-employed and Unpaid Family Workers	26.2	18.0	18.7
Women	23.9	16.6	18.4
Persons Aged 15 Years and Above with Disability	-	14.7	17.2
Youth	20.5	14.7	16.6
Urban Residents	13.2	9.3	11.6
Senior Citizens	14.4	9.1	10.3
Migrant and Formal Workers	14.4	8.8	10.2

Data Sources:
i. Merged datafile of the 2015 FIES and January 2016 LFS
ii. Merged datafile of the 2018 FIES and January 2019 LFS
iii. Preliminary merged datafile of 2021 FIES and January 2022 LFS

Table 12. Poverty Incidence in Urban and Rural Areas by Region, 2015-2021

Region	Poverty Incidence (%)					
	2018		2021		2023	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Philippines	9.3	24.5	11.6	25.6	10.3	22.1
Luzon						
NCR	2.3	-	3.6	-	1.9	-
CAR	4.9	15.1	5.1	13.5	3.7	8.7
I – Ilocos	6.7	10.6	12.7	15.1	11.7	12.6
II – Cagayan Valley	12.1	17.0	12.9	16.2	9.0	10.8
III – Central Luzon	5.4	9.5	11.0	12.8	7.3	10.1
IV-A – CALABARZON	5.0	11.5	8.2	14.4	7.7	8.8
IV-B – MIMAROPA	12.5	16.3	16.2	24.4	17.8	26.6
V – Bicol	16.8	30.2	22.2	32.3	22.3	30.3
Visayas						
VI – Western Visayas	6.4	15.7	9.0	19.5	8.3	15.3
Negros Island Region (NIR)	17.7	26.2	19.6	29.1	26.8	32.9
VII – Central Visayas	9.5	23.6	17.9	37.1	12.3	24.5
VIII – Eastern Visayas	20.0	32.2	17.1	31.8	20.9	29.1
Mindanao						
IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	16.1	43.4	14.4	41.3	13.3	40.9
X – Northern Mindanao	16.4	28.8	20.2	32.9	17.4	32.8
XI – Davao	13.7	28.3	12.4	25.8	13.1	22.5
XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	20.7	32.4	21.5	32.7	18.3	29.9
XIII – CARAGA	21.1	35.4	27.3	38.2	13.9	24.4
BARMM	54.5	62.5	36.1	35.6	34.7	31.3

(Source: Philippine Statistics Authority)

Income Inequality Assessment.

National inequality has been improving slowly, with the Gini coefficient showing a downward trend over the past two decades. The Philippines national Gini coefficient improved to 0.4119 in 2021 from 0.4267 in 2018 and 0.4438 in 2015. This was driven by the growth in the average annual family income of the first to fifth income deciles even during the pandemic as the government extended financial aid. Meanwhile, the average annual family income of the sixth to tenth income deciles declined. Overall, the long-term trend since the early 2000s has been a gradual decline in inequality, indicating some improvement in income distribution.

Urban areas like Metro Manila tend to have higher income inequality due to the concentration of both wealth and poverty. Rural regions, while generally poorer, sometimes show lower inequality because income levels are more uniformly low. Continued efforts in inclusive economic growth, education, infrastructure development, and social protection are essential to sustain and deepen these gains.

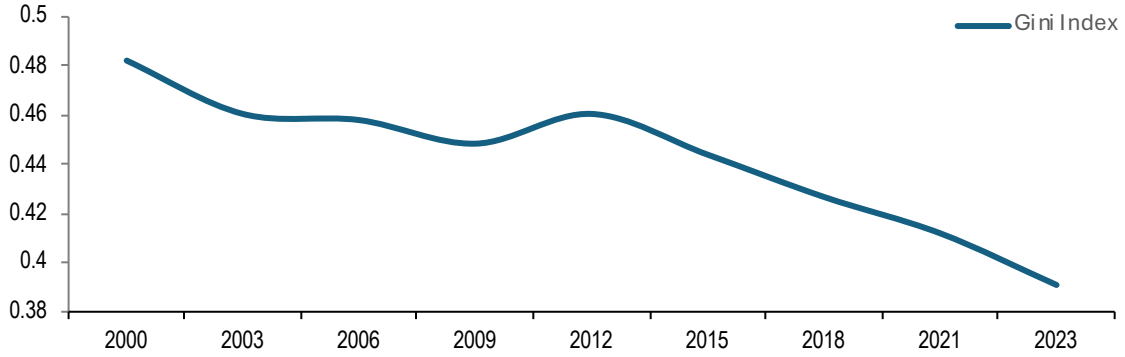


Figure 16. Income Inequality in the Philippines, 2000-2023

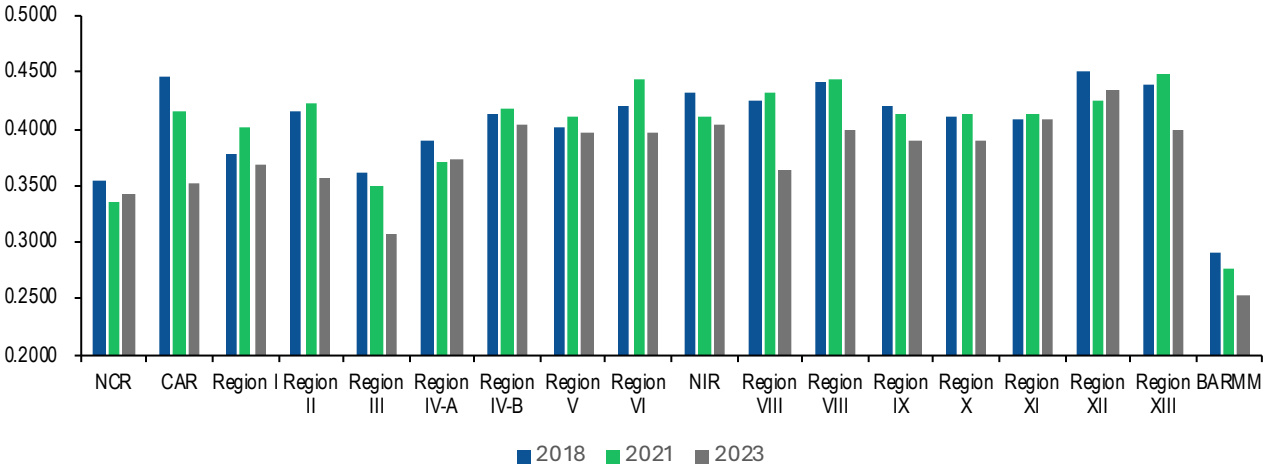


Figure 17. Income Inequality by Region, 2018, 2021, and 2023

Republic Act No. 8425 otherwise known as the “Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act” mandates the National Anti-Poverty Commission to institutionalize the Social Reform Agenda (SRA) to ensure the meaningful representation and participation of the Basic Sectors who are referred as disadvantaged sectors of the Philippine society at the societal level, namely: farmer-peasant, artisanal fisherfolk, workers in the formal sector and migrant workers, workers in the informal sector, indigenous peoples and cultural communities, women, differently-abled persons, senior citizens, victims of calamities and disasters, youth and students, children, and urban poor. As stipulated in the Act, poverty alleviation means addressing the concerns of the “Poor” or those individuals and families whose income falls below the poverty threshold defined by DEPDev.

The adoption and integration of SRA uses four (4) multi-dimensional approach to poverty - 1) Social 2) Economic 3) Ecological and 4) Governance to access basic social services, economic opportunities, sustainable development of productive resources, and participation of the basic sectors in decision-making and management processes that affect their rights, interests, and welfare, respectively. These approaches also complement the progressive realization of the five (5) fundamental rights of the poor which include the attainment of Adequate Food, Decent Work, Relevant and Quality Education, Adequate Housing, and the Highest Attainable Standard of Health.[3] Eradicating poverty among the poor equates to providing ways and means for them to achieve each of the five fundamental rights.

The NAPC incorporates an income-based measure of poverty using the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of 2016-2017 released by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). This index highlights deprivations in Education (36.9%), Health and Nutrition (37.5%), Housing, Water, and Sanitation (27.4%), and Employment (8.3%). In terms of Housing, deprivation is assessed based on ownership of assets, toilet facilities, source of water supply, tenure status of dwelling, housing materials, and access to electricity.[4] In relation to this, the provision of Right to Adequate Housing of Republic Act No. 11291 or the "Magna Carta of the Poor" (MCP), encompasses for suitable, affordable, secure, culturally fitting dwelling with dignity, tenure security as per Republic Act No. 7279 or the "Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992," along with access to essential services, amenities, and livelihood opportunities that mandates key shelter agencies to reach the poor by prioritizing socialized housing, building housing for families in high-risk or disaster-prone areas, facilitating access to tenure security, and establishing an efficient system for community-based socialized housing/people's proposals. Additionally, the NAPC is guided by the principle of coordinating and synchronizing the social reform and poverty alleviation programs of the national government agencies with the LGUs towards improving the quality of life of those individuals that are challenged to meet the minimum basic needs.

Following the SDGs by 2030, the term “No Poverty” is a pivotal action for a just and humane society for all, particularly for countries that are considered as geographically vulnerable to natural disasters and human-induced calamities. Considering the priority sectoral agenda of the Basic Sectors, it is suggested to note the following as concerns requiring for immediate intervention to poverty alleviation:

[3] RA 11291: An Act Providing for a Magna Carta of the Poor

[4] Filipino Families Are Most Deprived in Education, retrieved from https://www.mppn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Philippines-mpi-press-release.pdf

Table 13. Poverty Alleviation Strategies by Sector

Basic Sectors	Priority Sectoral Agenda	Poverty Alleviation Strategies
Artisanal Fisherfolk	Adoption of national strategic framework on Establishment of Fisherfolk Settlement	Identify plans on settlement areas with adequate access to fishing ground to avoid the frequent displacement of fisherfolk caused by natural disasters or human-induced calamities.
Children	Full implementation of Anti-Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children	Monitor the child protection policies, particularly on the role of government towards the reintegration of children who have been victimized and gravely affected by the violations committed against them in a manner that is gender-responsive and age-appropriate.
Cooperatives	Amendment of Republic Act No. 9520 or the Philippine Cooperative Code	Advocate for the function of cooperatives as social enterprises that promote the inclusive growth of micro and small cooperatives.
Farmers & Landless Rural Workers	Passage of the National Land Use and Management Act	Fast tracking the passage of the senate counter measure and immediate endorsement of the consolidated bills to the president for enactment. - to ensure the protection of agricultural lands and provide legal impediments to illegal conversions of lands.
Formal Labor and Migrant Workers	Passage of Security of Tenure Bill and Ending Contractualization	Provide a stable source of living wage protected with labor rights and benefits to individuals and/or families.
Indigenous Peoples	Ratification of International Labour Organization (ILO) 169 Convention or the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention	Safeguards indigenous rights to ensure equal opportunities in jobs, healthcare, education, and social services. The ILO 169 ratification can complement the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA).
Non-Government Organizations	Amendment of EO 325, s. 1996 to include NAPC Basic Sector representation in RDC	Advocate for the automatic inclusion of Basic Sector members in the RDC and amending Executive Order No. 325 issued in 1996, to integrate NAPC Basic Sectors into the RDC.
Persons with Disabilities	Institutionalization of the Executive Order 417 series of 2005 on Persons with Disabilities Economic Independence Program	EO 417, s. 2005 aims to establish the Economic Independence Program for Persons with Disabilities. This program is designed to foster autonomy and economic self-reliance, including a disability-inclusive social protection program that promotes their participation and independence
Senior Citizens	Pushing for the Universal Social Pension	Recognize the inclusion of the Universal Social Pension in the top socio-economic agenda, which will provide a dignified social protection floor for all Filipino citizens as they reach the age of sixty (60).
Urban Poor	Passage of the on-site, in-city, near city Peoples' Plan Bill	Advocate the passage of the People's Plan Bill in collaboration with other key shelter agencies, which would involve sourcing a PHP 150 billion budget allocation for a comprehensive land use and housing

Basic Sectors	Priority Sectoral Agenda	Poverty Alleviation Strategies
		program. This effort also encompasses a comprehensive strategy for land allocation, housing, community development, and enhancing livelihoods for the urban poor.
Victims of Disasters and Calamities	Active participation in local DRRM planning, implementation, monitoring & evaluation	Empower the community to develop resilience and unity to mitigate the impacts of both natural calamities and human-induced disasters.
Women	Full functionality and monitoring & evaluation of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Desks in all barangays nationwide	Strengthen the legal enforcement of VAWC laws to create a supportive environment for women and children who are victims of violence and/or harassment, among other issues, and adopt a comprehensive approach to address the underreporting of VAWC violations.
Workers in the Informal Sector	Realization of enterprise Formalization	Streamline registration processes in accordance with bureaucracy policies to encourage informal businesses to transition to formal status.
Youth and Students	Addressing the rising cases of teenage pregnancy	Tackle pressing issues that impact young women, such as enhancing access to quality education, improving governance mechanisms, and addressing the critical national concern of teenage pregnancies.

- Reduce Inequality in Urban Areas by Promoting Equally Shared Opportunities and Benefits – The RA 11291 mandates NAPC to ensure the involvement of Basic Sectors and Local Government Units (LGUs) in the process of collecting and consolidating sectoral and local plans focused to poverty programs through a bottom-up approach into Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans (LPRAPs). Subsequently, these plans will be integrated into the National Poverty Reduction Plan (NPRP) to enhance the living standards of the impoverished, providing them with ongoing opportunities for growth and development.

  The NAPC, with its multidimensional approach to poverty, will also work to reduce inequality in both urban and rural areas, particularly by advancing the attainment of the Five (5) Fundamental Rights under MCP. This includes facilitating their access to pertinent information about essential programs designed to achieve Adequate Food, Decent Work, Relevant and Quality Education, Adequate Housing, and the Highest Attainable Standard of Health. The MCP further emphasizes the importance of recognizing the members of the Basic Sectors as a priority population in the pursuit of livable and sustainable communities, aligned with sustained opportunities.

  Aligned with the UN SDG 10, the initiative to reduce inequality among individuals facing disadvantages related to attributes such as gender, religion, race, and birthplace encompasses various dimensions. This includes achieving income parity, ensuring access to essential services, promoting socio-economic integration, and facilitating participation in electoral processes reflected with the overarching commitment to ensuring inclusivity and preventing anyone from being left behind.

d. Generate More and Better jobs and Expand Formal Sector Employment

Financing support through labor market interventions, social safety nets, social protection programs, from government institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector under the NUA endeavor to increase access to basic social services particularly the marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged sectors. Gender mainstreaming into employment allows men and women to obtain decent work, reduce gender-based pay gaps, and participate in a productive workplace.

Since 2016, the labor force participation rate of women has been consistently lower than men. In 2019, the DEPDev commissioned a research study to identify the factors that affect the economic participation of women using quantitative and qualitative approaches (Cabegin E.C., 2019). The study highlighted the following:

a. In less developed regions (IX, XIII, XII, VIII, V, IV-B), over 50% of women workers were in the informal sector.
b. Marriage and childbearing led to a significant decline in female labor force participation, but remote and online jobs offered opportunities for mothers.
c. Low-educated women faced a double handicap, being less likely to find employment, and when they did, it often involved domestic work or informal sector jobs.
d. Many low-educated married women turned to micro- and small-scale businesses for income.
e. Women's exposure to media and asset ownership were also significant factors influencing their labor force participation.

Moreover, the World Bank (2021) finds that women's participation in the labor force was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as it led to additional childcare and household responsibilities (e.g., caring for sick relatives and assistance with distance learning). Results from the December 2020 round of the Household Frequency Survey show that women are more likely to assist in distance learning. There was steady progress in employment levels from 2017 to 2019. However, considering the COVID-19 restrictions, this led to a 10.3% unemployment rate and 2.58 million job losses in 2020. Underemployment improved in 2021 and 2022, decreasing to 7.8% and 5.4%.

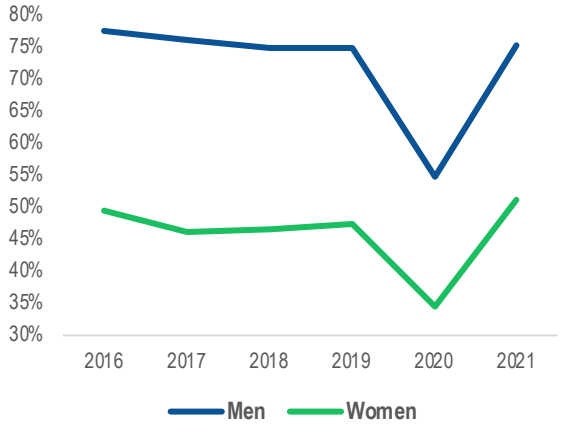
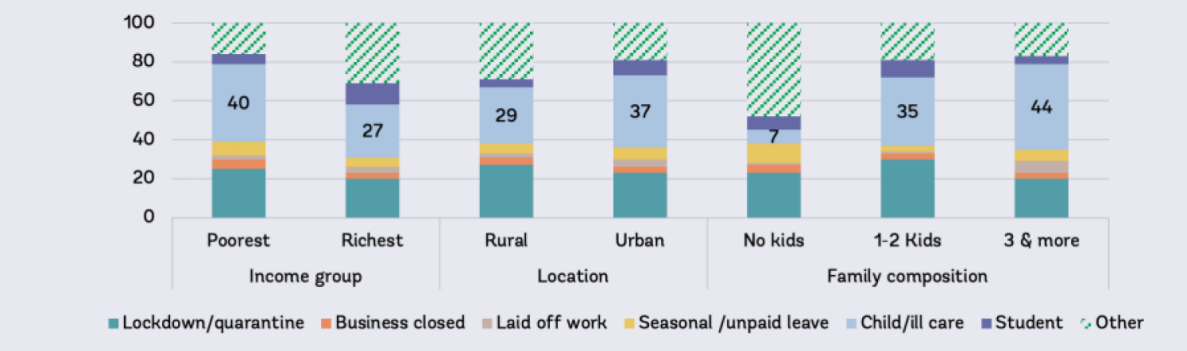


Figure 18. Labor Force Participation Rate by Sex

Table 14. Labor Force Participation Rate, 2016-2021

Year	Proportion of Population in Labor Force (%)	
	Men	Women
2016	77.6	49.3
2017	76.2	46.2
2018	75.1	46.6
2019	74.8	47.6
2020	54.8	34.5
2021	75.4	51.2

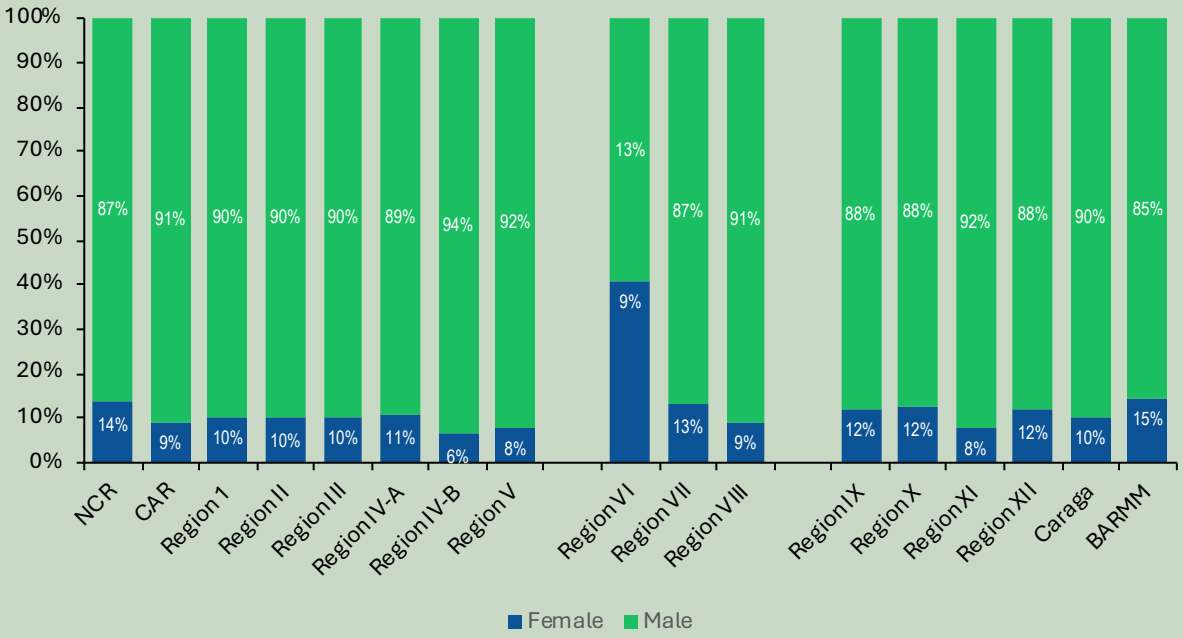
(Source: PSA)



(Source: 2020 Household High-Frequency Survey, Round 2)

Figure 19. Reason for Women not Working, by Location, Income Group, and Family

As of December 31, 2022, 4Ps serves 3,798,151 active household beneficiaries, primarily headed by males (89.33%). Among the regions, BARMM has the highest percentage of female-headed households (14.64%), followed by the National Capital Region (13.54%), Region VII (12.98%), Region X (12.47%), and Region IX (12.20%). Some households have exited the program because they no longer have eligible members based on the Listahanan 3 validation.



(Source: DSWD)

Figure 20. Percentage of Male and Female Household Head by Region, 2022

Table 15. Proportion of Employed Population living below the International Poverty Threshold

Age & Sex		Share of Employed Population (%)							
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Below 15 years old	Both Sexes	6.6	5.5	4.4	3.5	2.7	2.0	3.4	2.8
	Female	5.5	4.5	3.7	2.9	2.2	1.6	...	...
	Male	7.3	6.1	4.9	3.8	3.0	2.2	...	...
15 to 24 years old	Both Sexes	8.2	6.8	5.6	4.4	3.4	2.6	...	...
	Female	6.0	4.9	3.9	3.0	2.2	1.7	...	...
	Male	9.5	8.0	6.5	5.2	4.1	3.1	...	...
Above 25 years old	Both Sexes	6.3	5.2	4.2	3.3	2.5	1.9	...	...
	Female	5.4	4.5	3.6	2.9	2.2	1.6	...	...
	Male	6.8	5.7	4.6	3.6	2.7	2.1	...	...

(Source: NAPC)

Republic Act No. 11291 mandates NAPC to ensure the involvement of Basic Sectors and Local Government Units (LGUs) in the process of collecting and consolidating sectoral and local plans focused to poverty programs through a bottom-up approach into Local Poverty Reduction Action Plans (LPRAPs). Subsequently, these plans will be integrated into the National Poverty Reduction Plan (NPRP) to enhance the living standards of the impoverished, providing them with ongoing opportunities for growth and development.

The NAPC, with its multidimensional approach to poverty, will also work to reduce inequality in both urban and rural areas, particularly by advancing the attainment of the Five (5) Fundamental Rights under MCP. This includes facilitating their access to pertinent information about essential programs designed to achieve Adequate Food, Decent Work, Relevant and Quality Education, Adequate Housing, and the Highest Attainable Standard of Health. The MCP further emphasizes the importance of recognizing the members of the Basic Sectors as a priority population in the pursuit of livable and sustainable communities, aligned with sustained opportunities.

Aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10, the initiative to reduce inequality among individuals facing disadvantages related to attributes such as gender, religion, race, and birthplace encompasses various dimensions. This includes achieving income parity, ensuring access to essential services, promoting socio-economic integration, and facilitating participation in electoral processes reflected with the overarching commitment to ensuring inclusivity and preventing anyone from being left behind.

In addition, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) facilitates employment through its Labor Market Information Program. This program serves as a vital source of information for employers and potential employees, offering insights into future labor market conditions, in-demand jobs, and skills shortages. DOLE provides client-specific information, educational resources, and communication materials to support informed decision-making.

Table 16. Individuals Reached by the Program on Labor Market Information

Region	Number of Individuals Reached (in '000)						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Philippines	3,230	4,188	4,185	4,026	2,259	4,665	4,618
Luzon							
National Capital Region	573	584	474	121	254	575	800
Cordillera Administrative Region	122	124	121	557	62	142	192
Region I – Ilocos Region	193	231	217	217	177	281	413
Region II – Cagayan Valley	133	117	113	121	112	233	256
Region III – Central Luzon	337	397	291	322	113	203	229
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	529	1176	1491	822	217	332	431
Region IV-B – MIMAROPA	112	105	102	104	112	217	267
Region V – Bicol Region	75	84	67	68	79	112	119
Visayas							
Region VI – Western Visayas	90	174	170	407	100	79	311
Negros Island Region	78	-	-	-	-	-	-
Region VII – Central Visayas	230	340	263	291	252	100	333
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	49	44	41	44	31	252	46
Mindanao							
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	70	80	126	185	105	31	255
Region X – Northern Mindanao	104	90	128	207	214	105	434
Region XI – Davao Region	154	162	156	178	128	214	159
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	308	381	351	269	246	128	233
Region XIII – CARAGA	72	102	75	113	58	246	140
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: DOLE Administrative Data)

Financing support through labor market interventions, social safety nets, social protection programs, from government institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector under the New Urban Agenda endeavor to increase access to basic social services particularly the marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged sectors. Gender mainstreaming in employment allows men and women to obtain decent work, reduce gender-based pay gaps, and participate in a productive workplace. Programs, projects, activities supporting this agenda include:

Tulong Pangkabuhayan para sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers (TUPAD) is community-based package of assistance that provides emergency employment for displaced workers, underemployed and seasonal workers, for a minimum period of 10 days, but not to exceed a maximum of 30 days, depending on the nature of work to be performed.

- **Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP)** is a grant assistance on livelihood for disadvantaged workers either for individuals, groups, that allows them to (1) start individual or group livelihood undertaking, (2) upgrade or complement existing livelihood undertakings to grow into more viable and

sustainable businesses, or (3) re-establish lost or damaged livelihoods due to natural, human-induced disaster or calamity, or economic crisis.

- **Labor Market Information Program/ Public Employment Service Offices** serves as a vital source of information for employers and potential employees, offering insights into future labor market conditions, in-demand jobs, and skills shortages. DOLE provides client-specific information, educational resources, and communication materials to support informed decision-making.

Programs involving the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) under the New Urban Agenda shall contribute to the expansion of formal sector employment and increasing incomes in the informal sector. Programs, projects, and activities supporting this agenda include Youth Employability Programs (Youth Sector Report, National Youth Commission, 2022), where:

- 128,284 youth assisted under the Special Program for the Employment of Students (SPES)
- 49,787 youth assisted under the Government Internship Program
- 1,315 youth provided with life-skills training under JobStart Philippines

e. Achieve Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups (Women, Youth, Old, and PWD)

Motivated by the governance aspect of the SRA that aims to democratize decision-making and management processes, the NAPC Basic Sectors, who are among the vulnerable population, have actively advocated for their integration into sectoral representation across diverse governance frameworks and mechanisms.

Pursuant to RA 11291, ensuring the meaningful representation and participation of the Basic Sectors in governance and community development within their respective LGUs is crucial for achieving social inclusion. This is articulated in Section 8 of the Act, which emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive and convergent plan through the NPRP, as well as enhanced coordination and convergence among government agencies are the key mechanisms in securing the rights of the poor.

In 2019, the Children Sector elevated its membership status from ex-officio to a full-fledged member of the National Child Labor Committee, now recognized as the National Council Against Child Labor (NCACL), through Executive Order No. 92, s. 2019. Meanwhile, the YS successfully secured permanent representation in the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) Youth Development Indicators Technical Working Group (TWG) in 2021. This achievement ensured the incorporation of the youth development aspect as a criterion for assessing local government units (LGUs).

The NAPC Women (WS) and Youth and Students (YS) Sectors collaborated to lobby with the President for declaring teenage pregnancy as a national priority. This declaration called for the full implementation of Republic Act No. 10354, also known as the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2019. This initiative complemented the advocacy of the Children Sector, which supported the provision of education in Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) through age-appropriate information, materials, and modules.

The NAPC Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Sector ardently advocated for the implementation of accessibility across various domains, including infrastructure, transportation, basic support services, digital technology, and meaningful participation in government processes. This unwavering dedication aimed to ensure that these sectors could fully participate and engage in society, enjoying equal opportunities and rights as any other citizen.

4.3. ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

Access to adequate housing is a fundamental human right recognized by the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines which mandates "the State...for the common good, [to] undertake, in cooperation with the private sector, a continuing program of urban land reform and housing which will make available at affordable cost, decent housing and basic services to underprivileged and homeless citizens in urban centers and resettlement areas." It is underscored that adequate housing is essential for individuals and communities to lead dignified and fulfilling lives. More than just a roof over one's head, adequate housing includes several elements that contribute to a secure, safe, and healthy living environment.

a. Constraints to Securing Decent, Affordable Housing

A variety of reasons can be cited in the growing need for housing. Rapid urbanization, while bringing economic growth and opportunities, also brings problems and challenges on housing, basic services, facilities and utilities, land tenure, and employment. Particularly, the housing backlog persists in the socialized segment due to affordability issues, and shares of the socialized segment to the total housing supply has been decreasing over the years. Housing production faced major challenges in terms of low allocation and utilization of funding, lack of suitable land, and delays in permits and clearances. Housing backlog is further exacerbated by damage caused by natural hazard events. Almost half a million dwellings or houses were damaged due to disasters from 2016 to 2021.

Informal settler families (ISFs) that do not have security of tenure was estimated at 3.7 million as of 2021. ISFs suffer from poor housing quality, inadequate infrastructure, and high risk to natural disasters such as flooding and landslides making them one of the most vulnerable sectors in society.

From 2017 to 2022, the total housing needs of the Philippines was estimated at 6.5 million. For the period of 2023 to 2028, housing needs is estimated to reach 6.9 million households (HHs), 3.4 million of which is the backlog plus future requirements and 3.5 million is reserved for inventory losses. The accumulated housing backlog is estimated at 2.2 million households which is comprised of: (a) households likely to occupy unacceptable housing units at 1.045 million; and (b) doubled-up households in acceptable housing units at 1.165 million.

Table 17. Estimated Housing Needs in the Philippines, 2023-2028

Components of Housing Needs	Accumulated or Current Housing Needs **(Backlog as of Dec 2022)**	Recurrent or Future Housing Needs	Total Housing Needs (2023-2028)
1. Households in/likely to occupy unacceptable housing units	1,048,619	47,382	1,096,001
2. Doubled-up households in acceptable housing units	1,164,662		1,164,662
3. Newly formed households likely to occupy acceptable housing units		1,137,777	1,137,777
4. Allowance for losses in the inventory of households in acceptable housing units		3,546,342	3,546,342
Total	**2,213,281**	**4,731,501**	**6,944,782**

(Source: DHSUD, 2025)

As expected, housing backlog is highest in the most populated regions which are the National Capital Region (429,542 HHs), Region IV-A (382,024 HHs) and Region III (240,874 HHs). Other urbanized regions such as Region 6 (130,108 HHs), Region VII (132,779 HHs), Region X (115,185 HHs), Region XI (104,797 HHs) also have significant housing backlog. Together these regions comprise around 70% of the total housing backlog in the country. A high rate of housing backlog in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) was also estimated at 148,509 HHs which points out to the very low level of service delivery on housing provision as well as the high population growth rate in the area.

Addressing the 6.9 million housing needs is made more difficult by the inadequate national budget allocation. In fact, despite growing national budgets, the housing sector has received less than 0.3% on average over the past decade; and in 2025, a meager 0.10% of the total government budget was allocated to housing (Table 2). This greatly limits government's ability to scale solutions and meet urgent demand on housing. Because of this, only 66 percent of the 1.6 million direct housing assistance target of the government for the period 2017–2022 was accomplished.

Table 18. Budget Allocation for the Housing Sector compared to the National Budget, 2016 – 2025

Year	National Budget (PHP, billion)	Appropriation to Housing (PHP, billion)	Share (%)
2016	2,138.61	32.70	1.53
2017	2,499.49	14.80	0.59
2018	3,767.00	5.47	0.15
2019	3,661.63	3.00	0.08
2020	4,100.00	5.46	0.13
2021	4,506.00	5.35	0.12
2022	5,024.00	8.10	0.16
2023	5,268.00	4.91	0.09
2024	5,768.00	6.34	0.11
2025	6,326.00	6.45	0.10

(Source: DHSUD, 2025)

In addition to the inadequate national budget allocation to the housing sector, ISFs and low-income households are also unable to afford housing costs or utilize the formal housing system due to a lack of income and limited housing financing choices.

b. Addressing the Housing Gap

Given the challenges in addressing the growing housing need, it is timely that in 2019 the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) has been created through a consolidation of the then Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) and the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB).

With this development, DHSUD is now the primary national government entity responsible for the management of housing, human settlements and urban development. It is the sole and main planning and policymaking, regulatory, program coordination, and performance monitoring entity for all housing, human settlement and urban development concerns, primarily focusing on the access to and the affordability of basic human needs.

In a bold move to meet the enormous housing needs of the country, Executive Order (EO) No 34 was issued in July 2023 declaring the "Pambansang Pabahay para sa Pilipino" (4PH) a flagship program of the current administration. The 4PH Program aims to provide affordable in-city and near-city vertical housing development of low, medium to high-rise housing projects for ISFs and low-wage earners; and transform informal settlements and blighted areas into sustainable township and residential developments. The DHSUD, together with its key shelter agencies, is working closely with the LGUs, government financial institutions (GFIs), and the private sector to come up with innovative strategies to make housing units accessible and affordable to target beneficiary including the allocation of public funds for the payment of housing interest support to reduce beneficiaries' monthly amortization.

In support to the 4PH, the DHSUD through EO 34 also mandated the identification and reporting of all government lands that are suitable for housing and human settlements and urban development purposes and promote the optimization of the use of government lands.

From the second semester of 2022 to first semester of 2025, a total of 360,276 housing units were produced and financed through DHSUD and its Key Shelter Agencies (KSAs).

Table 19. Housing Units Constructed and Financed (2nd semester 2022 to June 2025)

Agency	Jul-Dec 2022	2023	2024	as of Jun 2025	Total
Direct Housing (housing units produced)					
NHA	13,303	15,856	12,990	7,841	49,990
SHFC	215	4,140	4,439	9,816	18,610
DHSUD			24	4,910	4,934
Indirect Housing (housing units financed)					
HDMF	58,028	96,848	90,616	37,927	283,419
NHMFC	1,026	2,177	100	20	3,323
Total	**75,572**	**119,021**	**108,169**	**60,514**	**360,276**

(Source: DHSUD, 2025)

While the 4PH Program represents a bold step forward, its rollout has surfaced critical implementation challenges. These issues span program design, heavy reliance on government subsidies, and bottlenecks in institutional coordination. Meanwhile, KSAs also face challenges, specifically on funding requirements to finance their major programs.

To address these limitations, it was paramount to enhance the modalities of the previous program framework. The expanded 4PH Program now includes other modalities such as rental options and other usufruct arrangements, use of balanced housing escrow funds, inclusion of horizontal housing developments, provision of housing loans with preferential interest rate, and pursuing community-driven housing options for more beneficiaries like slum upgrading which are all aimed at broadening the housing delivery modes, make it more effective, and financially viable. Furthermore, to engage more beneficiaries and developers in the expanded 4PH, the DHSUD will conduct regular dialogues and enhance coordination with key shelter agencies (KSAs), aiming to speed up housing delivery and make the program more inclusive and responsive.

To streamline housing-related permits, clearances, and licenses, the DHSUD will digitalize the Housing One Stop Processing Centers (HOPCs) in all regions. In operationalizing the HOPCs, the DHSUD will leverage digital infrastructure, inter-agency coordination, and process automation that will provide a more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly experience for developers, stakeholders, and the public for all required housing-related permits.

Moving forward, the government will intensify the implementation of key shelter programs to increase housing access for ISFs, the homeless, and underprivileged communities.

Box 1. Community Mortgage Program (CMP)

CMP is a people-led housing finance and community development program implemented by the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), a key shelter agency of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), which assists legally organized associations of low-income groups to acquire and develop a tract of land under the concept of community ownership. The primary objective of the program is to assist residents of blighted or depressed areas to own the lots they occupy, or where they choose to relocate to, and eventually create sustainable and resilient communities in coordination with the local government units. CMP shall be implemented in various Flexible, Affordable, Innovative, and Responsive (FAIR) shelter solutions.

The Community Mortgage Program has enabled hundreds of thousands of Filipino families to achieve security of tenure. SHFC reports that CMP has benefited more than 330,000 families across 2,775 communities nationwide, involving over ₱18 billion in loan releases. The program continues to prioritize the urban poor, informal settler families, and vulnerable sectors, allowing them to collectively purchase the land they occupy or to relocate to safer areas through government-supported financing and technical assistance. By empowering people's organizations to collectively manage the process, CMP promotes community ownership and shared responsibility for development outcomes.

In 2024, SHFC introduced the *Enhanced Community Mortgage Program*, designed to streamline processes and make the CMP more efficient and responsive. The enhanced version aims to simplify documentary requirements, shorten processing time, and provide additional loan packages that cover house construction and site development. It also strengthens partnerships with local government units and private sector partners to ensure that poor families, especially those living in danger zones and informal settlements, gain faster access to affordable and secure housing opportunities. Through these initiatives, the CMP continues to evolve as a cornerstone of the government's inclusive housing strategy—empowering communities to transition from informality to formal, self-sustaining settlements while improving the quality of life of low-income Filipino families.

(Sources: Social Housing Finance Corporation, 2024)

Table 20. Illustrative laws and Executive Issuances on Housing and Urban Development

Law/Executive Issuance	Abbreviated Title	Summary Description
Republic Act No. 11201 (2019)	An Act Creating the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development	Creating a full-fledged department mandated to provide access to adequate, safe, secure, habitable, sustainable, resilient and affordable homes
Republic Act No. 7279 (1992)	An Act to provide for a Comprehensive and Continuing Urban Development and Housing Program	Focuses on housing rights, urban land reform, and resettlement, ensuring that marginalized groups have access to decent housing and sustainable communities
DHSUD Department Circular No. 2022-004 (2022)	Declaring the Pambansang Pabahay Para Sa Pilipino (4PH) Program as a Priority Program of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban	Institutionalize 4PH as DHSUD's flagship housing initiative, align all relevant agencies and stakeholders,

	Development (DHSUD) and Providing Guidance for the Implementation Thereof	and set out the roles, principles, and standards for its implementation
DHSUD Memorandum Circular No. 2023-002 (2023)	Providing for the Implementing Guidelines for The Pambansang Pabahay Para Sa Pilipino (4PH) Program (Operations Manual)	Requirements, processes, and guidelines for the implementation of the 4PH Program
Executive Order No. 34 (2023)	Declaring the Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program as a Flagship Program and directs all government agencies to submit a detailed inventory of all available lands suitable for housing	Address the need for decent housing and to build on the potential impact of a robust housing sector on the growing economy
DHSUD Department Order No. 2025-021	Establishing a Beneficiary-Centric Housing Development and Financing-Enhanced Expanded 4PH Program	Expand affordability and accessibility of socialized housing by allowing beneficiaries to select housing types and modalities suited to their needs and financial capacity, simplify the application process, and expedite project delivery
DHSUD Department Order No. 2025-022	Authorizing the Allocation of the Developers' Incentivized Compliance for Community Mortgage Program (CMP) of the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) under the Expanded 4PH Program	Authorizes the allocation of the developer's incentivized compliance for and in favor of acquisition of private lands for CMP of SHFC to expand the regular 4PH vertical housing to include other modalities of residential development to make it inclusive in terms of housing production vis-a-vis beneficiaries various income segment.
DHSUD Department Order No. 2025-025	Authorizing the Allocation of the Developers' Incentivized Compliance to Finance or Subsidize the Construction and Development of Socialized Housing Projects and Programs of the National Housing Authority under Expanded 4PH Program	Authorizes the allocation of the developers' incentivized compliance for the implementation of the various housing programs and projects of the NHA

c. Role of Local Governments in Housing Provision

Republic Act (RA) No. 7160 or the Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991, which specifies the various responsibilities of local government units (LGUs) in the promotion of general welfare and provision of basic services and facilities. The LGC vested upon LGUs the primary responsibility of delivering housing services to their constituents, and to establish participatory governance structures for the delivery of public goods.

To provide a comprehensive and continuing program for urban development and housing, RA No. 7279, or the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) was enacted in 1992. It lays down the mechanism for the program's implementation, emphasizing the role of LGUs in the inventory, identification, acquisition, and disposition of lands for immediate and future needs in socialized housing and resettlement areas.

The LGC and UDHA make it imperative for LGUs to create a special body on public services which include housing through the establishment of local housing boards (LHB) and for LGUs to develop their respective Local Shelter Plans (LSPs), a document that spells out shelter strategies and implementation plans in response to the housing needs and resource situation of a locality. Since then, LSP has been one of the sectoral plans developed by cities and municipalities, separate from the preparation of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). More recently, the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) issued Department Order No. 2022-05, which directs the integration of the LSP formulation process into the CLUP formulation process to reduce the number of plans being prepared by LGUs, strengthening the use of Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment (CDRA) in identifying potential lands for housing; and ensure sustainability of areas identified for housing projects by taking a proactive approach to housing development.

Meanwhile, the LHB is a local special body tasked to formulate, develop, implement, and monitor policies for social housing especially those pertaining to resettlement and demolition. The creation of LHBs in many cities in the Philippines became relevant because of the increasing population of informal settlers and the deteriorating conditions of informal settlements. Thus, LHBs have an important role in the adoption of pro-poor and effective social housing policies and programs.

Box 2. Disiplina Village in Valenzuela City

Disiplina Village, also called *Disiplina Village: Bagong Bahay, Bagong Buhay*, is a flagship in-city reloc-ation and public rental housing project of Valenzuela City targeting informal settler families (ISFs) living in danger zones. According to Galing Pook, the two sites in Barangays Ugong and Bignay span a total of 13 hectares and together accommodate around 4,594 informal settler families. In its design, Disiplina Village is presented as a "complete community" with supporting amenities: in Ugong, there is a daycare center and proximity to schools and health facilities; in Bignay, there is a 3S Center (Sentro ng Sama-samang Serbisyo) which houses a city hall annex as well as health station, police community precinct, fire substation, barangay hall, and daycare center.

As of 2021, the two existing Disiplina Villages in Ugong and Bignay remain the core housing sites, hosting a total of 143 buildings. The model emphasizes estate management: it provides concrete roads, alleys, drainage and sewer systems, and individual power and service connections. It is being held up as a model of public rental housing that includes not only shelter but integrated services and governance, allowing local government units to directly address resident needs through the nearby LGU facilities.

Looking ahead, Valenzuela is expanding the concept. In 2023, a new project called Disiplina Village Arkong Bato (Phase 1) was ceremonially launched by President Marcos, as part of the national housing agenda under the "Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino" program. According to news sources, this fourth Disiplina Village is expected to offer approximately 1,200 housing units for relocating informal settlers along riverbanks, under transmission lines, or affected by disasters.

(Sources: Galing Pook, 2017; PNA, 2021)

Box 3. Quezon City's Socialized Housing Program and Local Housing Board

The Quezon City Government established its *Socialized Housing Program* as an integrated approach to addressing the challenges of informal settlements and urban blight. The program was developed through a comprehensive shelter planning process that analyzed the city's housing needs and identified key institutional and operational reforms. To implement the program effectively, the city reorganized its structure and created specialized bodies such as the *Housing, Community Development and Resettlement Department* (HCDRD), the Housing Board, and the *Task Force on Socialized Housing and Blighted Areas*. These entities coordinate planning, land acquisition, social preparation, engineering, and estate management, ensuring that housing development is handled in a unified and systematic manner.

Financial sustainability is a central feature of the program. The Quezon City Government generates dedicated revenues for housing through the Idle Land Tax and the Socialized Housing Tax, which collectively contribute over ₱300 million annually to the local housing fund. These funds are used to finance in-city resettlement projects that allow informal settler families to remain within Quezon City, and more importantly, near their sources of livelihood. The City LGU manages eight housing projects that accommodate up to 2,367 households. Construction costs are capped at ₱450,000 per unit to maintain affordability, while financing options are provided through partnerships with the Pag-IBIG Fund and the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC). Beneficiaries who do not qualify for national housing loans are given access to in-house financing at an interest rate of 5.1%, with graduated amortization to ensure payment feasibility.

The governance of the city's housing initiatives is anchored on the Local Housing Board (LHB), which was reconstituted under Executive Order No. 23, Series of 2022. The LHB serves as the city's policy-making and coordinating body for shelter development and resettlement. Its primary functions include formulating local housing policies, reviewing and endorsing housing projects, and mediating issues related to informal settlements and relocation. The Board provides a platform for collaboration among city departments, national agencies, civil society organizations, and affected communities. Through this structure, Quezon City institutionalizes participatory housing governance in accordance with the Local Government Code of 1991 and the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.

A study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) highlights that the effectiveness of Local Housing Boards varies across cities in Metro Manila. In Quezon City, the LHB has been relatively active in policy formulation and coordination compared with other LGUs. The study notes, however, that for LHBs to function optimally, they require adequate financial and technical resources, well-defined mandates, and genuine representation from both government and community sectors. Strengthening these boards enhances accountability, transparency, and inclusiveness in local housing governance—key factors for sustaining the success of programs like Quezon City's socialized housing initiatives.

(Sources: Galing Pook, 2014; PIDS, 2021; Quezon City Government, 2022)

4.5. ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

a. Provide access to safe drinking water, sanitation and solid waste disposal

Clean drinking water, sanitation, and solid waste disposal are essential for human health and wellbeing. Inaccessibility of these basic services exposes the population to various diseases such as diarrhea, cholera, typhoid, and dysentery. Moreover, inadequate access to these basic services has negative impact on education, gender equality, economic development, and environmental sustainability. Therefore, improving accessibility to these basic services will save and improve lives, as well as contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal.

- **Water**

  In 2022, majority (96.3%) of the total number of families in the country that has basic access to safe drinking water. While households with limited, and unimproved access to safe drinking water constitutes the 1.3% and 2.3% of the total number of families, respectively. Meanwhile, 0.1% of the total number of families relies to surface water as their source of drinking water.

  Among the 18 regions in the country, the National Capital Region has the highest percentage of families with basic access to safe drinking water with 99.3% families. While the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has the lowest number of families with basic access to safe drinking water at 87.8%.

  Creation of Water Resource Management Office (WRMO)

  Attaining universal, adequate, and equitable access to safely managed water and sanitation services are at the core of inclusive and sustainable development. To maximize the use of the country's water resources and ensure that all water requirements are sufficiently distributed nationwide and ensure effective water management across all levels and sectors, the DENR is strengthening water governance through Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) by consolidating all agencies with water-related functions under the Water Resource Management Office (WRMO).

  WRMO is created pursuant to Executive Order No. 22, s. 2023 issued by President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. on April 27, 2023, under the DENR. The WRMO, in coordination with all stakeholders, shall primarily be responsible for the integration and harmonization of all government efforts and regulatory activities to ensure availability and sustainable management of water resources nationwide.

  The WRMO is co-handling with DPWH and DILG the technical management of nationally funded water supply projects worth Php14.6B. This will provide water to about 1,600 barangays all over the country. Moreover, some of the Php276B worth of DPWH flood control projects will be repurposed to address multiple needs such as dams, water impoundment for irrigation, power generation, and domestic water use. To address the potential impact of climate change and extreme weather events such as shortage of water supply in the country due to El Niño, the WRMO proposed the issuance of Memorandum Circular 22 directing all government agencies to conserve water. The conservation program, in coordination with the two Metro Manila concessionaires, is currently working with the top six government agencies that use the most water to reduce their consumption. The savings of at least five million liters of water per day is targeted through pipe replacement and internal conservation measures, including leaks management of government agencies to assure additional supply for Metro Manila. The WRMO issues national bulletins as guidance for water conservation for public and private sectors.

  In addition, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) issued Memorandum Order No. 2023-1 entitled "Water Management and Conservation Measures" for water utilities/water service providers enjoining them to prepare and update or adopt and implement action plans designed and aimed to mitigate the expected impacts and adverse effects of El Niño phenomenon.

- **Sanitation**

  There are about 84% of the total number of families in the country in 2022 that has basic service level to sanitation facilities. While families with limited and unimproved level of sanitation services constitutes for about 10.8% and 2.7%, respectively. There are about 2.6% of the families, in 2022, whose sanitation services relies to open defecation.

  Among the Regions, Central Luzon has the highest number (92.5%) of families with basic level of sanitation service. While the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has the least number (51.6%) of families with basic level of sanitation service.

Table 21. Percentage of Families by Service Level of Sanitation Facility, 2022, by Region

Region	Basic (%)	Limited (%)	Unimproved (%)	Open Defecation (%)
Luzon				
National Capital Region	82.9	14.4	2.7	*
Cordillera Administrative Region	87.4	8.6	3.2	0.8
Region I – Ilocos Region	84.7	14.0	*	*
Region II – Cagayan Valley	89.8	8.5	*	*
Region III – Central Luzon	92.5	6.3	0.7	*
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	90.4	7.0	2.1	*
Region IV-B – MIMAROPA	81.4	9.6	2.6	6.4
Region V – Bicol Region	80.9	8.5	2.5	8.1
Visayas				
Region VI – Western Visayas	82.0	7.8	3.1	7.1
Region VII – Central Visayas	76.3	16.1	2.4	5.2
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	84.1	9.8	2.5	3.7
Mindanao				
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	81.4	10.3	4.7	3.6
Region X – Northern Mindanao	88.3	8.7	1.5	1.6
Region XI – Davao Region	82.2	15.4	1.6	0.8
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	73.8	18.9	3.6	3.6
Region XIII – CARAGA	89.3	7.0	1.7	2.0
BARMM	51.6	17.2	21.4	9.7

* An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.
(Source: PSA Annual Poverty Indicator Survey, 2022)

- **Solid Waste**

Solid waste management remains a major challenge in the Philippines especially in urban areas like Metro Manila. The country's waste generation is expected to continue to rise with the increase in population, improvement of living standards, rapid economic growth, and urbanization. Republic Act No. 9003 otherwise known as the "Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 aims to address the growing problem on solid wastes in the country. It provides the legal framework for the country's systematic, comprehensive, and ecological solid waste management program that shall ensure protection of public health and the environment. It also provides for the necessary institutional mechanisms with the creation of the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), which oversees the implementation of solid waste management plans and prescribe policies as well as incentives to achieve objectives of the law.

According to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the DENR, there are a total number of 296 of sanitary landfills in the Philippines in 2022 serving to 652 LGUs. Among the Regions, the Ilocos Region has the greatest number (52) of sanitary landfills. Moreover, the EMB has recorded a total of 65,691,122.23 metric tons of municipal waste in all the sanitary landfills in the country.

The Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990 is concerned with the management of industrial chemicals in all aspects of its life cycle from importation, manufacture, distribution, use, and disposal. It also covers the management of hazardous wastes from its generation, handling, transport, treatment, and disposal. Complementary activities are the regulation of priority chemicals, the implementation of the Chemical Control Order, and the complete inventory and formulation of the National Implementation Plan for 12 persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

Table 22. Number of Sanitary Landfills in the Philippines by Region, 2022

Region	Number of Sanitary Landfills
Philippines	**296**
Luzon	
National Capital Region	1
Cordillera Administrative Region	10
Region I – Ilocos Region	52
Region II – Cagayan Valley	44
Region III – Central Luzon	15
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	41
Region IV-B – MIMAROPA	14
Region V – Bicol Region	8
Visayas	
Region VI – Western Visayas	15
Region VII – Central Visayas	16
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	11
Mindanao	
Region IX – Zamboanga	5
Region X – Northern Mindanao	28
Region XI – Davao Region	8
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	23
Region XIII – CARAGA	4
BARMM	1

(Source: EMB Solid Waste Management Division)

The Philippines is a party to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. The overall goal of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects which may result from the generation and transboundary movements and management of hazardous wastes.

As of 2022, there were 14,506 facilities validated/inspected to determine their compliance with different environmental laws, particularly Title III (Hazardous Waste Management) of Republic Act 6969. These are combination of TSD and Co-

Processing facilities and Importers of recyclable materials containing hazardous substances. Of the monitored facilities, 3,624 were found non-compliant, hence, issued with Notices of Violations (NOVs).

In addition, the issuance of DENR Administrative Order 2013-22 requires generators, transporters, and treatment, storage and disposal (TSD) facilities of hazardous waste, including waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) to be registered with EMB for proper documentation of the details of the movement of such wastes.

On 2022, the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) formulated a policy on "Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)" which mainly aims to provide a guideline for the appropriate management of WEEE.

b. Ensure access to safe and efficient public transport system

Public transportation is a key component in promoting sustainable and inclusive urban development in the country. Ensuring access to safe and efficient public transportation is a critical pillar to support the sustainable growth of urban centers in the country. Public transportation can enhance the mobility, accessibility, and connectivity of the residents, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups. Public transportation supports economic growth and social cohesion of urban areas by facilitating the movement of people, goods, and services. At the same time, efficient public mass transportation systems can significantly reduce traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and air pollution, thereby improving the environmental quality and livability of urban centers.

Since the conception of New Urban Agenda through Habitat III, there has been a steady passenger movement in public transportation of the country. While road-based trans However, the public transportation has come to halt due to Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. But since then, there has been an increase in passenger ridership as the country economy reopens. This is reflective in all transportation sector in the country.

Table 23. Number of Passengers by Transportation Mode, 2017-2022

	Number of Passengers (in millions)		
Year	Aviation	Maritime	Railway
2017	88.259	93.384	379.548
2018	96.508	98.761	348.807
2019	106.280	106.709	327.785
2020	24.370	31.154	99.666
2021	11.067	28.077	102.312
2022	22.863	74.113	

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) has ramp-up their efforts to provide efficient mass public transportation. Cognizant of the strategies laid under the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 on the development of applicable mass transportation and infrastructure facilities (i.e., railways, road-based, and ferry systems) in metropolitan areas, the DOTr embarked on prioritizing mass public transportation. Thence, the government has initiated land transport infrastructure projects to ensure that the public has access to safe and efficient public transport systems. This includes the following:

Railway Projects

1. **Construction of New Railways:**
   - The Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP) is a 33km subway system that will connect the north and south portions of Manila from Quirino Highway corner Mindanao Avenue to Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

2. **Expansion/extension of the existing railway system:**
   - Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 has an ongoing extension of its existing line from Baclaran to Bacoor, Cavite;
   - LRT Line 2 System will be extended further east from Masinag junction in Antipolo to Cogeo and to the west to Pier 4.

3. **Development of inter-regional rails:**
   - Metro Rail Transit Line 7 (MRT7) is a 22km rail line with an alignment from North Avenue in Quezon City to San Jose, Del Monte, Bulacan;
   - MRT4 Project will be running from EDSA Ortigas to Taytay;
   - North-South Commuter Railway (NSCR) Phase 1 is a 37.9km line connecting Tutuban, Manila, and Malolos City, Bulacan, while the NSCR Phase 2 is a 53km line between Malolos City, Bulacan, and Clark, Pampanga;
   - Mindanao Railway Project Phase 1, a 100km railway that will connect Tagum City, Davao del Norte, and Digos City, Davao del Sur;
   - South Long-Haul Project involving a 639km line will be connecting NCR and Region V; and North Long Haul is undergoing the project preparation stage for the financing, design, construction, and operations and maintenance (O&M) of an approximately 853km Inter-regional railway system connecting the NCR, Region I, Region II, and Region III.

4. **Improvement of Existing Railway Infrastructure:**
   - LRT2 Systems & Facilities Improvement, Rehabilitation & Modernization Projects;
   - MRT3 Rehabilitation Project which involves the rehabilitation and upgrade of the existing MRT3 System has just been completed.

Road Infrastructure Projects

1. **Construction of a new integrated transport facilities and bus rapid transit systems:**
   - Taguig Integrated Terminal Exchange which aims to reduce traffic congestion in Metro Manila by serving as the single terminal in the south of NCR.
   - North Integrated Terminal Exchange currently under project preparation stages for an Unsolicited-Build-Own-Operate-Development of Bus Rapid Transit Systems:
   - Cebu Bus transit Project consists of a 13.2-km trunk service that traverses through Cebu City's Central Business District, from SRP in the South West and IT Park in the North East, and a 22.1 km feeder service at Mambaling-Talisay, SRP-Talisay, and IT Park - Talamban alignments;
   - Expansion of additional BRT System in other urban areas are proposed soon for the conduct of Feasibility Study.

2. **Davao Public Transport Modernization Project**

   An integrated 673-km route network will be served by articulated 18-meter battery electric buses (BEB) and Euro V-compliant 12-/9-meter diesel-engine vehicles, all replete with accessibility and intelligent mobility features. Consists of a core bus network of over 100km and a feeder network of over 500km. Davao PTMP includes civil works, procurement of diesel and electric buses, institutional capacity

building and social development program.

3. **Development of Active Transport Infrastructure Network**

   The project involves construction of high-standard active mobility corridors for pedestrians, micro mobility users (such as, bikes, scooters, e-bikes/scooters) with tropical climate considerations (end-of-trip cycling facilities such as bike parking, showers, canopies, bike shed) in metropolitan areas around the Philippines. Feasibility Study is also proposed for the development and construction of the first bike expressway project in NCR. The project will include the elevated or dedicated bikeways and active transport facilities.

4. **Improvement of the EDSA Busway**

   The project involves the financing, design, construction, purchase, operations, and maintenance of a high-capacity busway plying through Circumferential Road 4 (EDSA) and other major and feeder roads; and

5. **EDSA Greenways Project**

   A transit-oriented development (TOD) type of greenways that aims to connect pedestrian networks on Balintawak, Cubao, Guadalupe, and Taft Stations of MRT 3.

6. **Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP)**

   This is the government's response to address both the aggravating transport related problems and the future transportation demand of the country. This has ten (10) components comprised of the following:

   a. Regulatory Reform – this launched the "Omnibus Guidelines on the Planning and Identification of Public Road Transportation Services and Franchise Issuance" or the Omnibus Franchising Guidelines (OFG) which serves as the guidelines in the issuance of franchise for public utility vehicles.

   b. LGU Local Public Transport Route Planning (LPTRP) – the local government units are required to prepare their own LPTRP that will be implemented in their respective localities. Prior to doing so, the LGU are to be capacitated for them to be able to formulate the route plan.

   c. Route Rationalization - the route rationalization is a study that aims to provide rationalized and efficiently planned routes that would be responsive to the demands of the passenger. It is a comprehensive and strategic assessment of the current public transport based on passenger demand, location of major movement and future travel demand patterns.

   d. Fleet Modernization - this component aims to ensure that all PUVs that take part in the program will follow modern policies which will complement what the traditional units lack. For the current public transportation vehicles to be on par with global standards, the program's Fleet Modernization component makes great effort in developing the Philippine National Standards for PUVs adopting prevailing and accepted international standards while adjusting suit the behavior of the Filipino commuters. These standards are the sole technical basis of fleet modernization as the nation gradually shifts to the new designs of PUVs.

   e. Industry Consolidation - one of the major components of the program, this component will be realized through the formation of transport cooperatives or other legal entities wherein these entities will be entitled to benefits such as government subsidies and access to credit facilities, among others, to aid in modernizing their fleets and run the modernized units in a systematic and predictable manner. The component refers to the strategic merging of smaller transport industry players to form into a legal entity either by forming a cooperative or corporation through the help of the Office of Transportation Cooperatives and Cooperative Development Authority.

   f. Financing PUV Modernization - it serves as financial aid to the operators provided by the government through its government financing institutions (GFIs) namely Landbank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines.

g. Vehicle Useful Life Program - this is the component of the program that will assist the owner of an old unit in selling at an appraised cost. This component ensures that the old public utility vehicles are surrendered and effectively scrapped.

h. Stakeholder Support Mechanism - the Stakeholder Mechanism involves other agencies such as TESDA and DOLE to be able to equip/assist drivers or operators who will opt out of the program. This may be in the form of a training or a livelihood program.

i. Initial Implementation - while the LPTRPs and Route Rationalization studies are being prepared, franchises are being issued for routes that are identified and approved by DOTr and LTFRB which are categorized as New Routes.

j. Communications - to ensure that the information disseminated about the program is true and correct, the Communication component of the PUVMP helps in reaching out to our major stakeholders to be educated about the program, its benefits and to garner support and interest.

Furthermore, the government will ensure transport safety and security through additional safety features in transport hubs such as closed-circuit television, baggage scanner, proper lighting, and a real-time passenger information system with no exceptions to the existing Rail Transportation System.

c. Provide access to modern renewable energy

Promoting transition to renewable energy (RE) sources is another component of the New Urban Agenda which can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance energy security, and create green jobs. RE is also vital in addressing the challenges of rapid urbanization and climate change, which affects the quality of life and resilience of the population. According to the Department of Energy, the share of RE in the total final energy consumption of the country from 2017 to 2022 has remain steady. Despite this, the Department of Energy (DOE) remains committed in promoting “green energy.”

The shift to renewable energy is espoused in the Philippine Energy Plan (PEP) which envisions a low-carbon future for the country. Among its components, the Strategic Focus Areas depicts how the energy sector will move forward to attain the envisioned clean and sustainable future. This is underscored with the Energy Supply and Demand Outlook that is guided with promoting energy security through clean energy fuels and technologies and stronger investments. Further, the move towards transitioning to a low carbon future is also substantiated with environmental management, pursuit for energy resiliency and security, continued energy engagements at the international front, and the collaborative role of the energy attached agencies.

For the energy sector to transition into having a clean and sustainable future, the defined path to undertake leads to the Clean Energy Scenario (CES). The CES is a transformative direction towards clean energy future. CES espouses a 35 percent Renewable Energy (RE) share in the national power generation mix by 2030 and 50 percent share by year 2040. Under this scenario, there will also 5.0 percent blend for biodiesel and 1.5 percent increase in aggregate natural gas consumption from transport and industry sectors between 2020 and 2040. It is also expected that there will be 10.0 percent penetration rate of electric vehicles for road transport (motorcycles, cars, jeepneys) by 2040 and around 5.0 percent energy savings on oil products and electricity by 2040 due to energy efficiency initiatives.

Table 24. Share of Renewable Energy Share to Total Final Energy Consumption, 2017-2022

Year	Percentage of Renewable Energy Share on Total Final Energy Consumption (in thousand tons of oil equivalent)							
	Oil	Natural Gas	Coal	Electricity	Biomass	Biofuels	Total Final Energy Consumption	Share of RE (%)
2017	17,803.68	52.51	3,162.99	6,688.98	7,257.01	509.19	35,474.36	21.9%
2018	18,167.87	59.39	2,573.11	7,103.79	7,294.94	524.03	35,723.13	21.9%
2019	18,459.25	61.53	2,357.95	7,490.80	7,331.60	558.39	36,259.52	21.8%
2020	16,009.24	37.20	1,841.41	7,157.59	7,072.24	474.83	32,592.51	23.2%
2021	17,662.29	0.35	2,162.25	7,516.25	7,157.27	529.27	35,027.68	21.9%
2022	18,267.04	-	1,946.14	7,853.19	7,217.02	575.23	35,858.62	21.7%

(Source: DOE)

Cost Implications of Clean Energy Scenario

The blended electricity generation cost leads to a cheaper cost under the CES by 1.0 percent in 2030 and 5.0 percent in 2040 as compared with the Reference Scenario (REF), equivalent to PhP2.97 per kilowatt-hour (KWh) and PhP3.41/KWh, respectively. However, given the significant share of solar photovoltaic (PV) capacity by 2040, equivalent to 45 gigawatts (GW) of additional capacity, entails extra cost to mitigate intermittency of at least 10.0 to 20.0 percent of the solar capacity to ensure grid stability and meet the 25.0 percent operational reserves. This cost may add up for the installation of the technology such as the battery storage and hybridized with clean stable source of energy (i.e., LNG, hydropower and biomass and concentrating solar thermal).

The Competitive Selection Process (CSP) provides for an adequate and proper power supply contracting through a transparent procedure. This mandates all distribution utilities (DUs) to undergo in securing power supply agreement (PSA) to protect the end-users with unnecessary exposure in the volatility of spot prices in the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) that redounds to least cost supply of electricity.

The implementation of the Green Energy Auction Program (GEAP) introduces greater competition among RE developers and generators and assists them in mitigating market exposure and risks related to renewable projects, thus easing the effect on cost. It also facilitates economies of scale due to the aggregation of energy requirements based on the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) mandates. The deployment and access to clean technology also provide a window for technological innovation that can bring down cost through localization.

Philippines Commitment in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

On 15 April 2021, the Philippines submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) that aims to reduce the country's 2030 GHG emissions by 75.0 percent as an aspirational target. This comprises of 72.29 percent conditional commitment and 2.71 percent unconditional commitment. This is part of the commitment that the country has entered into with the Paris Agreement through the UNFCCC.

The energy sector's GHG emissions only covers the combustion of fossil fuels and other activities related to the production of energy. Based on computed GHG, the energy sector targets a 2.8 percent reduction from 2020-2030, which includes both conditional and unconditional targets, consistent with the CES of the PEP 2018-2040. This is equivalent to GHG emission reduction of about 45.9 MTCO2e or about 1.37 percent of the country's NDC target. The DOE has been maximizing various

international fora to get support on the country's call for climate justice following the Paris Agreement.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

The broadband subscription in the country has maintained an increasing trend since 2017The effects of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 are also evident in the number of fixed broadband subscription with an increase of 1.76 from 5.52 in 2019.

Table 25. Fixed Broadband Subscriptions in the Philippines, 2017-2022

Year	Fixed broadband subscriptions (per 100 people)
2017	3.18
2018	3.58
2019	5.52
2020	7.28
2021	8.73
2022	8.34

(Source: DICT, PSA)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippines adopted a comprehensive approach which includes:

- National Action Plan (NAP) against COVID-19 – The government formulated the NAP to strike a balance between the management of COVID-19 and the safe reopening of the economy.
- The Bayanihan to Heal as One Act (Republic Act 11469) – enacted to address the COVID-19 pandemic impact, providing social amelioration packages and safety nets to all affected sectors.
- Social Amelioration Program (SAP) – government initiative offering financial assistance to the most vulnerable to the COVID-19 pandemic as a temporary relief to the crisis.
- Bayanihan to Recover as Once Act (Republic Act 11494) – enacted to offer financial assistance, including emergency subsidies for displaced workers and funding social welfare programs.
- National Employment Recovery Strategy (NERS) 2021-2022 – the government's master plan for reviving pandemic-affected labor market.

Legislations were adopted and implemented to help Filipinos manage income shocks, such as:

- Universal Health Care Law (RA 11223) - Mandated PhilHealth coverage for all Filipinos and helped lower out-of-pocket spending from 42.0 percent in 2019 to 39.9 percent in 2020.
- Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (RA 11310) - Institutionalized and enhanced the conditional cash transfer program and increased its budget from PHP89.40 billion in 2018 to PHP106.80 billion in 2021.
- Social Security Act of 2018 (RA 11199) - Strengthened the Social Security System and mandated the provision of unemployment benefits, which benefitted 220,443 individuals from 2019 to 2021.
- The following legislations were also enacted to ensure the safety of women and persons with disabilities workers:
- RA 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act - Defining gender-based sexual harassment in streets, public spaces, online, workplaces, and educational or training institutions, providing protective measures, and prescribing penalties therefor.
- RA 11210 or the 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law - Extending maternity leave to 105 days for female workers, with an optional 30-day unpaid extension, and providing an additional 15 days for solo mothers.

CHAPTER 5

Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Prosperity and Opportunities for All

The Philippines had been enjoying strong economic performance and was considered one of the fastest growing economies in Asia. The country's gross domestic product (GDP) was growing at an average rate of 6.4% from 2009 to 2019. This was until the COVID-19 pandemic brought the country's economy into recession, breaking almost three decades of uninterrupted growth. The pandemic disrupted the country's growth momentum, as the economy contracted by 9.6% in 2020.

Despite the challenges faced in 2022, such as inflation averaging 5.8% due to supply-chain disruptions caused by geopolitical conflicts and domestic issues, the country achieved significant progress overall. Income and employment indicators demonstrated a strong performance, with GDP growing by 7.6% for the whole year, surpassing the annual target range of 6.5% to 7.5%. This expansion was fueled by robust consumption growth on the demand side and the reopening of the services sector on the supply side. Moreover, the unemployment rate fell to 5.4% from 7.8% in 2021, and the underemployment rate decreased to 14.2% from 15.9% during the same reference periods.

5.1. INCLUSIVE URBAN ECONOMY

a. Sustained GDP Growth Rate

In 2021, the Philippines partially recovered from the initial devastation brought about by the pandemic. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth declined to 5.7% compared to 7.1% in 2016. The reversal in the country growth rate resulted from stringent and widespread quarantines that severely affected key economic sectors and people's income. Targeted quarantine resulted in more effective and efficient delivery of social protection programs and allowed more businesses to operate and more Filipinos to resume work. Thus, the Philippine GDP grew at an annual rate of 7.6% in 2022 from 5.7% in 2021 which was the highest recorded growth rate since 2017.

The Philippines sustained its economic expansion with a GDP growth of 6.4% year-on-year in Q1 2023, exceeding analysts' median forecasts (BSP, 2023). The growth reflects strong domestic demand supported by sustained improvement in labor market conditions, tourism, investments, and construction benefitting from the full opening of major economic sectors. The economy is targeted to continue its high-growth performance of 6.0%-7.0% in 2023 and 6.5%-8.0% in 2024-2028.

Table 26. Gross Regional Domestic Product of the Philippines (at constant 2000 prices), 2000-2022

Region	Share to Total GDP (%)				
	2000	2010	2014	2018	2022
Luzon					
National Capital Region (NCR)	34.6	33.5	32.5	31.8	31.4
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.7
Region I – Ilocos Region	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3
Region II – Cagayan Valley	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1
Region III – Central Luzon	10.1	10.2	10.8	11.3	11.0
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	15.0	14.7	14.6	14.8	14.8
MIMAROPA – MIMAROPA	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0
Region V – Bicol Region	2.5	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.9
Visayas					
Region VI – Western Visayas	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.8
Region VII – Central Visayas	5.5	6.0	6.4	6.5	6.5
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	2.8	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.5
Mindanao					
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Region X – Northern Mindanao	3.6	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.7
Region XI – Davao Region	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.8
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5
Caraga Administrative Regio	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) / Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4

(Source: Philippine Statistics Authority)

b. PWD Employment

According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (United Nations Human Rights, 2006). In order promote equal opportunities to all person with disabilities, it is important to recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labor market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.

Filipino Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) remain one of the most marginalized sectors, and employment is one of the biggest challenges that they face. While there are government agencies and disability laws that are designed to support PWDs to become productive

citizens, many are still caught in unstable occupations such as domestic work or ambulant vending (Inquirer.net, 2023).

There were almost 76 million working-age Filipinos living in 2022, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). Out of this number, 1.9 million are PWDs, according to a study that uses the PSA's Labor Force Survey. Out of the 1.9 million working-age Filipinos with a disability, only 353,000 or less than one in five were part of the workforce in January 2022.

PWDs encounter various barriers even before they can obtain a job. These include challenges in using public transportation, inaccessible job postings, attitudinal barriers such as being pitied instead of treated as equals, and limited accessibility to general and skills education.

Consequently, more than one in four Filipino PWDs work in elementary occupations such as street-sweeping, domestic work, and ambulant vending, which are often low-paying and highly insecure jobs.

The labor situation for Filipino PWDs even worsened during the pandemic. PWD's labor force participation dipped from 22% in January 2019 to 18% in the same month of 2022. Meanwhile, unemployment among PWDs rose from 4.5% to 7% over the same period, still according to the same study (Ines, 2023).

Filipino Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) remain one of the most marginalized sectors, and employment is one of the biggest challenges that they face. While there are government agencies and disability laws that are designed to support PWDs to become productive citizens, many are still caught in unstable occupations such as domestic work or ambulant vending. There were almost 76 million working-age Filipinos living in 2022, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). Out of this number, 1.9 million are PWDs, according to a study that uses the PSA's Labor Force Survey. Out of the 1.9 million working-age Filipinos with a disability, only 353,000 or less than one in five were part of the workforce in January 2022.

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c. Youth Employment

The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in multiple shocks for the youth—including disruptions in their education and training, employment, and earnings, and increased job search constraints.
Percentage of youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET) decreased (cumulative)
Despite the pandemic, the share of youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET) improved. The youth NEET declined to 16.8 percent in 2021 from 23 percent in 2015, exceeding the target for the year. This may be attributed to the relaxation of community quarantine restrictions and the utilization of online/digital platforms in areas of training, education, and employment bridging.

Likewise, the youth unemployment worsened in 2021 at 15.1 percent from 11.5 percent in 2016. The youth continue to face challenging employment prospects, resulting in persistent inactivity rates in education, training, and employment.

Certification rate of Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) graduates increased (%)
The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) launched "OPLAN TESDA Abot Lahat: TVET Towards the New Normal" to ensure continuity of training and skills development programs amid the pandemic. Technical-Vocational Institutions (TVIs) implemented flexible learning modalities which may have contributed to the attainment of Plan targets in 2021. Moreover, the technical-vocational education and training (TVET) certification rate remained high. TVET certification rate in 2021 is at 92 percent but was slightly

lower than the previous years (94.3 percent in 2019 and 93.7 percent in 2020) due to the pandemic.

Likewise, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) adopted flexible learning arrangements in delivering education services and continued to support projects geared towards the internationalization of higher education institutions (HEIs), such as the development of institutional capacity, participation in the ASEAN University Network, and research, among others.

d. Employment rate of TVET graduates increased

The promotion of TVET can help address the high incidence of youth NEET. The employment rate of TVET graduates improved from 66.2 percent in 2016 to 70.5 percent in 2020.

In addition, it is important to form tight linkages between educational institutions, skills development authority, and PESOs to mitigate search frictions and mismatches, as information on active labor market programs can be efficiently cascaded to education providers.

e. Duration of school-to-work transitions of TESDA graduates decreased (months)

Achieving curricular alignment informed by labor market trends and complex transformations in strategic sectors, can foster better learning outcomes and better school-to-work transitions. However, finding employment remains a challenge for TESDA graduates. In 2020, the duration of school-to-work transitions of TESDA graduates increased at 3.35 months compared from the average of 3.0 months in 2016.

f. Unemployment Rate (%) decreased and Youth Unemployment Rate (%) decreased

Sustained improvement in employment levels from 2017 to 2019 suffered a setback during the pandemic as mobility and operating restrictions were imposed on several sectors, resulting in an increase in unemployment rate of 7.8 percent in 2021 from 5.4 percent in 2016. Employment levels recovered in 2022, with a decrease in unemployment rate to 5.4 percent. Likewise, the youth unemployment rate was 15.1 percent in 2021. This was higher than the reported youth unemployment rate in 2016 at 11.5 percent.

g. Manufacturing Gross Value Added (GVA) growth rate in the industry sector improved (%)

The industry sector is poised for a broad-based recovery in 2022 led by growth in manufacturing and construction activities. The economic opportunities in industry across regions including the digital economy expanded. From 8.2 percent in 2016, the Gross Value Added (GVA) growth rate in the industry sector improved to 8.5 percent in 2021. Industrial employment generated exceeded the target with the bulk of employment coming from the construction (625,000) and manufacturing (270,000) sectors in 2021.

While the Manufacturing GVA as a proportion of GDP increased to 19.2 percent in 2021, surpassing the annual Plan target of 16.8-17.0 percent for 2022, the manufacturing employment as a proportion to total employment decreased from 8.3 percent in 2016 to 7.9 percent by 2021.

h. Labor productivity in industry and service sector increased (% growth)

Growth in the industry and services sectors' labor productivity remained negative for 2021. Given the faster rebound of employment compared to output, the industry and services sectors continued to post declines in labor productivity. The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in multiple shocks for the youth—including disruptions in their education and training, employment, and earnings, and increased job search constraints.

From 2017 to 2021, a gain of 1.274 million was observed to be unemployed. The highest gains of unemployed were women with 744,000 while men with 530,000.

In 2021, the 25-34 age group exhibited the highest employment (12.129 million) and unemployment (1.258 million) rates. From 2017 to 2021, employment increased by 3.654 million, surpassing the decrease in unemployment by 1.274 million.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected males, leading to a surge of 1.464 million unemployed, while females witnessed a rise of 777,000 in unemployment. Swift government intervention reduced national unemployment to 3.715 million in 2021, with decreases evident in both male (2.131 million) and female (1.584 million) unemployment.

The top three industries by employment in 2021 were:

- Wholesale and retail trade, automobile and motorcycle repair (9.725 million);
- Agriculture, hunting, and forestry (9.353 million); and
- Construction (4.319 million).

According to LFS, the female employees are higher in Service and Sales (5,567), Elementary Occupations (4,432), and Managers (1,767).

In July 2023, the country's unemployment rate for population 15 years and over decreased to 4.8 percent from 5.2 percent in the same month last year. Unemployment rate was posted at 4.5 percent in April 2023.

In terms of level, the number of unemployed in July 2023 was estimated at 2.27 million, posting a decline of 329 thousand from the 2.60 million reported in July 2022.

Employment rate in July 2023 was registered at 95.2 percent. This was higher than the reported rate in July 2022 at 94.8 percent, but lower than the estimate in April 2023 at 95.5 percent.

Underemployment rate in July 2023 was registered at 15.9 percent. This was higher than the reported rate in July 2022 at 13.8 percent, and still higher than the estimate in April 2023 at 12.9 percent.

The country's Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in July 2023 decreased to 60.1 percent from 65.2 percent in July 2022 and 65.1 percent in April 2023. This LFPR translates to 46.90 million who were either employed or unemployed.

In terms of the country's unemployment rate for youth population 15 years old to 24 years old increased to 14 percent from 11.9 percent in the same month last year. Youth Unemployment rate was posted at 10 percent in April 2023.

Youth Employment rate in July 2023 was registered at 86 percent. This was lower than the reported rate in July 2022 at 88.1 percent, and lower than the estimate in April 2023 at 90 percent.

Youth Underemployment rate in July 2023 was registered at 14.8 percent. This was higher than the reported rate in July 2022 at 12.1 percent, and still higher than the estimate in April 2023 at 10.6 percent.

Youth LFPR was placed at 29.6 percent in July 2023, which was lower than the reported youth LFPR in July 2022 (37.1%) and April 2023 (34.7%). Employment rate among youth decreased to 86.0 percent from 88.1 percent in the same month last year and 90.0 percent in April 2023.

Across regions, Region II or Cagayan Valley posted the highest employment rate of 96.7 percent in July 2023. This was followed by Region XI or Davao Region (96.5%) and Region XII or SOCCSKSARGEN (96.4%).

Unemployment rate at the regional level showed that seven of the 17 regions posted an unemployment rate higher than the national rate of 4.8 percent in July 2023. These were Region V or Bicol Region (6.2%), Region IV-A or CALABARZON (5.9%), Region VII or Central Visayas (5.5%), Region X or Northern Mindanao (5.4%), Region VIII or Eastern Visayas (5.1%), Region XIII or Caraga (5.1%) and National Capital Region (4.9%).

Results of ISLE (2018-2020) show that compared to the June 2016 round, an increase of 12,521 employed PWD is observed. Moreover, in June 2018, many employed PWDs were male, with a 65.6% share or 3,966, while 34.4% or 2,076 were female PWD workers. Gains of 6,668 was observed for female PWDs in June 2020, with 8,744 or 47.1% share.

In 2016, PSA conducted a National Disability Prevalence Survey (NDPS) for individuals aged 15 and older, assessing disability levels. Key findings include:

- Only 12% of those with severe disabilities had ever worked, while 10% had never worked.
- Among individuals with disabilities, those with mild disabilities had the highest percentage of those who had ever worked (48%) and the highest percentage of those who had never worked (40%).
- Approximately 34% of individuals with severe disabilities and 13% with moderate disabilities found applying for and securing a job very or extremely problematic.

- More than half (54%) of those with severe disabilities who had previously worked reported that they were not currently working due to their health condition or disability.
- In contrast, the primary reason for individuals with mild (58%), moderate (44%), and no disability (52%) who were not currently working was dealing with personal family responsibilities.

According to ILO, around 1.44 million individuals have disabilities, with 49.1% female. They face disparities in education (including TVET), employment, income, and policy awareness. While also enduring compounded discrimination, intensifying their challenges.

On PWD-based employment, the National Skills Registration Program (NSRP) was initiated. The program operates PhilJobNet and the PESO Employment Information System (PEIS) which are used by the DOLE implementers and partners for the efficient and effective delivery and monitoring of employment facilitation services. The following key observations are derived from PhilJobNet and PEIS:

- A total of 6,926 PWDs are registered from 2020 to June 2023, 52% of which are female. In terms of age group, most of the registrants are within 25-34 years old (20.4%). This is followed by 65 years old and above PWD registrants (16.4%).
- PWD registrants are observed to be visually (26%), physically (19%) and hearing (8%) impaired. When grouped by educational level, many of the registrants are high school graduates (29%) and elementary graduates (28.9%).
- On the employment status of the registrants, recent data shows only 6% of the total unemployed PWD registrants are new entrants/fresh graduates and 4% had finished contracts.
- For employed registrants, there are more self-employed (51%) than wage-employed (39%).

A total of 897 persons with disability are employed in government and private sectors. Further, there are 478 establishments with more than 100 employees employing persons with disability for the same period.

As of June 30, 2022, a total of 1.820M are working in the government, of which 8,206 (0.45%) are PWDs. In terms of regional distribution, majority of the PWD government employees are in Region VI (1,699) and NCR (1,599). Further, the percentage of people with disabilities who are employed increased from 0.37% in 2016 to 0.42% in 2023, an increase of 0.05 percent.

On 2020's onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of employed PWDs increased by 0.05%, totaling 0.46% compared to the previous year. The top three regions which employed PWDs in 2016 were Region 6 (1,575 workers), Region 5 (750 workers), and Region 9 with 671 PWD workers. Meanwhile, from 2017 to June 2023, the top three regions during the said period were the National Capital Region (NCR), Region 6, and Region 4. The number of government PWDs at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was 8,176 and increased to 8,218 by June 2023. Notably, the percentage of female PWD employees rose from 42.5% in 2016 to 44.2% in June 2023.

Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

i. Percent of allocation for micro and small enterprises to total bank loan portfolio (%)

Percent of allocation for medium enterprises to total bank loan portfolio (%) According to Socioeconomic Report 2021[5], the global pandemic has exposed the lack of resiliency of startups, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and cooperatives. Micro and small-scale enterprises were the most vulnerable given their limited asset size, lack of economies of scale, and structural inefficiencies.

To support economic recovery, the government prioritized assistance to affected enterprises, particularly MSMEs, by providing access to low-cost loans and debt restructuring schemes, facilitating market access, and supporting business-repurposing activities, among others.

[5] Socio Economic Report 2021

Loan allocation of banks for micro and small enterprises declined further to 2.1 percent of the total loans as of end-December 2021 from 3.81 percent in 2016. Bank lending activities contracted compared to the pre-pandemic period amid the deterioration of borrowers' credit profiles, less favorable economic outlook, and reduced tolerance for risk. The Philippine banking system's total loan portfolio declined by 0.7 percent year-on-year (y-o-y) to PHP33.9 trillion, while the loans to MSMEs decreased by 8.0 percent y-o-y to PHP1.81 trillion.

Likewise, loan allocation of banks for medium enterprises dropped further to 3.3 percent of the total loans in 2021 from 5.44 percent in 2016. Pursuant to the Magna Carta for Small Enterprises (RA 6977), the mandatory credit allocation for MSMEs lapsed on June 16, 2018. Nevertheless, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) continues to monitor the exposures of the banking industry to MSMEs through the issuance of Memorandum No. M-2018-022.2 The BSP has also undertaken other relief measures to help channel liquidity directly to the MSME sector while ensuring a robust industry.

The global pandemic has exposed the lack of resiliency of startups, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and cooperatives. Micro and small-scale enterprises were the most vulnerable given their limited asset size, lack of economies of scale, and structural inefficiencies. With the government's support programs and measures to curb the infection rate, 69 percent of the MSMEs were able to resume operations in May 2021. The digital transformation of enterprises during this period has been a silver lining as both consumers and businesses shifted to purchasing goods and services online. However, there remains a need to tap technological opportunities to digitally empower enterprises in this fast-changing market environment.

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Some of the strategies to support the small- and medium-sized enterprises includes:

- *Improve access to finance* – Promotion of and access to hybrid instruments, Credit Surety Fund (CSF), and value chain financing (VCF) will be further enhanced.
- *Protect the rights of consumers and businesses through effective B2B and C2C policies* – A policy framework that will effectively govern B2B and C2C transactions will be established and implemented to protect stakeholders against fraud, unfair trade, and anti-competitive business practices.
- *Enhance access to production networks to improve the sector's production supply chain* – The Innovation for Regional Inclusive Innovation Centers (RIICs), Industry and Startups (IRIS) Program will strengthen and expand the RIICs; assist local firms in assessing their readiness for digital transformation; and support the startups to grow, scale up and become sustainable.
- *Enhance innovation and technology adoption of MSMEs, startups, and cooperatives* – This is through the implementation of a comprehensive MSME digitalization program among government agencies nationwide. Programs designed to provide innovative solutions to small enterprises will be

scaled up, including the establishment of incubation hubs, shared service facilities (SSFs), and the Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP) 2.0, among others.

- *Promote an alternative digital marketplace for entrepreneurs to sell and promote local products* – E-markets may replace or complement brick-and-mortar shops to ensure continuous operations of businesses. This will complement the Department of Trade and Industry's Go Lokal! and the DOST's OneStore.ph platforms.

Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs)

According to the World Bank report[6], micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) represent a key pillar of the Government of Philippine's (GoP) competitiveness and inclusive growth strategy. MSMEs are the bedrock of private sector and entrepreneurship in the Philippines. The government's focus on MSME sector stem from its important role in the economy. Comprising over 99 percent of all enterprises in the country, the MSME sector represents the private sector, and generates nearly two-thirds of the country's total employment.

The MSME sector in the Philippines consists of 1,105,143 or 99.59% of the 1,109,684 total registered establishments in the country in 2022 which is 208,304 higher than the registered in 2015 as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). Microenterprises make up the largest portion (90.49%), followed by small enterprises (8.69%), and medium enterprises (0.40%). This composition is at par with those of MSME sectors in other ASEAN countries Collectively, these MSMEs generated a total of 5,607,748 jobs or 65.10% of the country's total employment.

Micro enterprises produced the biggest share (32.69%) closely followed by small enterprises (25.35%) while medium enterprises lagged at 7.06%. Meanwhile, large enterprises generated a total of 3,006,821 jobs or 34.90% of the country's overall employment. Nearly half of the country's MSMEs are largely engaged in "wholesale and retail trade," constituting 49.48% of total establishments. A far second is "accommodation and food service activities" (14.31%) which is closely trailed by "manufacturing" (12.08%). Other key economic activities being undertaken by MSMEs are "personal services for wellness and activities" (6.44%) and "financial and insurance activities" (4.60%).

The Philippines has a legal framework governing the policy for MSME development enshrined in the Magna Carta for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (RA No. 6977, as amended), the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises Act of 2002 (RA No. 9178, as amended by RA No. 10644), the Go Negosyo Act (RA No. 10644), and the Youth Entrepreneurship Act (RA No. 10679). Said laws work synergistically to provide a holistic approach in setting strategic measures that encompass a wide range of relevant sectors under the purview of MSME development.[7]

The government policies and programs for MSMEs cover the following outcome areas:

- *Business Environment* - a dynamic practice and culture of governance that fosters the establishment, development, sustainability, and competitiveness of socially responsible and environment-friendly MSMEs.
- *Access to Finance* - the sustained availability of reasonably priced, socially responsible, and environment-friendly financial products, services, and support programs that are designed for MSMEs and those MSMEs can conveniently and readily access.
- *Access to Markets* - the sustained ability of MSMEs to be competitive in selling their products and services to existing and new markets, both domestic and international, under a climate of fair, free,

[6] World Bank Group. (n.d.). Philippines: Assessing the Effectiveness of MSME and Entrepreneurship Support. https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/853041563828559514/pdf/Philippines-Assessing-the-Effectiveness-of-MSME-and-Entrepreneurship-Support.pdf

[7] Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Plan 2017-2022. (2018). Manila: Department of Trade and Industry

socially responsible and environment-friendly trade practices.

- *Productivity and Efficiency* - the production and delivery of competitive, standards-compliant, socially responsible, and environment friendly products and services that generate optimum economic returns.

Some of the major policies, programs, and projects in the four outcome areas are as follows:

Business Environment

- *RA No. 9501: Magna Carta for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (as amended, RA No. 6977, RA No. 8289)* – An Act that promotes, supports, and encourages entrepreneurship through providing program assistance, and strengthening a balanced and sustainable development to MSMEs.
- *RA No. 9178: Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) Act of 2002* – An Act promoting the establishment of Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs), allocating incentives, benefits, and other purposes.
- *RA 10644: Go Negosyo Act* – An Act promoting job generation and inclusive growth through the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises, mandating the establishment of Negosyo Centers in all cities, municipalities, and provinces, which shall be responsible for promoting ease of doing business and facilitating access to services for MSMEs.
- *R.A. 10679: Youth Entrepreneurship Act* – An Act promoting entrepreneurship and financial education among Filipino youth.
- *RA 9485: Anti-Red-Tape Act* – An Act to improve efficiency in the delivery of government service to the public by reducing bureaucratic red tape, preventing graft and corruption, and providing penalties therefor.
- *Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, series of 2011* – Guidelines in implementing the standards in processing business permits and licenses in all cities and municipalities.
- *Joint Memorandum Circular No.1 Series of 2016* – Revised standards in processing business permits and licenses in all cities and municipalities.
- *Enhanced Business Name Registration System* – Provides ease of registering and paying business name registration online.
- *R.A. No. 10524: Magna Carta for Persons with Disability* – An Act Expanding the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disability, amending for the purpose Republic Act No. 7277.

Access to Finance

- *RA No. 9501, Section 15: Mandatory Allocation of Credit Resources to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (as amended, RA No. 6977, RA No. 8289)* – For a period of 10 years from the date of the Act, all lending institutions under BSP rules, whether private of public, shall set aside at least 8% for micro and small enterprises and at least 2% for medium enterprises of their loan portfolio and make it available for MSME credit.
- *Microfinance program for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) such as 'Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-asenso," or P3 Program* – Aims to provide affordable loan program for MSMEs for this sector to shun loan sharks such as 5-6 money lending scheme. The P3 is designed to bring down the interest rate at which micro-finance is made available to micro enterprises.
- *Access of Small Entrepreneurs to Sound Lending Opportunities (ASENSO) Program* – A revitalized government-led MSME financing program which aims to lower the effective cost of borrowing and liberalize requirements, create wider financing system that will give MSMEs access to short and long-term funds and standardize lending procedures. Under the program, MSMEs get the necessary assistance also through market exposure, human resource training, and product development.

- *Credit Surety Fund Program (CSF)* – A credit enhancement program designed by BSP that aims to increase the credit worthiness of MSMEs having trouble in obtaining loans due to lack of collateral, credit knowledge, and track record.
- *Access of MSMEs to Digital Payments* – A digital finance ecosystem with the right mix and range of service providers, digital solutions, and delivery channels should facilitate the convenience, affordability, and reliability of financial service. In line with this, the National Retail Payment System (NRPS) aims to establish a safe, efficient, reliable and affordable retail payment system in the country. The framework defines high-level policies, standards and governance principles covering retail payment operations and infrastructures. This is an integral reform considering that out of 2.5 billion payment transactions per month, only 1% are made through electronic means. This will translate to lower cost and higher efficiency for our MSMEs as well as unleash the potential of e-commerce.

Access to Market

- *Go Lokal!* – A retail concept store which showcases innovative, high quality Philippine products crafted, designed and produced by the country's MSMEs. It also serves as a free marketing platform where MSME partners gain access to the local consumer market, and ultimately, to the global export market.
- *Market Development Programs such as OTOP Program* – A priority program of the government to promote entrepreneurship and create jobs. Through OTOP, local chief executives of each city and municipality take the lead in identifying, developing, and promoting a specific product or service, which has competitive advantage.
- *Export Pathways Program (EPP)* – EPP focuses on providing export assistance through a systematic approach, providing interventions at every stage of an exporter's growth. It utilizes the Value Chain Approach (VCA), Industry Clustering, and Sub-contracting to arrive at a holistic export development program.
- *Enhanced Support for Trade Fairs* – This is the provision of a more organized menu of market services like trade fairs which are affordable to SMEs, through greater participation and partnerships with private organizations, LGUs and other key sectors. The DTI implements national, regional, sectoral, as well as international trade fairs such as the National Trade Fair (NTF), Manila F.A.M.E. International, International Food Exhibition (IFEX), and e-Services Philippines, among others.
- *oneSTore* – oneSTore.ph is an e-commerce web application that operates nationwide and caters primarily to Philippine consumers. It helps DOST-assisted MSMEs widen the scope of their target market and It can help deliver economic growth and increase business opportunities. oneSTore provides customers with an effortless shopping experience and retailers with simple and direct access to the largest customer base in the Philippines.
- *Tindahang Pinoy* – A depot that will showcase world-class, export-quality Philippine products. This facility aims to help exporters penetrate the domestic consumer and tourism markets with fund assistance from the DTI through the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC).
- *Information Drive on Foreign Trade Agreements* – The DTI, in partnership with the Bureau of Customs (BoC), the Tariff Commission and the private sector, has organized a series of information sessions on Doing Business in Free Trade Areas (DBFTA) nationwide to encourage and assist entrepreneurs to use Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and benefit from them. Understanding emerging and new markets as well as instruments such as FTAs will help exporters address new challenges in the global business environment.
- *Brand Equity Development Program (BrEDP)* – A new initiative of the government to develop innovative and globally competitive brands that can successfully penetrate the national, regional/ASEAN, or international markets. The overall goal of the program is to increase awareness and identity of at least one brand per province, per

year over the six years of implementation from 2017 to 2022.

Productivity and Efficiency

- *Shared Service Facilities (SSFs)* – This program entails setting up common service facilities or production centers for certain processes to give MSMEs access to better technology and more sophisticated equipment to accelerate their bid for competitiveness and help them graduate to a next level where they could tap better and wider markets and be integrated in the global supply chain. The project is implemented in cooperation with the academe, LGUs, and private organizations.
- *SME Roving Academy (SMERA)* – A continuous learning program for the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises to become competitive in domestic and global markets.
- *Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SET-UP)* – SETUP provides MSMEs with equipment and technical assistance to enable them to increase sales and production, streamline and improve overall company operations, upgrade the quality of products and services, conform to national and international standards of excellence, and be competitive in their respective fields.
- *KAPATID Mentor ME* – The Program is an initiative of the DTI and the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) to help the country's micro and small enterprises (MSEs) through coaching and mentoring where mentors teach MSEs on different aspects of business operations.
- *Food Innovation Center* – The Centers, which are in a state universities and colleges or private higher educational institutions, aim to produce value added agricultural and fishery food products by becoming the hub for innovations and technical support services for the food processing industry. Support services include food testing, information, packaging and labeling design, consultancy services, trainings, and seminars.
- *Industry Clustering* – The Program entails the delivery of various forms of technical assistance/interventions such as skills training, product development, market development and access, and the like to capacitate MSMEs and improve their productivity and competitiveness.

Strengthen Informal Economy

The informal economy consists of independent, self-employed small-scale producers and distributors of goods and services. Workers in this sector are for the most part not covered by the country's labour laws and regulations. Proxy measurement and related indicators for the informal economy include the vulnerable employment rate, defined as the share of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment.

In the Philippines, the Labor Force Survey data indicated that 38.3 per cent of those employed are in vulnerable forms of employment. This means nearly two out of five workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements and access to social protection and are more at risk during a crisis or shock.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes R204 - Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) adopted at the ILC's 104th Session (2015) based on strong tripartite consensus and near unanimous vote. This new Recommendation is of strategic significance for the world of work and for the future of work: it concerns half of the global labour force and more than 90 percent of small and medium enterprises worldwide who are working and operating in conditions of informality. In recent years, the use of technology is increasingly becoming a key element of the integrated approach to formalizing the informal economy, which is sometimes referred as "e-formalization" or "e-formality".

The ILO Country Office for the Philippines (CO-Manila) has carried out research and programmes to better understand informal work. Since the adoption of R204 in 2015, CO-Manila has been intensifying its support to the constituents on the promotion of the Recommendation, organizing awareness-raising workshops and South-South experience sharing, facilitating the participation of

the constituents at the regional and international fora, and providing technical inputs at the policy dialogue such as the five-cluster dialogue on enterprise formalization which started in 2019 on the basis of the learnings of the South-South forum of 2018. In collaboration with the Department of Labor - Bureau of Working Conditions (DOLE-BWC) and National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) , ILO has been engaged in the regional rollout of R204 of the selected RDCs since 2018.

The office also works with specific categories of workers in the informal economy specifically through the ongoing Assessment Based National Dialogue (ABND) towards establishing a Social Protection Floor as well as the Domestic Workers project, in order to strategically support the growing sector, enhance their role as contributors to the economy and provide such workers with the legitimacy and protection accorded other types of workers (ILO, n.d.).

j. Contribution of Informal Sector in the Country's Economy

The International Labour Organization (ILO) broadly defines the informal economy as referring to "all economic activities by workers and economic units that are – in law or practice – not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements" (ILO, 2002). Informal economy is consisted of independent, self-employed small-scale producers and distributors of goods and services. Work informality exists in all countries, although it is more prevalent in developing countries, which includes the Philippines.

The World Economics website calculates that the Philippines' informal economy is worth approximately US$ 470 billion, making up a significant 34.1% of the country's gross domestic product (World Economics, n.d.). According to the 2018 Informal Sector Survey, the informal sector employs 15.68 million people in the Philippines, accounting for 38 percent of the working population. And its substantial numbers translated into significant contributions to our expanding economy. Citing data from the Philippine Statistical Authority, the informal sector contributed P5.013 trillion to the country's GDP in 2016 (Royeca, 2023). There are no follow-up surveys conducted to update the statistics on informal workers in the country. Street vendors and peddlers make up a large portion of the Philippines' informal economy. Aside from street vendors, the Philippines' informal economy also includes people such as small-scale farmers, micro-entrepreneurs, fisherfolk, cobblers, street food hawkers, junkyard collectors, jeepney barkers, cigarette sellers, etc.

PSA typically estimates the number of informal sector workers in the country using data of self-employed workers and unpaid family workers from its regular Labor Force Survey (Medenilla, 2019). As of 2022, the agency estimates that the number of self-employed workers nationwide is around 13.37 million, or around 26.9 percent of the 49.7 million work force for that period which is relatively higher than the 10.9 millions of self-employed workers, or around 26.9 percent of the 40.83 million work force in 2016. At present, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) uses the proxy indicator on self-employed and unpaid family workers of the Labor Force Survey to provide current estimates. Also, the growth in agriculture and fishery exports showed signs of improvement. The value of agriculture and fishery exports increased from 8.1 percent in 2016 to 9.1 percent in 2020.

In contrast with well-established conglomerates and companies, as well as government-sourced jobs and regular jobs with clear rules of recruitment, agreement, and responsibilities, jobs at informal enterprises are mostly (but not always) characterized by a lack of regulation from government inspectors and based only on verbal agreements and understandings. They also tend to be characterized by untidy and dangerous working conditions, irregular wages for workers, and a lack of coverage by government laws and labor regulations. Thus, while the informal sector contributes as much to Philippines' economy as the formal sector, it presents many risks to those who rely on it (Iglesias, 2023). In addition, despite the contributions of the informal economy and its workers, it is discriminated against and "stigmatized" as "illegal, non-productive [and] a symptom of bad governance" (Chen, 2016)

Below are the national policies enacted to support workers in the informal economy:

Table 27. Laws and National Policies that Protect and Support the Informal Economy

Law	Description
Republic Act No. 8425 or the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act	An Act recognizes the informal sector as one of its 14 basic sectors. It provides for the participation of the informal sector in "planning, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Security Reform Agenda at various levels of government."
Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women	An Act that identifies women workers in the informal economy among the marginalized sectors "who shall be given particular attention, to guarantee that their human rights shall be respected, protected, fulfilled, and promoted."
Republic Act No. 10361 or the Kasambahay Law	An Act Instituting Policies for the Protection and Welfare of Domestic Workers.
Republic Act No. 9178 or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) Act of 2002	An Act to Promote the Establishment of Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs), Providing Incentives and Benefits therefor, and for Other Purposes.

Below are the national policies enacted in relation to promoting the right to work and employment of Persons with Disabilities (PWD):

Table 28. Laws and National Policies that Promote the Right to Work of Persons with Disabilities

Law	Description
Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons	An Act Providing for the Rehabilitation, Self-development and Self-reliance of Persons with Disabilities and their Integration into the Mainstream of Society and for other purposes.
Republic Act No. 10524 or Magna Carta for Persons with Disability (as amended, Republic Act No. 7277)	An Act Expanding the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disability, amending for the purpose Republic Act No. 7277, as amended, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability.
Executive Order No. 417	EO directing the Implementation of the Economic Independence Program for Persons with Disabilities.
Executive Order No. 261	EO for the creation of an Inter-Agency Committee on Employment Promotion, Protection and Rehabilitation of PWDs which is tasked to coordinate and monitor the implementation of and compliance with the employment provision of the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, and other relevant law.

k. Promote an enabling, fair and responsible environment for business and innovation

According to International Labour Organization (ILO), occupational accidents and diseases cause human suffering and loss. Their economic cost is high, with some 2 million workers dying each year from work-related accidents and diseases, and the figure is on the increase despite efforts to make inroads.

The Philippine Government estimates that 2.2 million Filipino workers in medium and large enterprises enjoy effective occupational safety and health (OSH) protection and services. In other words, 17 of 18 persons in the nation's workforce of 38.8 million do not benefit from acceptable working conditions. Studies substantiate that OSH conditions in micro-firms and the informal sector pose risks and hazards.

The ILO Country Office for the Philippines (CO-Manla) supports programs to promote a culture of safety and health that bring OSH services to those that need them the most. A range of government and non-government agencies are partners, with beneficiaries that include agrarian reform farmers, informal workers and trade unions and their members. The office works with constituents – governments, workers and employers' organizations to promote ratification of the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No.187).

A national occupational safety and health culture is one in which the right to a safe and healthy working environment is respected at all levels, where governments, employers and workers actively participate in securing a safe and healthy working environment through a system of defined rights, responsibilities and duties, and where the highest priority is accorded to the principle of prevention (ILO, n.d.).

l. Doing Business Starting a Business Score improved

The Philippines has made marked improvement in promoting ease of doing business, digital transformation, and ensuring public access to budget information in the past two years. The implementation of the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery (EODB EGSD) Act, which required streamlining processes and requirements for starting a business and granting construction permits, boosted the confidence of the private sector and eased the burden of the public in transacting with government. Efforts to further create a conducive business environment were initiated.

Relative to this, the Country's score in doing business/starting a business improved from 103rd rank with a rating of 60.07 in 2016 to 95th rank with rating of 62.8 in 2020 (World Bank, 2020). Improvements in the Philippines' ranking are attributed to the following major improvements:

- starting a business by eliminating capital requirements for domestic companies
- dealing with construction permits by improving coordination and streamlining the process for obtaining an occupancy certificate
- protecting minority investors by requiring greater disclosure of transactions with interested parties and enhancing director liability for transactions with interested parties

Following the World Bank's discontinuation of its flagship Doing Business Report due to data irregularities, the pilot implementation of a localized version of the reporting and ranking system is being explored to promote efficiency of government services, improve regulatory quality, and streamline administrative processes.

m. Percent of allocation for micro and small enterprises to total bank loan portfolio (%)

Percent of allocation for medium enterprises to total bank loan portfolio (%) According to Socioeconomic Report 2021, the global pandemic has exposed the lack of resiliency of startups, MSMEs, and cooperatives (DEPDev, 2021). Micro and small-scale enterprises were the most vulnerable given their limited asset size, lack of economies of scale, and structural inefficiencies.

To support economic recovery, the government prioritized assistance to affected enterprises, particularly MSMEs, by providing access to low-cost loans and debt restructuring schemes, facilitating market access, and supporting business-repurposing activities, among others.

Loan allocation of banks for micro and small enterprises declined further to 2.1% of the total loans as of end-December 2021 from 3.81% in 2016. Bank lending activities contracted compared to the pre-pandemic period amid the deterioration of borrowers' credit

profiles, less favorable economic outlook, and reduced tolerance for risk. The Philippine banking system's total loan portfolio declined by 0.7% year-on-year to PHP 33.9 trillion, while the loans to MSMEs decreased by 8.0% year-on-year to PHP 1.81 trillion.

Likewise, loan allocation of banks for medium enterprises dropped further to 3.3% of the total loans in 2021 from 5.44% in 2016. Pursuant to the Magna Carta for Small Enterprises (Republic Act No. 6977), the mandatory credit allocation for MSMEs lapsed on June 16, 2018. Nevertheless, the BSP continues to monitor the exposures of the banking industry to MSMEs through the issuance of Memorandum No. M-2018-022.2 The BSP has also undertaken other relief measures to help channel liquidity directly to the MSME sector while ensuring a robust industry.

5.2. SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY FOR ALL

a. Diversify of the urban economy and promote cultural and creative industries

Skills retooling, upskilling, digital literacy, and similar capacity-building programs will be offered to cultural and creative workers. Business toolkits that encourage business continuity planning, technology-enabled operations, and innovative practices such as design thinking will be developed for cultural and creative enterprises. Industry roadmaps for specific domains in the creative economy will incorporate strategies to prepare firms for risks and disruptions. Collaboration and co-creation among local and international stakeholders in the creative economy will be leveraged further.

Agencies such as the NCCA, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), Design Center of the Philippines (DCP), and Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), will prioritize the generation of registries of their respective stakeholders. Once established, this will be coordinated with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Trade and Industry, and the Social Security System to facilitate access to social protection programs, especially during emergencies.

Interventions to integrate creative workers into the formal economy will be complemented with strategies to assist them in intellectual property rights registration and accessing other relevant legal services when necessary. Concerned agencies like NCCA, DCP, and FDCP will work with DOLE and the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines to raise awareness among cultural and creative workers of their legal rights, including intellectual property rights.

Online and offline platforms, including trade fairs, will be utilized to expand the distribution and promotion of cultural products and services.

The Gardening and Gulayan projects by Department of Agriculture engaged community members in urban agriculture and enhanced agricultural participation in urban regions contributing to improved food security and nutrient availability. From 2017 to 2022, seeds, fertilizer, and garden tools, among others were provided to the ff:

- 2,863 urban agriculture gardens nationwide (except Regions IVA and XII), benefitting 2,850 groups;
- 25,357 school gardens across the country, serving 25,152 schools.;
- 1,159 Gulayan sa Barangay in Regions CAR, I, II, III, IVB, V, VII, VIII, and XII;
- 912 Gulayan sa Likod-Bahay in Regions CAR, II, III, IVB, VII and VIII;
- 27 Gulayan sa Bakanteng Lote with Hydroponics System and Drip Fertigation System in Regions IVA, VI, VII, VIII, IX, XI, and XII;
- 50 containerized gardening sites in Regions IVA, IVB, VI, VII, VIII, IX and XII

The following were the challenges experienced during program implementation:

a. Most teachers encountered difficulties in maintaining the gardens as they have multiple responsibilities;
b. Unsuitable sites were identified due to drainage problems and shortages in water sources, resulting in additional labor costs;
c. Monitoring the progress, especially in rural areas, was hampered by lack of monitoring tools, particularly in School Gardens and Gulayan sa Paaralan.
d. Strict health protocols, lockdowns and restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic impeded the program implementation.

To sustain the gains from the program, the following should be considered:

a. support of school heads, parents, LGUs, and other stakeholders;
b. regular training on community gardening is essential to promote and sustain backyard crop production practices; and
c. budget for the sustainability of these projects, specifically for maintenance and improvement, should be included in the annual plan of schools and LGUs.

Furthermore, the program expanded its reach to urban and peri-urban areas by establishing the National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP) in 2022. In 2023, the NUPAP provided the following: agricultural inputs including seeds, tools, and organic fertilizers to households, promoting backyard gardening and enhancing production efficiency. Farm machinery such as shredders and grasscutters were distributed for composting and land preparation, while hauling trucks assisted in the transport of harvest. High-value crop production sites were established in Regions III, V, IX, X, and NCR, thereby increasing productivity in the area. However, there were limited suppliers for small-value procurement, disruptions caused by Avian Influenza, and changes in sites, among others. Collaboration with other offices, shovel-ready projects, and regular project monitoring are important in the successful implementation of the program.

b. Develop technical and entrepreneurial skills to thrive in a modern urban economy

From 2017 to 2022, assistance and capacity development activities focused on enhancing technical and entrepreneurial skills essential for thriving in the modern economy were provided. The following milestones were achieved:

- 444 training courses on sustainable techniques, benefiting 15,019 participants;
- the School-On the Air (SOA) radio program reached 473 participants;
- 265 capability-building activities in enterprise development, benefitting 4,891 individuals and 52 groups;
- investment fora for Overseas Filipino Workers, engaging 2,755 individuals and 137 groups;
- 35 episodes of agribusiness investment webinars, drawing 12,199 views and reaching 31,233 viewers;
- Enhanced KADIWA ni Ani at Kita Financial Grant Assistance Program, which provided PhP 977.52 million to 426 beneficiaries (FCA, CBOs, LGUs, SUCs) from 2019 to 2021; and
- PhP 221.4 million were awarded through the Young Farmers Challenge (YFC) Program to support 2,955 youth beneficiaries engaging in agri-fishery based enterprises.

During program implementation, the following challenges were encountered:

a. ensuring maximum participation and dealing with adverse weather that affected the SOA broadcasts;
b. inability of proponents/FCA participants to provide the necessary information required for enterprise profiling and assessments for the Enterprise Development Program;
c. compliance of documentary requirements, lack of DA CSO accreditation, and past project liquidation for the the KADIWA Financial Grant Assistance Program
d. limited access to financial services and markets, training constraints, non-compliance by awardees,

and delays in fund releases owing to additional requirements for the YFC program.

Several lessons have been collected for more efficient program implementation in the next fiscal year: consistent communication, coordination with participants, and alternative approaches like recorded broadcasts and teaching cellphone radio use by ATI-RTCs and AEWs; collaborate with DA banner programs, bureaus, and attached agencies to set Agribusiness Investment Focus criteria; enhance collaboration with DA AMADs, LGUs, and stakeholders for effective Investment Promotion Planning; ensure stable internet connectivity for video documentation; coordinate well with production teams, providing guides and scripts for smoother processes; emphasize evaluating beneficiaries' readiness for participation and compliance with documentation, including CSO accreditation enhance coordination with LGUs for YFC program success, conducting background checks on applicants and ensuring continuous financial assistance, partnerships, and timely monitoring; and account for natural disasters, using durable materials and intensifying Department support during challenging periods.

The government will also continue to digitalize education and training, roll out employment bridging modules, and provide subsidies through the issuance of training vouchers, in partnership with the private sector. Through these, there will be employment gains from expected job diversification and flexible movement of the labor force. We will also pursue the full implementation of the Philippine Skills and Qualifications Frameworks (PSF/PQF) towards building the skills and competencies of the country's human capital for the digital economy. Further, we will ensure access to digital learning and training in underserved areas by enhancing the information, education, and communication (IEC) initiatives of TVET through various platforms such as the TESDA's Mobile Training Laboratory Program.

Given the growth in e-commerce and increased demand for digitally competent workers, we will expand the Labor Market Information (LMI) platforms to focus on digital careers. Both traditional and new forms of LMI dissemination will be maximized along with current systems such as the PhilJobNet, PESO Employment Information System, and the recently established Careerinfo.ph (Career Information System). Likewise, online employment facilitation mechanisms (i.e., virtual job and business fairs, e-Trabaho, Negosyo, at Kabuhayan) will be expanded to respond to the needs of job seekers and employers amidst the challenges of the pandemic. With these, we can provide timely, relevant, and accessible information towards informed career and education choices.

Training programs, especially those that are enterprise-based, accelerate knowledge and skills transfer, thereby increasing the employability and agility of the workforce. To take advantage of advancements in technology, we will strengthen the collaboration with academe and industry associations to aid the government in policy and program design. Meanwhile, we will continue the implementation of recently improved employment programs like the (a) Government Internship Program (GIP); (b) JobStart Philippines Program; and (c) Special Program of the Employment of Students (SPES). For the SPES and GIP, the DOLE also introduced alternative work arrangements for their beneficiaries.

c. Develop urban-rural linkages to maximize productivity

Connectivity aims to improve mobility and provide access to economic opportunities and social services across geographic space. It also aims to enhance the link between growth centers and production areas. The revised list of IFPs includes 77 connectivity-related projects consisting of roads, bridges, rails, airports, and seaports.

For roads and bridges, the Metro Manila Skyway Stage 3 and Metro Manila Logistics Network Project (Bonifacio Global City-Ortigas Center Link Road Project, Binondo-Intramuros Bridge, and Estrella-Pantaleon Bridge) comprise the completed IFPs. Ongoing projects include the North Luzon Expressway-South Luzon Expressway (NLEX-SLEX) Connector Road, SLEX Toll Road 4, NLEX Harbor Link Extension to Anda Circle, and Camarines Sur High-Speed Highway Project. In Visayas, ongoing IFPs include Bacolod-Negros Occidental Economic Highway and Samar Pacific Coastal Road Project. For Mindanao, the Cagayan de Oro Coastal Road, Sindangan-Bayog-Lakewood Road in Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga del Norte, Improving Growth Corridors in Mindanao Road Sector

Project, and Road Network Development Project in Conflict Affected Areas in Mindanao are being implemented. Moreover, the Surallah-T'Boli-San Jose Road in South Cotabato is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021.

In terms of rail, ongoing projects to enhance the Philippine National Railway (PNR) include the North-South Commuter Rail (PNR North 1), North-South Commuter Railway Extension (PNR North 2 and PNR South Commuter Rail), and PNR South Long Haul. The Subic-Clark Railway and Mindanao Rail Project Phase 1 are also in progress.

For air transport, the Sangley Airport and Clark International Airport Expansion Project Phase 1 under the IFPs were completed. The ongoing rehabilitation and expansion of the General Santos Airport and the construction of the Bicol International Airport Development Project are targeted to be completed in 2021. For sea transport, the New Cebu International Container Port Project is being implemented. Those in the IFP pipeline are the Iloilo Port, Davao-Sasa Port, and General Santos Port. In terms of information and communications technology (ICT), the Luzon Bypass Infrastructure Project was completed as part of the IFPs. This project provides a path for international cables across Luzon which, in exchange, allows government to use these cables for increased internet capacity. In addition, a Joint Memorandum Circular has been issued by concerned agencies to streamline the procedural requirements and reduce delays in the processing of permits for telecommunications towers. This is to facilitate internet connectivity in unserved and underserved areas in the count.

From 2016-2022, the community urban and peri-urban gardens, the Kadiwa Program for selling products, and Market Linkages Initiatives that connected farmers, fisherfolk enterprises, and agri-based micro and small businesses with consumer markets and institutional buyers were established. The following were achieved:

- Established 315 community urban and peri-urban gardens;
- Facilitated 67,219 retail Kadiwa retail selling benefitting 7.33 million households; and
- Assisted 470 market linkage transactions, which assisted 318 buyers and sellers.

However, the following challenges were encountered:

- Limited funding for community-based gardens, lack of widespread understanding and support for urban food security, disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic, difficulties in sustaining garden operations, and environmental constraints such as typhoons.
- Specific challenges faced by the KADIWA retail selling include the risk of infection, discontinuation of selling in some areas, limited resources for identification and setup, and financial constraints for suppliers. Other challenges for vegetable processing and institutional buying include a limited number of processors, difficulties in finding suppliers, reluctance of farmer groups to enter into agreements, low buying prices, oversupply during peak seasons, low local production of high-demand commodities, coordinating with different buyers and farmers, and meeting documentary requirements.

To intensify program implementation, the following were done:

- Maintain and improve existing services through the Farmers Contact Center and e-Learning Program, implementing health and safety protocols during the pandemic, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation processes.
- Use of climate-smart agricultural technologies and strong collaborations with different stakeholders such as the DepEd, LGUs, rural-based organizations, civil society, and FCAs.
- Provide agricultural supplies and starter kits to reinforce home gardening, recognizes and rewards best-performing community-based urban agriculture gardens, documents and disseminates home-grown best practices and agricultural technologies, includes community farm leaders in training programs, offers knowledge products for continuous learning, facilitates market-linkages through the KADIWA Program, and accredits urban farms as Learning Sites for Agriculture.

- Intensified partnerships, market-matching activities, and inter-trading to prevent losses and spoilage. The lessons learned include the need for expanding databases, updating cost structures, utilizing social media for information dissemination, and conducting trade fairs to enhance coordination and communication with different buyers and suppliers.

National Government Agency Accomplishments

On June 17, 2019, the National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan (NTESDP) was formally approved and adopted with the President signing Executive Order (EO) No. 83 s. 2019.
The EO enjoins all National Government Agencies and instrumentalities, Local Government Units, and private sector to adopt, disseminate, and support the implementation of the NTESDP, and refer to the Plan in the development and implementation of their respective Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs, projects and policies.

The NTESDP 2018-2022 envisions a Vibrant Quality TVET for Decent Work and Sustainable Inclusive Growth. This overarching theme is the rallying point that primes the TESDA and its partners to achieve the NTESDP's primary objective of galvanizing and strengthening the TVET sector. These will be achieved through the following Interagency projects and programs:

1. **eLearning for Agriculture and Fisheries (DA-ATI)**

   The Agricultural Training Institute under the Department of Agriculture implemented eLearning for Agriculture and Fisheries as a major part of their e-Extension Program. The eLearning platform offers courses on Crops Production, Livestock, Marine and Fisheries, Social Technology, and Sustainable Agriculture.

2. **Smarter Philippines Through R&D, Training and Adoption - SPARTA (DOST)**

   The Smarter Philippines Through R&D, Training and Adoption (SPARTA) is a project launched by DOST to provide necessary online education that will produce in three (3) years, 30,000 learners completing a specific tract on data science and analytics, R&D mechanisms and infrastructure to enable the data science and analytics industry to foster innovative governance practices.

3. **Industrial Training (DOST-Metals Industry Research and Development Center)**

   Designs and implements relevant training modules which continuously upgrade the Filipino entrepreneurs, engineers, and technicians to the demands of local and international markets.

4. **Ladderized Education Program (CHED)**

   The Commission on Higher Education continued to implement the the Ladderized Education Program (LEP) which allows tech-voc graduates to pursue a college degree without having to take the course programs all over again. CHED has developed 10 programs with Model Embedment of TVET Competencies/Qualifications with the recently approved Policy Standards and Guidance (PSG) for Ladderized BS in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (BSNAME).

5. **iTrain (DOST-FNRI)**

   The iTrain is Department of Science and Technology - Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI) newly added web-based service that delivers online tools for food and nutrition information. It commits itself to disseminate information to stakeholders for an empowering healthy lifestyle and well nourishment of Filipinos. The iTrain has been conducting trainings and seminars to utilize the use of the website. Users can enroll for face-to-face, online, or offline trainings to

learn more about health while earning professional development credits.

6. **DOH Academy (DOH)**

The pandemic prompted the Department of Health (DOH) to add courses on practical training in health and wellness through their DOH academy e-learning platform. Seventeen (17) additional e-learning courses were uploaded to DOH academy wherein 8,330 individuals registered with 58% of the total enrollees completed the courses. E-learning courses include contract tracing, testing, treatment, infection prevention, and control.

7. **Digital Jobs PH (DICT)**

Digital Jobs PH (DJPH) is the initiative of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) that offers various tracks of free online technical training to the general public as the nation heads into extended quarantine. It primarily aims to develop ICT technical skills of Filipinos in the countryside and increase an individual's hireability while participating in the digital economy. The value of the DJPH may be measured according to its economic contribution to the Local Government Unit (LGUs), where training has been conducted and how the populace may be upskilled to contribute to the local IT-BPM industry. This information would be crucial in informing and guiding the Department's policy and project development as it will assess and evaluate the efficiency and efficacy of project implementation in the countryside.

8. **JobStart (DOLE)**

The JobStart Philippines is a program headed by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in collaboration with other agencies including TESDA. It aims to enhance the employability of youth by reducing their jobsearch period and increasing their employment rate through Life Skills Training (LST) and Technical Training/Internship (TTI), paid internship, and full-cycle employment facilitation services from career planning to placement in best-fit jobs.

9. **Career Guidance and Advocacy Program (DOLE, DepEd, CHED, PRC, DOST)**

TESDA is an active member of the working group on the Career Guidance Advocacy Program (CGAP), which involves a network of agencies, including DOLE as the head, DOST, DepEd, CHED, and the PRC. The CGAP Working Group aims to create annual CGAP events in line with the groups' commitment to plan events that will involve the contributions and participation of these agencies in strengthening career guidance in the Philippines and providing updated Labor Market Intelligence (LMI). The Agency also serves as the Focal Agency for the Career Ambassadors Program which aims to establish a pool of Career Ambassadors who are qualified and credible spokespersons who can influence career seekers to make informed career decisions.

10. **Rice Extension Services Program - Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (DA)**

The RESP-RCEF program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) intends to help improve Filipino rice farmers' competitiveness, productivity, and income amidst the growing competition in the Philippine rice trade market. In joint effort with TESDA, the agency has been tasked to teach skills on rice crop production, modern rice farming techniques, seed production, farm mechanization, and knowledge/technology transfer through farm schools nationwide.

11. **Tsuper Iskolar Program (DOTr)**

Launched in 2019, the Tsuper Iskolar Program is a joint scholarship program between TESDA and the Department of Transportation (DOTr) intended for jeepney drivers, conductors, and other stakeholders. The scholarship program aims to provide skills training and social assistance, including developing training regulations and curricula for the affected stakeholders of the Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP). With a PHP350 million budget from DOTr, TESDA is preparing workers for a modernized transportation sector. The beneficiaries received free skills training, skills assessment, entrepreneurship training, and a training support fund for food and transportation allowance. The Tsuper Iskolar Program covers various sectors, including Automotive, Construction, Metals and Engineering, and Land Transportation.

12. **Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) (DSWD)**

The SLP, led by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), is a community-based capacity-building program for the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized households and individuals. The program intends to help beneficiaries to acquire the necessary assets to engage in and maintain thriving livelihoods that helps improve their socio-economic status. Specific programs include micro-enterprise development, skills training, and employment facilitation. As of December 31, 2021, the SLP has assisted 101,481 households. The DSWD shall devolve some of its services in 2022 to comply with the guidance of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

13. **Gender and Development Programs**

In line with Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women and the Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality, the promotion of gender equality in TESDA ensures equal access and elimination of discrimination in the TVET sector. As such, TESDA's Gender and Development (GAD) activities aim to raise awareness and critical consciousness in contributing to inclusivity for all. TESDA committed itself to improving the TESDA GAD Focal Point System (GFPS) to implement programs that would strengthen projects, activities, and other initiatives related to GAD. Examples of GAD programs include discussions on gender sensitivity trainings, collaboration with the Philippine Commission on Women, development of online courseware on GAD and sexual harassment awareness.

14. **Community Empowerment thru Science and Technology (CEST) (DOST)**

The Community Empowerment thru Science and Technology (CEST) is a program continually pursuing growth which aims to build progressive, empowered, and resilient communities under the blanket of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). During its implementation, 565 communities were able to benefit from 725 trainings conducted. Around 19,982 of the trained individuals include those that are isolated geographically, belong to marginalized sectors, communities with conflict, and indigenous people.

Projects and Collaborations with Development Partners – Programs lead by TESDA in partnership with other organizations towards achieving commitments:

1. **Skills for Prosperity (SFP) Project Philippines**

   The Skills for Prosperity Project in the Philippines (SfP-PH) is Britain's overseas development assistance project funded by the UK Global Prosperity Fund and implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The purpose of SfP-PH is to increase national capacity in achieving sustainable inclusive growth through improving technical vocational education skills. This can be done through its four pillars which are enhanced equity, improved quality, enhanced relevance, and improved cost effectiveness. The SfP-PH project highlights gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) while focusing on agriculture, construction, and information technology and business process management sectors. The sectors are widely recognized for their potential for employment creation catering to marginalized sectors. It is currently focused on area-based activities in three pilot regions which are Regions VI, VII, and VIII in Visayas. The mentioned regions were chosen as these are places with brisk economic development yet natural disaster challenges still occur. Together with the British Embassy in Manila and the ILO, TESDA works closely to upgrade skills development and Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems in the Philippines while attaining a sustained and inclusive academic growth.

2. **Green Philippine TVET**

   In line with TESDA Circular No. 58 Series of 2018: Implementing Guidelines for Greening TVET System, the agency developed the Greening Framework and Greening TVET Checklist. The Green Framework discusses the movement of TESDA in green jobs, policies, competency standards, training regulations, culture and a community. Both Framework and Checklist put forward objective and quantifiable evaluation for greening TVET. With the main goal of preserving and restoring the environment, the production of green jobs under the influence of RA 10771 or Green Jobs Act of 2016, the agency is expected to protect ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce consumption, and decarbonize the economy in the agriculture, industry, or services sector. Several provincial training centers such as the Calumpit Training Center have successfully promoted sustainable solutions through their solar-powered rainwater harvest and irrigation systems. Other green initiatives include the integration of green consciousness in local communities, like what the Provincial Training Center of Iba, Zambales and Camarines Sur has done with their constituents.

3. **STEMifying TVET With ILO**

   The International Labour Organization (ILO) developed aSTEM learning design framework to strengthen the skills training of women who are underprivileged and underemployed TVET graduates. The framework aims to equip these women to be more equipped with STEM-related skills to increase their career prospects. Implementing Guidelines in STEMifying TVET is currently being developed. TESDA will develop a Contextual Learning Matrix (CLM) that would connect basic, common, and core units of competency in areas of mathematics, science, and relevant languages in the emerging fields of green technology, health literacy, and inclusive training delivery.

CHAPTER 6

Environmentally Sustainable and Resilient Urban Development

The level of urbanization in the Philippines has rapidly increased through the years as evidenced by the continued high population growth rates in major urban cities. The Philippines has launched several initiatives towards fostering an environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development in line with the PNUA. These initiatives were spearheaded by the national government in partnership and close collaboration with local governments, civil society, the academe, local communities, and private stakeholders.

6.1. RESILIENCE, MITIGATION, AND ADAPTION OF CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

a. Minimize urban sprawl and loss of biodiversity resulting from it

Urban Greening

The Philippines is also investing in urban greening initiatives to preserve or create natural areas within urban centers, integrate green spaces into urban environments, and make these accessible for communities. Some of the enabling policies related to urban greening include the (a) DOH-DILG-DOT-DENR-DHSUD-DPWH-PCW-NCCA Joint Administrative Order (JAO) No. 2023-0001 dated 14 August 2023, with the subject: "Guidelines on the Creation, Use, and Management of Parks and Public Open Spaces for the Promotion of Physical and Mental Health and Social Well-being; (b) DHSUD's Open Space Development Guidelines; and (c) DOH's Health Communities Program. Urban greening is aligned with the *Resilient and Green Human Settlements Framework* (RGHSF) promulgated by DHSUD on using green development and adopting a resilience-driven approach on human settlements. Aside from enhancing environmental quality and livability of urban areas, urban greening also contributes to the attainment of the *Philippine Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan 2015-2028* (PBSAP). Under the PBSAP, the Philippines envisions that by 2028, there will be a 5% increase in the proportion of terrestrial natural areas in the five largest cities; and that as result of improved conservation, ecosystem services provided by key biodiversity areas will be enhanced (DENR BMB, 2016).

The National Greening Program (NGP), which started in 2011 and was expanded in 2016 through Executive Order No. 193 signed on November 12, 2015, aimed to rehabilitate the country's unproductive, denuded, and degraded forestlands estimated at 7.1 million hectares from 2016 to 2028 (DENR, 2024). The Expanded NGP includes urban areas under the greening plan of local governments, promoting the planting of trees and creation of green spaces in cities. Moreover, several local governments across the country have also initiated their respective urban greening programs such as establishing community parks, gardens, greenbelts, and green corridors to improve their green cover and enable biodiversity to thrive. Green areas not just improve the aesthetic appeal of urban centers, but they also serve as habitat for species living in urban areas, help improve air quality, raise awareness on environmental conservation, and provide meaningful and relaxing recreational areas which contribute to improved mental and physical well-being for urban dwellers.

Aside from open spaces, LGUs also plant trees along streets and incorporate green landscaping into urban design to reduce heat by providing shade, reduce air pollution and improve air quality, and improve aesthetic appeal of cities.

To develop a clear plan and approach on how to implement urban green space in the Philippines, the DENR Climate Change Service pushed forward the development of the *Urban Green Spaces Framework Action Plan* for the period 2022 to 2030. The framework enumerates the challenges of urbanization, natural and built environment factors, green growth strategies, and the goal of improving the quality of life. At the national level, financial and technical assistance was provided to the LGUs to establish their green spaces. Furthermore, programs and interventions of LGUs on developing green spaces are considered as part of the performance criteria in the DILG's Seal of Good Local Governance. Today, many LGUs continue to allocate budgets in their respective Annual Investment Plans to create, upgrade, and maintain urban green spaces.

Transport-oriented Development

The Philippines has launched several initiatives to minimize urban sprawl and reduce the impact to biodiversity by promoting new and sustainable ways to plan and direct the growth of urban centers. The country is promoting transport-oriented development through the creation of compact, walkable, mixed-use communities that are centered on efficient mass public transportation systems such as integrated rail systems, bus rapid transit systems, intermodal passenger terminals, and bus interchanges. This type of development encourages higher-density housing and mixed-use buildings near transit hubs, reducing the need to expand cities outward. At the same time, efficient and reliable mass public transportation systems, urban communities less reliant on cars, reducing the pressure to build more roads as well as parking spaces.

Promoting transport-oriented development is enshrined in both the long-term vision and mid-term housing and urban development plans of the country. The *National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan* (NHUDSP) 2040 identifies transport-oriented development as a banner program to achieve the goal of providing "sustainable housing and well-planned communities for every Filipino family". Transport-oriented development is also aligned with the strategies in both the *National Urban Development and Housing Framework* (NUDHF) 2017-2022 and the updated NUDHF 2023-2028 on integrating mobility and transport planning in land use planning, mixed-use development, and urban redevelopment. This will enable urban centers to reap multiple benefits such as greater urban mobility, reduced energy consumption and GHG emissions, improved public health, and economic growth. When fully implemented, transit-oriented development is expected to positively impact the quality of life of communities in urban centers by reducing traffic congestion making travel more pleasurable and cost-effective, improving safety by reducing pollution and reducing risks from transportation-related accidents, and lowering household expenses related to transportation, among others. The *Transit-Oriented Development Policy Framework* issued by DHSUD envisions that Transit-Oriented Development will be mainstreamed in both national and local land use planning by 2028.

To date, there are numerous ongoing and planned transport development initiatives in the Philippines that are in line with the principle of transport-oriented development. In the country's capital, the major railway systems serving Metro Manila such as the Light Rail Transit Line 1 (LRT1), Light Rail Transit Line 2 (LRT2), Metro Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT3), and the Philippine National Railway (PNR) remain operational with several initiatives underway to upgrade and make these systems more efficient. In the coming years, these railway systems will also be augmented by additional lines such as the MRT 7, which will run from San Jose del Monte, Bulacan to the North Triangle Common Station in Quezon City totaling 22.8 km; the Metro Manila Subway Project (MMSP), the country's first underground railway system that will traverse eight cities in Metro Manila and pass through three central business districts totaling 33 km in length; and the North-South Commuter Railway System Extension (NSCR), a mega railway network that will run across 26 cities and municipalities in Central Luzon, NCR, and CALABARZON spanning 148 km. Major connectivity

infrastructure in the pipeline include MRT Line 4, which will connect Ortigas Center to Taytay, Rizal to enhance connectivity in the eastern part of Metro Manila; LRT Line 6 that will connect Bacoor to Dasmariñas, Cavite to improve access to southern Metro Manila; and SkyTrain, an automated guideway transit system that will connect business central districts in Bonifacio Global City and Makati City. These projects are still in the early stages of planning and project design.

Moreover, the EDSA Busway, also known as *EDSA Carousel*, was implemented in 2020 to ease traffic along EDSA in Metro Manila. EDSA Busway is a bus rapid transit (BRT) system with a dedicated lane that spans 28 km, connecting to several bus routes and providing commuters with faster travel time and access to 21 bus stops. The entire route is serviced by 751 buses and 87 operators. It is currently tagged as the most efficient, affordable, comfortable and safe bus service in Metro Manila. In 2024, over 63 million commuters utilized the bus system (DOTr, 2025). The Philippine Government targets to continue improving this transport infrastructure in order to increase ridership as well as improve overall efficiency.

In February 2025, DOTr commissioned a feasibility study to explore means to further improve the EDSA Busway to improve commuter experience and further alleviate traffic conditions in this major thoroughfare in the country's capital. Proposed improvements in the BRT system include improving the bus stations, constructing operations control centers and parking depots, constructing support infrastructure such as concourses and passenger access footbridges in strategic places, and installing closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras to improve security.

Operations of the EDSA Carousel (Bus Rapid Transit System)
Photos from Inquirer (March 2025) and RM Networks (April 2019)

Initiatives promoting transport-oriented development are also present in urban centers outside Metro Manila. These include the Cebu BRT and the Davao High Priority Bus System (HPBS), which are expected to significantly improve public transportation in Metro Cebu and Metro Davao areas. These two projects are currently being implemented by the Philippine Government through development assistance from the World Bank and ADB.

Both projects are designed to integrate with other modes of transport, such as jeepneys and taxis, to enhance overall connectivity and encourage mixed-use development around transit hubs. BRT systems and integrated transport systems are also being explored in other major urban centers such as Iloilo City, Cagayan de Oro, and Zamboanga City. Meanwhile, several local governments such as Baguio City, Bacolod City, and Naga City are initiating projects to modernize their public transportation systems by promoting electric jeepneys and eco-friendly travel options, introducing improved routes, and encouraging public transport over private vehicles.

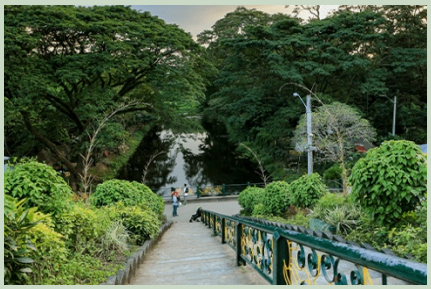
Table 29. Examples of Notable Urban Green Spaces in the Philippines

Name	Location	Description
La Mesa Nature Reserve and Eco Park	Quezon City	A nature reserve that spans 33 hectares and is part of the La Mesa Watershed Reservation, near the La Mesa Dam. The park provides a variety of outdoor recreational activities such as nature walks, rappelling, wall climbing, bird watching, and archery.
Ayala Triangle Gardens	Makati City	A 2-hectare urban park located in the heart of the Makati Central Business District in Metro Manila. The park is a popular spot for jogging, relaxing, and social events.
Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center	Quezon City	A 23.85-hectare zoological and botanical garden located in Diliman, Quezon City. The area is classified as a protected area being managed by the DENR. The park is home to various indigenous plants and animals. It also has a Wildlife Rescue Center that serves as a temporary shelter for confiscated, retrieved, abandoned, and injured wild animals.
Rizal Park (Luneta)	City of Manila	A historic urban park located in Ermita, Manila. It covers an area of 58 hectares and is considered one of the largest urban parks in Asia. It hosts several green spaces, including gardens, plazas, and open lawns.
Quezon Memorial Circle	Quezon City	A national park situated at the heart of Quezon City. It is a prominent landmark within a large elliptical traffic circle bounded by the Elliptical Road. The park houses museums, recreational spaces, gardens, and monuments.
UP Diliman Sunken Garden and Arboretum	Quezon City	A 5-hectare green space located inside the University of the Philippines Diliman campus that is popular for running, walking, biking, sports, and social events. It is surrounded by acacia trees and is part of the 2.2 km academic oval of the university.
Marikina River Park	Marikina City	The park was developed as part of the "Save the Marikina River" Rehabilitation Program that started in 1993. Is currently spans 220 hectares and stretches along an 11-kilometer section of the Marikina River. The park features recreational facilities, community areas, and a riverbanks center.
Bonifacio Global City (BGC) Green Spaces	Taguig City	BGC hosts several small parks spread throughout the business district that combine nature and modern architecture to exude a vibrant urban atmosphere. These include Terra 28th, Track 30th, Burgos Circle Park, and 1.6-km BGC Greenway, Sundial Park, and One Bonifacio Park.
Arroceros Forest Park	City of Manila	A riverside urban forest park located within a 2.2-hectare lot in the City of Manila. The park hosts about 3,000 trees, including Philippine native trees such as Bagras, Dao, Talisay, and Yakal.

Name	Location	Description
Paco Park	City of Manila	A recreational garden that was built during the Spanish period. The park was once Manila's municipal cemetery but has now become a popular venue for film shootings, weddings, private gatherings and cultural programs
Rainforest Adventure Experience (RAVE)	Pasig City	Also known as Maybunga Rainforest Park. The park covers 8 hectares that includes a botanical garden, swimming pools, an adventure park, and various community open spaces.
People's Park	Valenzuela City	An urban community park located beside the Valenzuela City Government Center and the Valenzuela Town Center. The park covers 1.5 hectares and has multiple recreational areas, an amphitheater, gardens, and mini zoos.
Filinvest Central Park	Alabang, Muntinlupa City	An outdoor events and community center in Alabang that was constructed as part of the Filinvest City's development. It accommodates events such as concerts, festivals, bazaars, and other related open-air events,
Burnham Park	Baguio City	A historic urban park located in downtown Baguio that covers 32.84 hectares. It offers a variety of recreational activities and amenities, including a man-made lake for boating, gardens, picnic areas, and sports facilities.
Iloilo River Esplanade	Iloilo City	A 9.29-km long linear park along the Iloilo River that was developed as part of the Iloilo River Rehabilitation Project. It offers a serene environment for walking, jogging, cycling, and other recreational activities.
Bacolod Capitol Lagoon Park	Bacolod City, Negros Occidental	A 3-hectare scenic park with a lagoon, walking paths, and lush greenery. It is a popular area for sports, recreational activities, and community events.
Naga City Ecology Park	Naga City	A green space dedicated to environmental education and conservation, featuring various plant species and eco-friendly facilities. It includes an orchid and mini-forest, playgrounds and gardens, eco-walk maze, and nature-inspired walkways.
People's Park	Davap City	An urban park covering 4 hectares that hosts 1,101 species of plants and trees, both indigenous and non-indigenous planted along the park's five avenues.
Pasonanca Park	Zamboanga City	An expansive urban green space covering 58 hectares. It features a garden park that hosts floral and butterfly species, an aviary park, and various bird species; tree house; walking paths conducive for leisurely strolls; and swimming pools.

Rizal Park (Luneta)
City of Manila

Japanese Garden at Rizal Park
City of Manila



La Mesa Ecopark
Quezon City

Burgos Circle Park
BGC, City of Taguig

JY Campos Botanical Park
BGC, City of Taguig

Ayala Triangle Gardens
Makati City

Arroceros Forest Park
Ermita, City of Manila

Marikina River Park
Marikina City

Burnham Park
Baguio City

Iloilo River Esplanade
Iloilo City

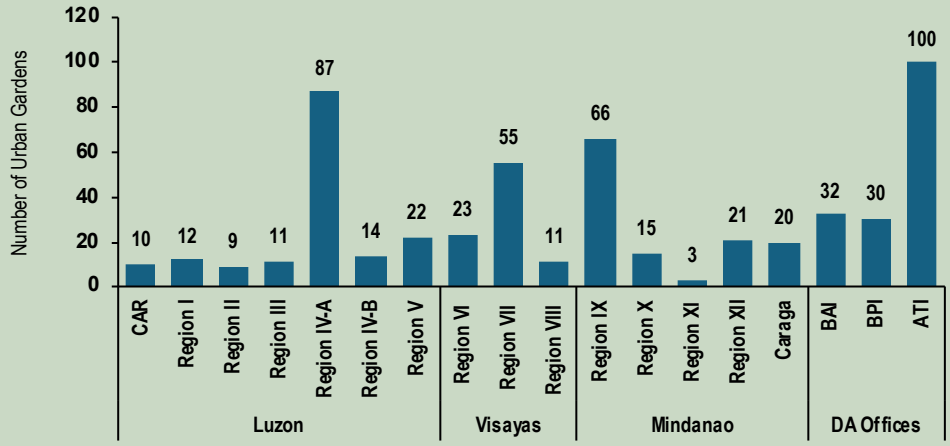
Bacolod Lagoon and Park
Bacolod City

Pasonanca Park
Zamboanga City

Figure 21. Notable Urban Green Spaces in the Philippines

Urban Gardening – Another key strategy to prevent urban sprawl and loss of biodiversity due to urbanization is urban gardening. This refers to the practice growing plants, vegetables, and fruits in urban areas, such as backyards, rooftops, balconies, and community spaces. Urban gardening helps cities produces additional food to enable urban communities to become more self-sufficient, reduces urban heat by adding green spaces, and improves air quality, among others. Urban gardening is gaining traction in the Philippines, especially in Metro Manila. For instance, the DOST NCR and Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD) launched *Gulayan sa Pamayanan* in 2021. This is an urban gardening project for 19 communities in Las Piñas, Parañaque City, Muntinlupa City, Pasay City, Marikina City, and Navotas City in NCR. Communities in these areas were trained on enriched potting preparation and Simple Nutrient Addition Program (SNAP) Hydroponics to enable them to establish urban gardens.

In 2022, the Department of Agriculture (DA) established the National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP), a program that supports urban community gardens and commercial farms (Administrative Order No. 3, 2022). The program aims to ensure the food security for the urban and peri-urban population; reducing food miles into food steps to lower fuel consumption and cost of logistics; creating livelihood opportunities; and promoting a healthy lifestyle by making available nutritious food for Filipinos specifically in urban and peri-urban areas. Thus far, the DA has supported 541 urban gardens under NUPAP across the country.



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URBAN GARDENS ESTABLISHED UNDER NUPAP

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- Promote food security
- Reduce food miles
- Create livelihood opportunities for urban communities

Figure 22. Urban Gardens under the DA National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program

Urban Hydroponics

In Tacloban City in Eastern Visayas, a greenhouse with hydroponics was established in Tacloban National Agricultural School (TNAS) as part of the urban agriculture initiative under DA NUPAP. The project aims to provide additional source of food for the urban community, encourage the youth to venture into sustainable urban agriculture, and develop competencies in crop production.

2,863
Urban Agriculture Gardens

25,357
School Gardens

1,159
Gulayan sa Barangay (Communal Plots)

912
Gulayan sa Likod Bahay (Backyard Gardens)

Figure 23. Urban Gardens under the DA High Value Crops Development Program

Given the notable achievements of NUPAP, the Philippine Government has strengthened and expanded the program. In 2024, the DA issued Memorandum Circular No. 04, which outlines the General Guidelines on the Implementation of NUPAP. This circular demonstrates the Government's commitment to ensure a resilient and sustainable food production system and promote urban and peri-urban agriculture to boost food production in the country. NUPAP's coverage has been expanded to include capacity-building and livelihood training; provision of starter garden soil, agricultural tools, and agricultural inputs; provision of technical assistance to eligible farmers; and funding assistance for urban and peri-urban agriculture program implementers, among others (DA Memorandum Circular No. 04, 2024).

Another key initiative is the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) which is also implemented by the DA. The program aims to promote the production, processing, marketing, and distribution of high value crops to enhance food security, stimulate economic growth in the supported communities, and advance the welfare of farmers. The program was institutionalized through Republic Act No. 7900 or the High Value Crops Development Act of 1995 but has since been strengthened and expanded to cover more commodities and support more farming communities.

Through this program, the DA has supported thousands of urban agriculture gardens, school gardens, and vegetable gardens in communal plots and backyard gardens focusing on high-value crops such as coffee, cacao, vegetables, and fruits. While the HVCDP is not solely focused on cities, many of its initiatives area in urban areas. For instance, the DA partnered with the Quezon City Government distribute high-quality ginger seedlings to urban farmers in Barangay Libis, Quezon City to promote food security and livelihood for the local community. The ginger seedlings distributed were a specific variant that produces higher-yields and better-quality produce, which was developed through a research and development project in Region 2 (DA, 2025).

These two programs, NUPAP and HVCDP, are part of the banner agricultural programs of the Philippine Government that serve as bedrock for innovative, climate-resilient, and relevant interventions for farmers and fisherfolk (DA, 2023). In 2023, the DA has supported 14,025 individuals and 8,402 groups through these two initiaitves. The DA has also trained 4,109 individuals on urban agriculture through its various programs.

b. Redirect growth to decongest urban areas

Today, about one-third of Filipinos live in highly urbanized regions where economic opportunities are concentrated and social conditions and development outcomes are better than other regions. Increasing population in urban areas translates to higher demand for food, social services, infrastructure and transport facilities, electricity and power, and other basic needs which puts more pressure on the environment - exacerbates air and water pollution and generates more waste. Combined with the proliferation of inefficient industries and unplanned/ unmanaged land use and development, these hasten the conversion of prime agricultural lands in urban fringes and increase GHG emissions, thus further aggravating the impacts of climate change (DEPDev, 2017).

Despite decades of regional growth and development programs, NCR remains the top migrant destination region in the country. Based on the 2015 Census, the region is home to about 13 million residents, roughly 12% of the country's total population. At 21,000 persons per sq. km., it is the most densely populated region in the country. A public health crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, puts the NCR in a more vulnerable situation compared to other regions in the country. In May 2020, 64% of all confirmed COVID-19 cases were from the NCR (UP Population Institute and Demographic Research and Development Foundation, Inc., 2020). The government, at the height of the COVID-19 quarantines which shuttered thousands of businesses and shed millions of jobs, the previous administration enjoined residents of the most densely populated regions including Metro Manila, where infections surged, to return to their home provinces and restart their livelihoods there. This is also known as the "Balik Probinsya" Program which was seen as one of the long-term solutions to decongest the urban centers and to develop other regions of the country through equitable distribution of the gains of our fast-developing economy, balanced development of the urban and rural areas and poverty alleviation. Most importantly, for the program to be successful, it should be well-planned and consider the convergence of resettlement, employment and livelihood opportunities, social development, health supply system, infrastructure, and resilient environment.

Some of the HUCs have taken initiatives to control urban sprawl by redirecting growth patterns through the enforcement of innovative zoning standards and controls. To guide urban development and control the current sprawl, the NUA can stimulate growth in the secondary cities to redirect population movements and economic development to these areas, easing the burden on major urban centers.

As prescribed by the LGC, LGUs shall be at the forefront of housing and urban development, with the support of the national government. For instance, the Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plan (PDPFP) and Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) guide the LGUs to shape the livability of their communities while ensuring that sectoral concerns such as ancestral land, cultural heritage, and biodiversity are preserved. As of June 2025, there are around 25 approved/updated PDPFPs or around 32% of total provinces, excluding BARMM. Meanwhile, there are 563 approved/updated CLUPs, accounting for 37% of all LGUs excluding BARMM (DHSUD, 2025).

Zoning ordinances also influence the way roads and spaces are designed to accommodate infrastructure for basic services and active mobility. Climate and disaster risk assessment is made a prerequisite in the approval of areas identified for housing and community development. In the 18th Congress, several priority legislations were proposed including initiatives involving land efficiency land management toward establishing Livable Communities such as the National Land Use Bill that will address the urgency to provide rationalized land use planning in the country, consolidate national laws on land use, and address long-standing land use conflicts.

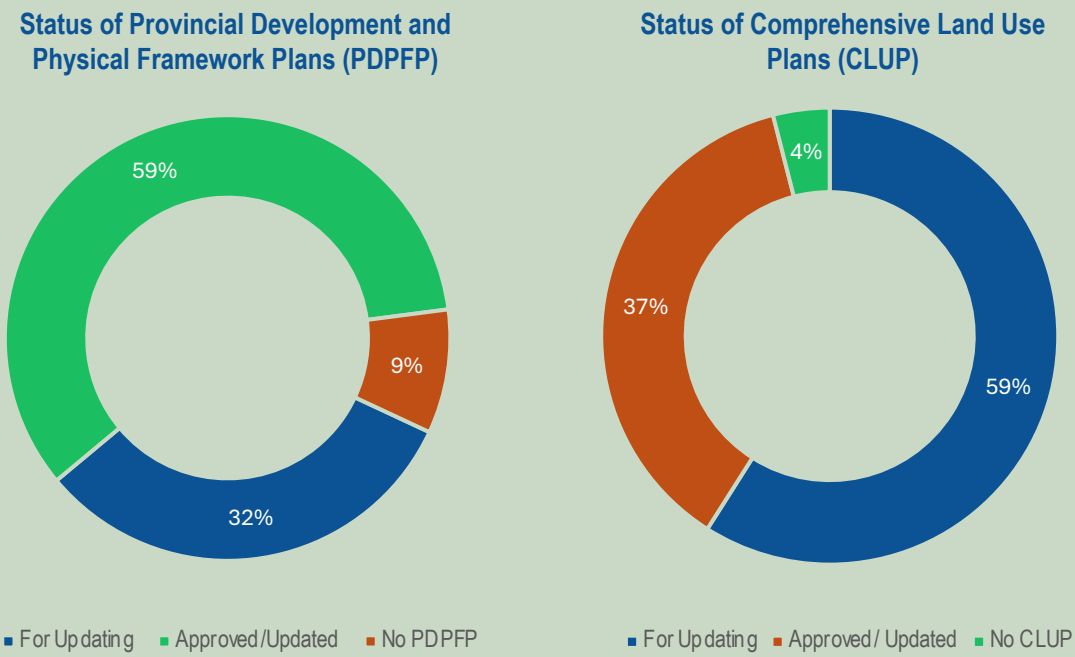


Figure 24. Status of CLUPs and PDPFPs in the Philippines

Table 30. Proportion of LGUs with Approved and Updated PDPFP/PPFP and CLUP

Status of PDPFP		
Status	Number of LGUs	Percent (%)
For Updating	25	32
Approved/Updated	47	59
No PDPFP	7	9
Total	**76**	**100.00**

Status of CLUP		
Status	Number of LGUs	Percent (%)
Approved/Updated	563	37
For Updating	900	59
No CLUP	52	4
Total	**1,634**	**100.00**

Note: Excluding BARMM LGUs

(Source: DHSUD Land Use Plan Status Dashboard, data as of June 2025)

Moreover, due to potential degradation or irreversible damage to the natural environment, carrying capacity assessments are conducted in areas where population movement needs to be managed, such as ecotourism destination areas and urban areas. Such assessments help inform appropriate policies and regulations in local plans (e.g., CLUP and CDP). These assessments may be guided by existing manuals developed by the government such as the *Manual on the Conduct of Urban Carrying Capacity Assessment in the Philippines* by DEPDev and the *Manual on Computing Carrying Capacity of Ecotourism Sites in Protected Areas* by DENR.

Carrying capacity assessments are vital to support evidence-based decision-making for urban planning. In Baguio City, studies have shown that urban carrying capacity is a significant concern. The City's population has already exceeded the original envisioned capacity.[8] The influx of tourists further strains transport infrastructure, water, and other resources (UP CIDS, 2024). In response, Baguio City has used this information to inform its land use and development plans. The City revised its CLUP to reclassify zones and limit high-density developments in ecologically sensitive areas. It has also enacted stricter enforcement of environmental regulations to protect its forests and watershed areas. The City LGU has implemented traffic rerouting, parking regulations, and public transport reforms to address congestion. As one of the top tourism destinations in the country, Baguio has also implemented tourism management policies, particularly during peak seasons, to avoid overwhelming infrastructure and resources.

Photo by John Lorenz Tajonera

c. Plan and implement climate change mitigation and adaptation actions

The Philippines is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. The country is located in the tropics, particularly in the Northwestern Pacific Basin, which is considered the most active tropical cyclone basin in the world. On average, around 20 cyclones per year enter the Philippines' area of responsibility, with approximately eight making landfall. The country is also an archipelago with extensive coastlines, making it highly susceptible to sea level rise and storm surges. High population density in coastal areas increases the number of people at risk from climate-related hazards. Estimates from the World Bank say that around 60% of the Philippines' land area and about 74% of its population as exposed to numerous hazards, including floods, cyclones, droughts, tsunamis and landslides (GFDRR, 2017).

In the past two decades, there has been an increased attention in boosting climate resilience particularly in densely populated areas such as cities. Climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM) and disaster risk reduction management (DRRM) are mainstreamed in all national and local development plans and policies.

The Philippines has made significant progress in collecting comprehensive and updated risk information using different technological tools including GIS, Light Detector and Ranging (LiDAR), Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar (IfSAR), computer simulations, and fault mapping (UNDRR, 2019). Relevant government agencies at the national and local levels have access to latest data on climate change projections as well as risk and vulnerability assessment to enable them to appropriately identify interventions and avoid maladaptation.

[8] Baguio City was originally designed to accommodate between 25,00 to 30,000 people. However, the population of Baguio had grown to 366,000 as of 2020. In addition, the City also welcomes at least 1.3 million tourists every year.

At the national level, the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2030 integrates climate change considerations to ensure sustainable and resilient development. It includes a dedicated chapter focused on accelerating climate resilience and disaster preparedness, which outlines key strategies that will enhance the country's ability to adapt to climate change impacts. In addition to this, the Philippines' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation Plan 2020-2030 outlines policies and measures to reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture, waste, industry, transport and energy. Several measures in the NDC Implementation Plan influence urban planning and development as it supports sustainable transportation through the expansion of public transportation systems and active travel options; promotes the development of climate-smart infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather events, such as floods and storms, thereby enhancing urban resilience; and encourages the adoption of green building practices, including the use of sustainable materials and energy-efficient designs, among others.

Moreover, technological and research priorities and capacity needs on CCAM and DRRM are identified. These include but are not limited to:

(a) development of methodologies/tools for national-level risk informed planning and programming;
(b) scenario development and modelling of sectoral climate impact;
(c) cost-benefit analysis of implementing CCAM and DRRM alternatives;
(d) low carbon innovations to address CCA and DRR;
(e) approaches and tools to address impact of slow onset events such as sea level rise and ocean acidification; and
(f) improved weather detection, forecasting and monitoring.

At the local levels, existing guidelines promulgated by DHSUD require CCAM and DRRM to be mainstreamed in all development plans. Climate risk data is used to inform development plans and resource management plans at the regional, provincial, and city/municipal levels. The respective Regional Development Plans (RDPs) 2023-2028 also contain provisions on accelerating climate action and strengthening disaster resilience. National government agencies such as CCC, DHSUD, DILG, and OCD provide technical assistance to LGUs in local climate policy development, project implementation, and community engagement.

As early as 2015, all local governments are required to integrate climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures into Local Development Planning, as integrated in the Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) and Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs) to ensure that urban development will be resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change. Climate and disaster risks and issues should be considered into existing LGU databases and ecological profile, planning structure and process, development plans and thematic/sectoral plans, and investment programs through identified policies, budget, and regulatory measures (DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2015-77).

At the start of the planning process, a thorough assessment of current and future climate risks is done using the Climate and Disaster Risk Assessment (CDRA) tool developed by the then HLURB (now DHSUD). CDRA is a methodology to understand and assess the potential impacts of hazards to people and their properties. CDRA also allows assessment of sensitivities and capacities of people and elements at risk (i.e. roads, buildings, natural resources, etc.) which largely determines vulnerability and eventually the outcomes of any disasters. Ultimately, mainstreaming CDRA into local land use plans will help LGUs identify priority decision areas and development challenges posed by climate change and natural hazards, make informed decisions to effectively address risks and vulnerabilities, and identify appropriate risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures as inputs to the comprehensive development planning and investment programming.

In 2025, the DHSUD released an Updated CDRA process, workbook, and training guide for land use and local development planning which include key enhancements on the following points: adoption of the IPCC AR6 Framework, use of localized high resolution climate change projections recently released by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), expansion of sectoral impact analysis, and standardization of geospatial data and indicators, and enhancement of risk analysis methodology, among others.

As of June 2025, there are only 39% or 591 LGUs which have risk-informed CLUPs which have mainstreamed CDRA, while majority of 924 LGUs or around 61% have yet to fully integrate DRR and CCA into local land use plans following national policies/guidelines (DHSUD, 2025).

Despite the continuous capacity development of LGUs and Guidelines for mainstreaming DRR CCA in the preparation of CLUPs, many LGUs still face challenges in preparing CLUPs mainly because of the lack of capacity in carrying our climate and vulnerability assessment results for land use planning, and unavailability of appropriately scaled probabilistic multi-hazard maps, and inconsistent spatial resolutions of available maps. Recognizing these challenges by LGUs, DHSUD has started in 2024 to develop the ***PlanSmart for Sustainable Human Settlements*** which is a digital, risk-informed and evidence-based platform to streamline the integration of disaster- and climate-resilient measures in land use planning. The aim is to establish a readily accessible centralized platform containing comprehensive, updated, and standardized datasets, including official hazards and risk assessment results that will help LGUs facilitate the generation, availability, and accessibility of spatial data, and speed up the local planning and investment programming process. By 2026, the DHSUD aims to roll-out this digital platform to around 200 LGUs throughout the country to help achieve the PDP target to have 100% of LGUs with risk-informed land use plans.

National government agencies such as the PAGASA, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), and Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) provide important climate data and risk data that are useful in land use planning.

Thereafter, appropriate adaptation strategies that address the specific climate risks are identified. These may include measures such as flood management systems, green infrastructure, and urban drainage systems. Stakeholders from local communities, concerned government agencies, civil society, and other stakeholders are intentionally consulted and engaged throughout the planning process to ensure that all sectors' diverse perspectives and needs are well considered and that the resulting plan will be inclusive.

One of the advances in the way CCA and DRRM are incorporated into urban planning is the GeoRisk Philippines or GeoRiskPH which was established and approved for funding in 2018. GeoRiskPH is a multi-agency, DOST-led initiative that developed an integrated database system and web and mobile applications for hazards and risk assessments. Its vision is to be the Philippines' central source of information for accurate and efficient hazards and risk assessment to help the government increase the nation's resilience to natural hazards. To ensure that the platform is utilized by the LGUs and NGAs, several partnerships were forged through the Memorandum of Agreement with two (2) private organizations and five (5) municipalities & three (3) provincial LGUs, of which 414 LGUs were trained.

Table 31. GeoRiskPH Platforms

Platform	Description / Content
HazardHunter PH	The country's one-stop shop for hazard assessment. It can be used to generate indicative hazard assessment reports on the user's specified location. It is a helpful reference for property owners, buyers, land developers, planners, and other stakeholders needing immediate hazard information and assessment. It also aims to increase people's awareness of natural hazards and advocates the implementation of plans to prepare for and mitigate the effects of hazards. As of May 2023, HazardHunterPH Pro was developed to enable multi- point/polygon assessment for a more precise hazard assessment. Salient accomplishments also include the integration of datasets for visualization and analysis such as landslide data from Project LIGTAS (Landslide Investigations on Geohazards and Timely Advisories in the Philippines), and DOST-PAGASA including Climate Types, Climate Projections (Rainfall,Mean Temperature), and Cyclone Track"

Platform	Description / Content
GeoAnalyticsPH	A web application that generates maps and analytics using hazards, exposure, and location data from the GeoRiskPH dataßbase. Currently, the application is already capable of conducting ground rupture hazard analysis.
GeoMapperPH	Ais a web application tool designed to collect information for the development of the National Exposure Database. As of May 2023, there are 486 GeoMapperPH web applications and 160 operations dashboards created.
Map & Feature Services/API Hub	A system used to create and maintain the credentials to be used by LGUs or partner agencies and other stakeholders to utilize the assessment script of HazardHunterPH.
3D Earth Risk	A web application designed to input and visualize 3D data including, but not limited to, Borehole and Building Footprints. 3D map visualization of borehole and building footprints are produced for better analysis by providing an interactive map for users to correlate hazards and features in the map. On November 15, 2022, PHIVOLCS launched the 3D Philippines Information System or 3DPH. It is a platform to aid planners and other interested parties in the creation of a rehabilitation and recovery plan using datasets and functions from existing GeoRiskPH systems. The 3DPH is a web-based application to provide end-users an easy-to-use and accessible platform for storing and facilitating hazards and risk assessment of surface and subsurface information. This application complements the GeoRiskPH in the management and analysis of scientific data to aid research, planning, and disaster risk reduction initiatives"

Source: DOST NUA Report Submission, 2023

In the Philippines, LGUs are empowered through devolved functions and autonomy, primarily guided by Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991. This legislation decentralizes governance, allowing LGUs to manage and deliver various services independently. One of the devolved functions include managing the environment and maintaining the ecological balance within their jurisdictions. Related to this, local governments develop specific plans to guide their respective climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives. Republic Act No. 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009 mandates all local governments to formulate and implement their own Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAPs), thus recognizing their key role as frontline agencies in climate action and improving the climate resilience of their constituency. An LCCAP is a strategic document that focuses on both climate change adaptation and mitigation at the city or municipal level. It also describes how LGUs plan to respond to the impacts of climate change and mainstream these responses into local development plans, such as land use plans, sectoral development plans, and investment programs. As of March 2024, a total of 1,496 LGUs accounting to 87.23% of all LGUs in the Philippines have submitted their respective LCCAPs (CCC, 2024).

In line with DHSUD's thrust to accelerate the adoption and implementation of disaster and climate-risk informed planning, two new Guidelines were recently issued by the Department in 2025 on Resilient Urban Design and Development (UDD); and Open Space Development (OSD). DHSUD has updated its urban design guidelines to revisit current requirements for settlements growth, particularly through the lens of urban design as outlined in the CLUP and ZO guidebooks. This policy aims to strengthen the role of land use planning in enhancing resiliency and equip local planners with design-anchored tools and strategies thereby improving their ability to implement various urban development interventions.

As one the resilient urban development strategies, DHSUD's Open Space Development (OSD) Guidelines aims to mainstream open space development into local land use plans, and serve as an overarching guide providing strategies, steps, and tools for LGUs in the establishment, operation, maintenance, and management of open spaces in their locality.

All local governments, especially urbanized and other rapidly urbanizing municipalities, are enjoined to adopt the two DHSUD Guidelines in the formulation or updating of their CLUP and ZO, to help build sustainable and resilient urban development. Capacity-building for pilot LGUs will start in 2025 on these two Guidelines, which will eventually be tied up to the CLUP review process, as well as awards and incentives system of the Department and other local government performance monitoring systems.

Table 32. Philippine Laws that Influence Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives relating to Urban Planning and Development

Policy	Description
Republic Act No. 9729 (Climate Change Act of 2009)	Mainstreams climate change into government policy formulations, ensuring that all sectors consider climate impacts in their planning and decision-making. It also established the Climate Change Commission to coordinate and monitor government programs related to climate change.
Republic Act No. 10121 (Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010)	Mandates the creation of a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework to guide the country's efforts in disaster risk reduction and management. The law also institutionalizes the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, which aims to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities. It also mandates the integration of DRRM in planning at all levels.
Republic Act No. 7279 (Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992)	Provides for a comprehensive and continuing urban development and housing program, establish the mechanism for its implementation, and for other purposes
Republic Act No. 7160 (Local Government Code of 1991)	Empowers LGUs to manage and maintain ecological balance within their jurisdictions, supporting climate change initiatives
Republic Act No. 8749 (Clean Air Act)	Provides for a comprehensive air pollution control policy, which includes the formulation of a national program for air pollution management. This helps ensure that urban areas maintain clean air, improving the health and quality of life for urban dwellers.
Republic Act No. 10174 (People's Survival Fund)	Provides long-term financing for climate change adaptation projects through an annual budget allocation of Php 1 billion (approx. USD 22.2 million) to support climate adaptation initiatives of local governments and communities. The PSF supports various adaptation activities, including water resources management, land management, agriculture, fisheries, health, infrastructure development, and natural ecosystems.

Notable Initiatives on Green Growth and Disaster Risk Reduction

Both national government agencies and LGUs spearhead various programs and projects to slow down climate change. These initiatives are aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving natural ecosystems and biodiversity, and promoting sustainable and low-emission development strategy. Below are notable climate change mitigation actions implemented by Philippine government agencies and LGUs that have an impact on urban development:

- ***Renewable Energy Projects*** — Power is essential in driving economic growth. The energy sector is the largest emitter of GHG in the Philippines. This sector contributed an estimated 74.89 teragrams (Tg) of carbon dioxide (CO_2) equivalent in 2015 and 99.85 Tg of CO_2 equivalent in 2020. The development and optimal use of the country's renewable energy resources is central to the sustainable energy agenda of the country. The Philippines, through the Department of Energy (DOE), promotes the development and use of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and hydroelectric power, to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Renewable energy is becoming increasingly important in urban areas, driven by the need for sustainable development and climate resilience. Republic Act No. 9513, or the Philippine Renewable Energy Act of 2008, establishes the framework for accelerated renewable energy development. The National Renewable Energy Program outlines the policy framework enshrined in Republic Act 9513. Under the NREP, the Philippines aims to achieve a 35% share of renewable energy in the power generation mix by 2030. By 2040, the program targets a 50% share of renewable energy in the power generation mix. This long-term goal reflects the country's commitment to transitioning to cleaner energy sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

  In recent years, the Philippines has seen an increasing trend in renewable energy investments. In 2024, the country added 794.34 megawatts (MW) of new renewable energy capacity, exceeding the combined 759.82 MW installed in 2021 (230.10 MW), 2022 (328.18 MW), and 2023 (201.54 MW). This steady growth in renewable energy capacity is a result of both policy push and technological factors. Key policy and regulatory enhancements such as streamlining permitting processes for renewable energy processes and establishing virtual one-stop shop system has improved the efficiency of application processing. At the same time, factors such as declining costs of solar panels, driven by economies of scale and technological advancements, has made renewables more competitive with fossil fuels (DOE, 2025).

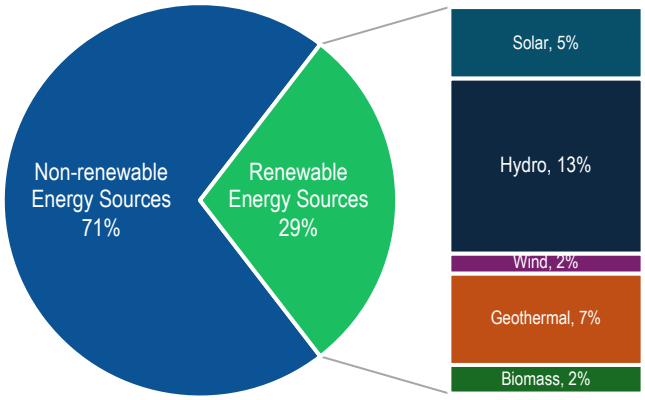


Figure 25. Philippine Renewable Energy Mix, 2022

At the local level, many local governments have been investing in solar energy projects, including solar-powered streetlights and government buildings equipped with solar panels. Under the Government Energy Management Program (GEMP), all government entities are required to source at least 20% of their electricity needs from renewable energy sources.

Aside from compliance, LGUs view investing in alternative energy sources such as solar power as a cost reduction measure. By generating their own power, local governments can lower monthly utility expenses and redirect savings to essential public services like health services, education, and local infrastructure. Under Resolution No. 8 promulgated by the Inter-Agency Energy Efficiency and Conservation Committee (IAEECC), a government entity that will install solar photovoltaic system or

any equivalent renewable energy technology with a capacity not exceeding 100 kW is also allowed to enter into a net-metering agreement with a distribution utility (DU). Any electricity generated that is not consumed by the customer is automatically exported to the DU. Through this mechanism, the DU shall give a peso credit for the excess electricity received equivalent to the blended generation cost, excluding other generation adjustments, and shall deduct the credits earned to the customer's future electric bills—further enhancing cost efficiency.

Cities in Metro Manila are leading the way in shifting to renewable energy sources to power government buildings and public facilities. In Pasig City, solar panels are installed on the rooftops of the Pasig City Hall, Pasig Mega Market, Pasig Sports Complex, and some public schools. In Makati City, solar panels were installed in at least nine schools in 2023, while 10 more schools targeted to be added in the coming years. The solar panels are projected to produce enough energy to power the schools during daylight hours, with excess energy being fed back into the grid (Makati City Government, 2023). To further incentivize the use of renewable energy sources, Makati City exempted accessory solar energy systems mounted on roofs, walls, windows, and the ground from real property taxes through the passage of City Ordinance No. 2024-221 or the Solar Energy Systems Ordinance. Similarly, the Quezon City Government is implementing its own solarization project. In 2024, around 600 photovoltaic solar panels were installed in two public schools and three government buildings. The Quezon City LGU targets to install more than 1,000 solar panels in more than 50 schools and city-owned hospitals.

To complement government initiatives, major property developments and businesses in Metro Manila have invested in renewable energy sources. In 2022, Meralco, the main electricity distributor in Metro Manila, contracted just 3% of its energy supply from renewable sources. As part of the long-term sustainability strategy, Meralco aims to ramp this up to 22% by 2030.

In the Province of Iloilo, the Iloilo City Government installed 134 solar panels atop the City Hall. These solar panels are expected to generate 60 kilowatts a day which will be enough to cover around one-third of the power demand at the City Hall. Solar power also supplements traditional sources of power and can provide redundancy in areas that experience shortages. For instance, in the Province of Samar, solar panels are also installed in local government buildings as part of the wider initiative to promote energy independence amid frequent power interruptions that affect the entire island.

Iloilo City Government installed 134 solar panels atop the City Hall. The solar panels are expected to generate 60 kilowatts a day and will cover around one-third of the power demand at the City Hall
Photo from Philippine News Agency, January 15, 2024

Solar panels installed in local government buildings in Samar as part of wider initiative to foster energy independence amid frequent power interruptions affecting the entire Samar Island
Photo from Philippine News Agency, October 21, 2024

- ***Sustainable Transportation*** — As urban areas grow, the demand for transportation also grows to address mobility needs. More people move to urban areas due to the availability of jobs and economic opportunities. Transportation and logistics are also necessary to support the growth of businesses. Given the projected economic growth and level of urbanization in the Philippines, the number of vehicles per capita in the Philippines is expected to increase more than five-fold from 114.7 vehicles per 1,000 people in 2020 to 672.9 vehicles per 1,000 people by 2050 (World Bank, 2023).

  Transportation is a major contributor to both air pollution and GHG emissions. The transport sector accounts for about 22.8% of the country's GHG emissions in 2020 and the largest source of urban pollution. In 2023, the Philippines' transportation sector contributed an estimated 37 million tons of carbon dioxide (CO_2), which is 4% higher compared to the previous year. Broken down, 87.88% of the total emissions come from road transportation, 9.18% from water-borne navigation, and 2.95% from domestic aviation. Without intervention, transport-related emissions are expected to grow by 7.1% annually, which could triple total emissions up to 72.6 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent by 2030, compared to 23.6 metric tons of CO_2 equivalent in 2010 (Climate Tracker Asia, 2025). Estimates from the World Bank project that GHG emissions from land-based transport sector could quadruple to 147 million tons of CO_2 equivalent by 2050 if current motorization continues (World Bank, 2023).

The dominance of road-based transportation may well be related to the country's relatively low levels of other modes transport such as rail and ferry services. For example, more than 90% of passenger traffic and more than 60% of cargo traffic are by road, and almost all the intra-island freight movements are purely road-based (ADB, 2012). Data from the Land Transportation Office (LTO) shows that motor vehicle registration has been steadily increasing through the years. In 2022, the Philippines registered more than 13.6 million electric vehicles, 4.6% higher than the past year (LTO, 2022).

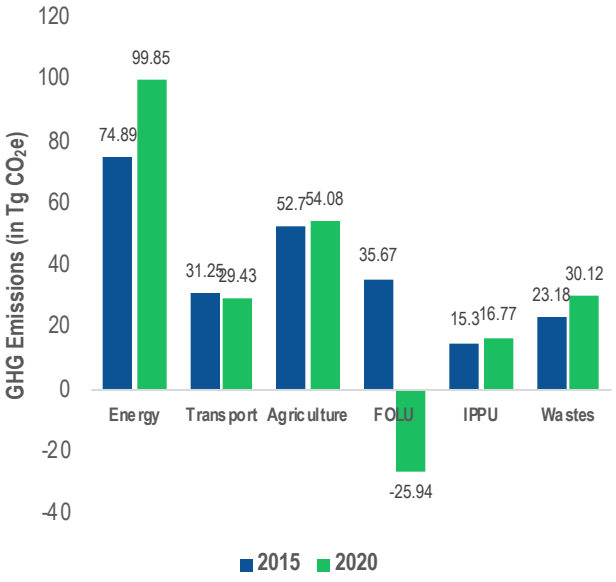


Figure 26. GHG Emissions by Sector, 2015 and 2020

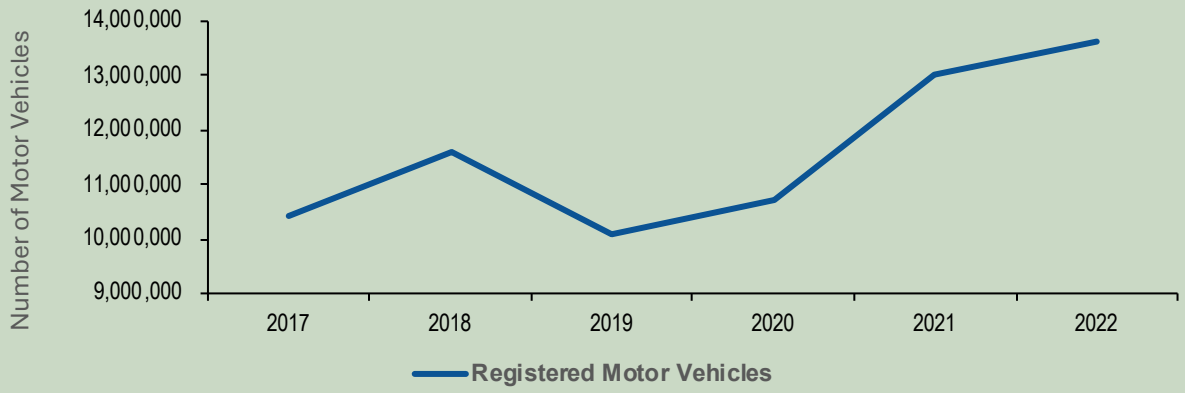


Figure 27. Motor Vehicles (MV) Registered in the Philippines, 2017-2022

Table 33. Registered Motor Vehicles by Region

Region	No. of Motor Vehicles Registered					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Philippines*	**10,410,814**	**11,595,434**	**10,086,534**	**10,732,149**	**13,022,483**	**13,627,805**
Luzon						
NCR	2,617,537	2,792,936	3,076,088	2926338	3,209,308	3,552,326
CAR	158,865	169,234	185,370	179,757	199,786	184,120
Region I – Ilocos Valley	593,933	642,552	683,694	655,425	673,858	760,129
Region II – Cagayan Valley	431,864	474,352	655,425	498,743	551,089	591,842
Region III – Central Luzon	1,252,402	1,345,319	1,467,71 8	1,298,936	1,378,438	1,429,698
Region IVA – CALABARZON	1,353,476	1,515,031	1,633,594	1,620,006	1,772,081	1,905,430
Region IVB – MIMAROPA	178,496	217,774	227,189	201,505	231,807	242,803
Region V – Bicol Region	396,357	460,370	495, 106	455,-'74	489,609	550,440
Visayas						
Region VI – Western Visayas	587,080	651,873	705,325	66 3,569	637,527	664,991
Region VII – Central Visayas	800,149	920,040	1,077,376	921,341	1,042,576	1,094,612
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	240,695	286,969	323, 813	286,203	335,918	355,697
Mindanao						
Region IX – Zamboanga	352,912	403,173	443,750	390,363	452,174	480,895
Region X – Northern Mindanao	371,748	442,362	486, 501	454,250	558,276	582,075
Region XI – Davao	486,292	585,517	632,601	613,547	712,063	722,110
Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN	405,589	489,229	532,067	468,374	509,402	510,637
Region XIII - Caraga	183,419	198,703	234,055	217,361	268,571	3;552,326

(Source: LTO)

The Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted by the Philippines to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2021 recognizes transport as a key sector for emissions mitigation. The DOTr has identified the following initiatives:

(a) developing mass transit systems and expanding railway systems;
(b) modernization of old public utility vehicles to improve environmental performance;
(c) promoting the adoption of electric vehicles; and
(d) full-scale deployment of motor vehicle inspection system.

These initiatives are estimated to reduce GHG emissions by around 67 million metric tons of CO_2 equivalent ($MtCO_2e$), accounting for 7% of the target total GHG reduction of 990 $MtCO_2e$ under the NDC policies and measures (CCC, 2024).

Developing mass transit systems – The country is implementing several projects to improve public transportation systems following the principle of transport-oriented development. The PDP 2023-2028 identifies developing mass transportation systems in metropolitan areas as a priority. At present, there are ongoing and planned major railway improvement projects, bus rapid transit systems, intermodal passenger terminals, and bus interchanges in metropolitan areas and other cities across the country. Better mass transportation systems reduce the need for private vehicles on the road as well as reduce traffic congestion particularly in major thoroughfares. This directly reduces carbon footprint of urban transportation.

In addition to land-based transportation, several maritime and aviation infrastructure projects are also in the pipeline. The Philippines is targeting to upgrade ferry systems and other coastal and inland waterways transport systems. The Government has identified a set of shipping projects, including "Green Ports", to reduce emissions from port operations. Meanwhile, the proposed MAPALLA Ferry System will connect the waterways of Metro Manila, Cavite, and Laguna via a high-capacity, high-frequency and low carbon commuter vessels. Moreover, existing airports are will also be improved and new ones will be strategically developed to address future demand. Night rating of airports—equipping them with facilities and approvals for safe nighttime operations—will enhance their efficiency and indirectly contribute to GHG emissions reduction by reducing air traffic congestion, reducing takeoff and landing delays, and foster more efficient aircraft utilization.

Modernizing public utility vehicles (PUVs) – In Philippine urban areas, public transportation constitutes 80% of the overall ridership and trips. Jeepneys serve about 40% of total ridership (Dimalanta, Atienza, & Samonte, 2023). Jeepneys are a common form of public transportation in the Philippines. These vehicles commonly run on diesel engines which emit high levels of pollutants. Plenty of jeepneys and other PUVs are also 10-20 years already but are still in operation in the country.

In 2017, the Philippine Government launched the *Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (PUVMP)*, which aims to replace old jeepneys and other PUVs with new ones that meet higher safety and environmental standards. Though most associated with jeepneys, the PUVMP covers all modes of road-based transportation, including both four- up to six- wheeled passenger transport vehicles. A key feature of the PUVMP is the use of vehicles with Euro 4-compliant engines, which produce fewer pollutants than older models. Aside from energy efficiency, the modern PUVs are expected to be air-conditioned and equipped with safety features (Mendoza, 2021).

Between 2017 to 2022, over 6,000 modern PUVs (Euro 4 diesel and e-jeepneys) have been deployed in various areas across the country, majority of which are in metropolitan areas. Currently, the program faces bottlenecks, particularly in terms of stakeholder acceptance and adoption. The Government is working to address financial challenges faced by jeepney drivers and operators that greatly affect adoption of the modern PUVs. When fully implemented, the PUVMP is expected to significantly lower GHG emissions. The World Bank (2023) estimates that retiring PUVs above 15 years old can displace up to 23.20 Mt of GHG emissions through 2030.

To complement the initiative, route rationalization was implemented to optimize fleet distribution and efficiency. Modernized jeepney routes started in 2018. Comparison between traditional and modern jeepneys show that the modern vehicles have higher vehicle capacity, could operate longer, provide higher earnings for the drivers and operators, and have higher fuel efficiency. Daily ridership is also higher at 460 passengers per day for modern jeepneys (i.e., 300-750 for Euro IV Jeep and 200-250 for E-Jeepney) compared to 150-350 passengers per day for traditional jeepneys (Mettke, Mariano, & Kaenzig, 2019).

Promoting active transportation – The Philippine Government is promoting non-motorized transport such as cycling and walking to reduce emissions from the transportation sector. Promoting the use of active transportation aims to reduce urban traffic congestion and emissions while improving public health.

In many areas, walking paths and bike lanes are established to promote active transportation, reduce reliance on motor vehicles, improve road safety, and reduce carbon emissions. Under the Active Transport and Safe Pathways Program spearheaded by the DOTr, the Philippine Government is promoting sustainable and eco-friendly modes of transportation such as cycling and walking. This program started in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 2024, the DOTr has already constructed approximately 812 km of bike lanes in Metro Manila, Ilocos Region, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, Bicol Region, and the Davao Region. These newly built lanes form a growing network of pathways that assure a safe, interconnected cycling route system. In 2025, the DOTr released plans to build at least 260 km of additional dedicated bike lanes, expanding the network to include more cities and municipalities. The government aims to develop the bike lane network to 2,400 kilometers by 2028.

Accelerating adoption of electric vehicles – The Philippine Government is also actively promoting the adoption of electric vehicles through a combination of policy, financial and non-financial incentives, infrastructure development, and public awareness campaigns. In 2020, the DOE issued Department Circular 2020-10-0023 which prescribed the *Policy Framework for the Development of the Fuel Economy Rating, Fuel Economy Performance, and Related Energy Efficiency and Conservation Policies for the Transport Sector and Other Support Infrastructures*..

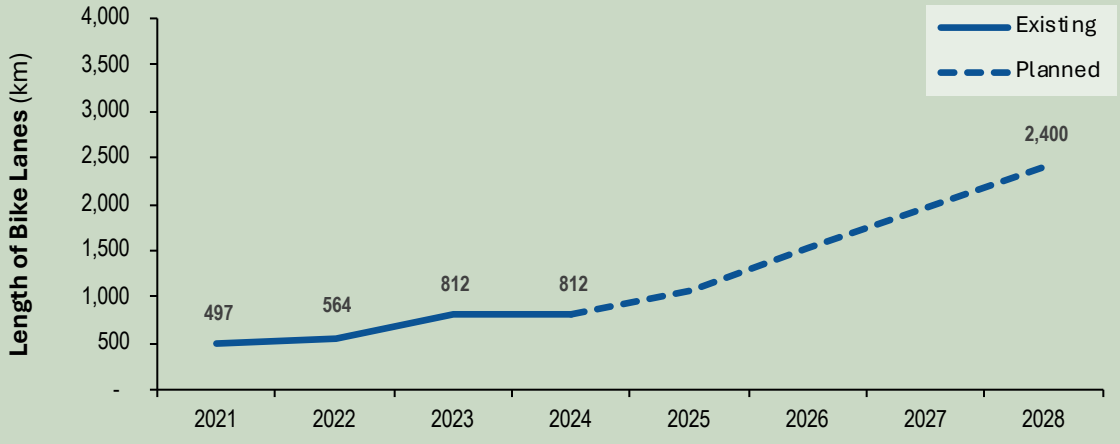


Figure 28. Length of Bike Lanes established under the DOTr Active Transportation Program

In 2022, Republic Act No. 11697 or the Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act was enacted. The law mandates the promotion of electric vehicles, development of a Comprehensive Roadmap for the Electric Vehicle Industry, as well as provides both fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to encourage adoption of electric vehicles. Electric vehicles may be exempted from excise tax and value-added tax to make them more affordable for Filipino consumers. It also encourages financial institutions to provide concessional packages to private sector institutions engaged in either manufacturing or importation of electric vehicles and charging stations as well as preferential rates and payment schemes on consumer loans.

The Government is also providing subsidies for the installation of charging stations. These charging stations are located in community parking lots, malls, and gas stations in many major urban centers. Campaigns are also being launched to inform the public about the benefits of electric vehicles, focusing on environmental impact, cost savings, and incentives from the government.

There are also non-fiscal incentives to promote adoption of electric vehicles. In Metro Manila, electric vehicles are exempted from the mandatory unified vehicular volume reduction program, number-coding scheme, and other similar schemes implemented by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA). and City LGUs.

These efforts have resulted in a steadily growing adoption of electric vehicles. In 2023, data from the Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines (EVAP) show that there are an estimated 15,300 electric vehicles registered nationwide. The Philippine electric vehicle market is expected to further grow in the coming years as more models are launched. These models range from cars, utility vehicles or trucks, e-scooters, and e-bicycles. EVAP forecasts that the number of electric vehicles will increase to around 6.6 million in the next decade. The Philippine Energy Plan 2020-2040 envisions at least 10% penetration rate of electric vehicles for road transport by 2040 (DOE, 2020).

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations in Pasig City installed through the *Promotion of Low Carbon Urban Transport Systems in the Philippines (LCT) Project* implemented by UNDP and DOTr, with support from the Global Environment Facility

Photos from Pasig City Government, March 7, 2024

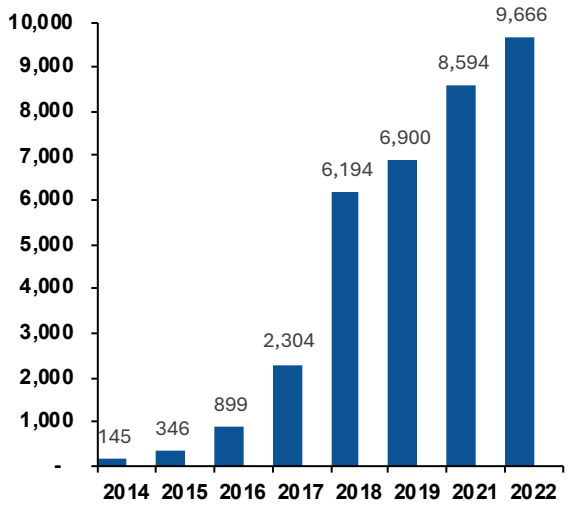


Figure 29. Registered Electric Vehicles in the Philippines, 2014-2022

- ***Nature-based Solutions*** – Nature-based solutions refer to a variety of policies and measures that harness the power of nature to address threats to water security, natural disasters, and the adverse impacts of climate change (WWF, 2024). It underpins the principle that when natural ecosystems are restored, maintained, protected, and sustainably managed, they provide essential ecosystem services that benefit communities. These ecosystem services include preventing flooding, addressing soil erosion, securing safe water sources, reducing air pollution and heat from GHG emissions, and provide source of food. At the same time, nature-based solutions when implemented properly help integrate natural processes and ecosystems into urban development initiatives to promote sustainability and prevent loss of biodiversity in urban areas. Nature-based solutions are up utmost importance in the broader climate change mitigation strategy.

  Estimates suggest that nature-based solutions globally can provide up to 37% of the mitigation needed to achieve the targets of the Climate Change Conference (COP21) Paris Agreement to maintain global average temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C (World Bank, 2022). In the Philippines, nature-based solutions offer a lot of potential in increasing the climate resilience or urban and rural communities alike. The Philippines is the third most vulnerable country to climate change according to the 2017 World Risk Report (World Economic Forum, 2017). At the same time, the country is abundant in natural resources and ranks high in biodiversity but is also considered a hotspot due to the rapid rate of degradation it faces.

  Several urban areas in the Philippines have embraced nature-based solutions and are actively advocating and investing in these initiatives. In many urban areas, rain gardens are constructed in public parks and certain areas to help manage stormwater runoff and reduce the risk of urban flooding. A rain garden is a low impact development system composed of berms planted on an engineered soil, designed to collect and filter rainwater and allow it infiltrate into the ground (Poso, et al., 2020). A notable example of a large-scale rain garden in an urban area in the Philippines is the 3.2-hectare Evozone Rain Garden located in Nuvali, Santa Rosa, Laguna. The area serves as a rainwater catchment basis but is also designed to serve as an outdoor recreation space and habitat for wildlife in the rapidly developing urban community.

The 3.2-hectare Evozone Rain Garden in Nuvali in Santa Rosa City, Laguna serves as a rainwater catchment basin. It is also designed to accommodate visitors and nature lovers, offering a vast outdoor recreation area for the local community.

Photo from Nuvali, Ayala Land Inc., 2021

Urban green spaces are also examples of nature-based solutions. In addition to constructing green parks, the government is advocating the integration of green spaces in property development. For instance, under the Urban Greening Ordinance enacted by the Cebu City Government in 2021, all developers are required to allocate at least 10% of the project areas for green space. This applies to all vertical structures, including those used for commercial, industrial, residential, institutional, or agricultural purposes. The ordinance also mandates that new structures include at least three green building features, including alternative energy sources.

In coastal areas, preserving and restoring natural ecosystems like mangroves, beach forests, and marshes provide cost-effective protection against flooding, erosion, storm surges, severe winds, and other coastal hazards that threaten communities. After the onslaught of Typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Super Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines in 2013, the Philippine Government studied and heavily invested in planting mangroves and beach forests to protect communities particularly in its eastern seaboard. Tacloban City in the Visayas is one of the local governments that implemented its mangrove restoration program. Implemented in 2016-2018 by the Tacloban City Government, One Architecture Project, and the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), the initiative reverted abandoned fishponds to a greenbelt of mangroves and beach forests. Coastal communities were engaged to help in breaking down dike to restore tidal flow, land development, and the collection and planting of wildlings of mangrove species (Wetlands International Philippines, 2023). The coastal city of Cebu, which is vulnerable to rising sea-level and storm surges, is also implementing numerous mangrove restoration projects along its urban shorelines (Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation, Inc., 2007). These mangroves serve as natural buffers, absorbing wave energy while providing habitats for marine species. The City Government of Cebu partners with private sector, non-government organizations, and other stakeholders to implement these initiatives. Other notable similar initiatives include the community-led Siargao Islands Mangrove Rehabilitation Project as well as the Bohol Integrated Coastal Resource Management Project, which protected over 30 coastal communities.

In Palawan, Puerto Princesa City is actively developing urban biodiversity corridors to mitigate climate change impacts and support local ecosystems. These corridors, which are areas of vegetation that allow animals to travel between habitats, are essential for maintaining biodiversity and ensuring the survival of both plants and animals within the city. Moreover, the City Government of Puerto Princesa is ramping efforts to address diminishing green spaces in urban areas by planting more trees to combat the effects of rising temperature and climate change. The LGU has spearheaded regular tree planting activities that are participated by thousands of people across the city. Trees planted are mostly endemic and native trees that support biodiversity. Based from data from the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (City ENRO), a total of 2.6 million trees have been planted from 1991 to 2022 across 16 sites within the city's upland barangays, with 70% to 80% survival rates (Reyes, 2023).

Across the country, there are also green highways and linear parks that integrate transportation corridors with green spaces and wildlife habitats. Green highways incorporate vegetated medians, bioswales, tree-lined corridors, as well as bike lanes and pedestrian paths lined with trees. Meanwhile, linear parks are narrow strips of green space along rivers and highways that is used for recreation, flood control, and habitat protection. Examples of these include the Green City Highway in San Fernando City, Pampanga; the C6 Linear Park along the Lakeshore Road Network in Taguig City; the 9-km Iloilo Esplanade in Iloilo City; and the Pasig Rain Garden and Greenways.

Other nature-based solutions implemented in the Philippines to mitigate climate change, promote urban biodiversity, and support sustainable urban development include greenbelts and riparian buffer zones, urban wetland conservation, forest-based watershed management, and estuarine and marine ecosystem-based management.

- ***Green Buildings*** — The Philippines recognizes the importance of promoting green and energy-efficient buildings and infrastructure as one of the key strategies to reduce GHG emissions. The Philippines National Adaptation Plan (NAP), which outlines the overall strategy for adaptation and resilience, emphasizes the integration of climate-smart standards in building and construction (CCC, 2024). The NAP targets to incentivize the adoption of green and circular economy principles across housing programs and value chains at every level.

  Republic Act No. 11285 signed on April 12, 2019, promotes energy efficiency and conservation as a national priority. It provides the national framework for advocating energy efficiency as a way of life. It also provides fiscal and non-financial incentives for energy efficiency and conservation projects as well as tax deductions and duty-free importation for energy-efficient technologies. Furthermore, under the Government Energy Management Program (GEMP), the Philippine Government mandates all government offices to reduce the cost of energy consumption by government agencies by advancing energy efficiency technologies and practices in all government facilities. Towards this end, many government agencies have already started implementing energy efficiency measures in government-owned and operated buildings and public facilities to save costs and help conserve energy. To increase awareness and advocate resource efficiency, the Philippines has also instituted a "National Green Building Day" to be celebrated every September 8 by virtue of Proclamation No. 1030, s. 2020.

  At the same time, private businesses and developers have designed and implemented commercial buildings and structures that make use of modern architectural and engineering measures and techniques to lower emissions, enhance overall energy efficiency, minimize wastes, and conserve water resources. These buildings are innovatively designed with features that improve insulation; use energy-efficient lighting or utilize natural ventilation and daylighting; have high-efficiency air conditioning and cooling systems; utilize solar power or other renewable energy sources; optimize water consumption; and/or are equipped with smart controls and sensors to optimize energy use for lighting and temperature control, among others.
  The Philippines is home to several LEED-certified buildings (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), which are designed towards optimizing energy and water consumption, contributing to sustainable urban development. The certification program was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council and is recognized globally. In 2023, the Philippines had 24 LEED-certified projects, representing 11 million certified square feet (1.06 million sq.m.). This placed the Philippines at number 10 in the world for LEED-certified buildings (U.S. Green Building Council, 2023). The country's growing number of green buildings reflects a surge in awareness of the need to mitigate climate change and reduce the environmental footprint of buildings.

  In the Philippines, there is also a local standard called Building for Ecologically Responsive Design Excellence (BERDE) that can be used to assess, measure, monitor, and certify the performance of green building projects above and beyond existing national and local building and environmental laws, regulations, and mandatory standards (PHILGBC, 2024). BERDE was established by the Philippine Green Building Council (PHILGBC). It is recognized by the Philippine Government as the national voluntary green building rating system.

  As of June 2023, over 1,000 green buildings in the Philippines are certified under various local and international green building rating systems. While most green buildings are in Metro Manila, several ones are located in urban areas outside NCR. These include Cebu Exchange and Lucima, both LEED-certified properties in Metro Cebu; EDGE-certified Primavera Residences and LEED Platinum-certified Pioneer House in Cagayan de Oro City; and SunPower Philippines in Biñan City, Laguna, to name a few. The increasing number of green buildings in the Philippines represent growing awareness and commitment towards sustainable urban development.

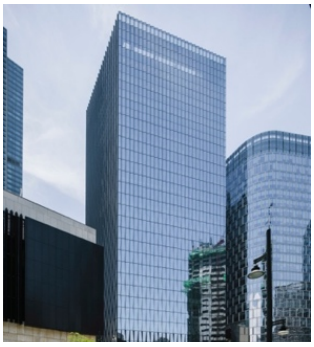
Figure 30. Notable LEED Certified Buildings in the Philippines

LEED Certified Buildings in the Philippines

Makati Commerce Tower

Location: Makati City
Certification: LEED Platinum (2023)

Built with advanced green building features, the Makati Commerce Tower is a LEED Platinum version 4.0 Grade A building. The building is equipped with features on water conservation and management, heat island reduction, light pollution reduction, and energy optimization.



ArthaLand Century Pacific

Location: Taguig City
Certification: LEED Platinum (2018)

The building was certified as "net zero operational energy and/or carbon", demonstrating the highest level of energy efficiency. It is also certified as LEED Platinum and BERDE 5-stars. It has both energy efficiency measures and water conservation features.

Zuellig Building

Location: Makati City
Certification: LEED Platinum (2013)

The first Platinum LEED Core and Shell building in the Philippines upon its completion in 2013. It has a number of features, such as low-emissivity curtain wall to reduce solar heat gain; sensor-controlled lighting system; rainwater collection system; and efficient HVAC system.

Citibank Plaza

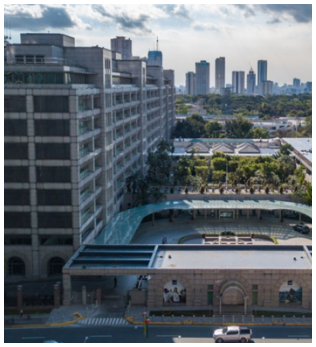
Location: Taguig City
Certification: LEED Platinum (2017)

The 24-story tower has a LEED Platinum for its Core and Shell design in recognition of its efficient use of energy and water, as well as other environment-friendly features. It also received the LEED Platinum for Commercial Interiors.

BTTC Centre

Location: San Juan City
Certification: LEED Gold (2014)

This LEED Gold certified building uses insulated glass units to adjust and maintain the temperature within the structure while also reducing the need for air conditioning. It also has a power-regenerating electrical system for the elevators.



ADB Headquarters

Location: Mandaluyong City
Certification: LEED Gold (2011)

The ADB Headquarters is LEED Gold for New Construction Version 3.0 certified. It has cooling tower management, mostly uses eco-friendly and locally sourced products, solar panels that meet about 3.5% of ADB's power needs, and recycling features.

W City Center

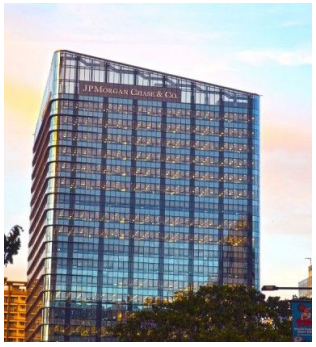
Location: Taguig City
Certification: LEED Gold (2021)

The building has LED lighting, low-E glass, and green roof to reduce heat and power consumption. It uses low-flow fixtures to cut water usage by over 45%. The building also promotes healthy indoor environments through low-VOC materials and ventilation systems compliant with ASHRAE standards.

One Paseo in ArcoVia City

Location: Pasig City
Certification: LEED Gold (2022)

The building is a LEED Gold-certified office tower featuring advanced mechanical, electrical, lighting, and water systems that were thoroughly commissioned to optimize performance and efficiency. Its eco-efficient design supports sustainable operations within a mixed-use, green township context.



Worldwide Plaza

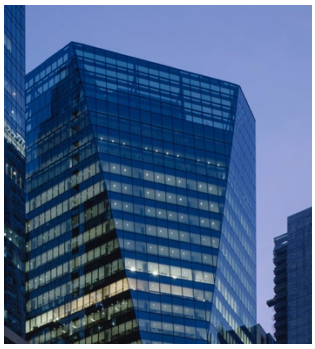
Location: Taguig City
Certification: LEED Gold (2022)

This is a 27-story office tower with energy-efficient design—high-performance glass curtain walls, daylight optimization, and efficient VRF HVAC systems—with rainwater and graywater harvesting. It emphasizes responsible materials & waste management, and enhanced indoor environmental quality.

Cebu Exchange

Location: Cebu City, Cebu
Certification: LEED Gold (2022)

Cebu Exchange is one of the Philippines' largest multi-certified sustainable office tower, achieving LEED Platinum, BERDE 5-Star, and EDGE Zero Carbon certifications. Key features include energy-efficient systems, water conservation measures, and green spaces and wellness amenities.



NEX Tower

Location: Makati City
Certification: LEED Platinum (2019)

The tower showcases a bold biophilic design that includes an 11-meter hydroponic green wall in the skylit lobby; three landscaped outdoor areas that which enhance air quality; and low-E double-pane glazing, advanced HVAC, and other energy efficiency and water conservation features.

Filinvest City

Location: Alabang, Muntinlupa City
Certification: LEED Gold (2020)

The project holds a LEED Gold certification for sustainable neighborhood development. It features a lush “Spectrum Linear Park” green belt with tree-lined pedestrian and bike lanes, extensive open green spaces (30% of the 244-ha district), and integrated electric shuttle to promote low-carbon mobility.

Below are notable climate change adaptation measures that have an impact on urban development:

- ***Flood risk management*** – Flood risk management in urban areas of the Philippines has become a national priority due to increasing climate-related disasters, especially in flood-prone cities like Metro Manila, Cebu, and Davao. In line with this, both the National Government and concerned LGUs in urban areas have implemented several flood management projects. Approximately 20% of Metro Manila is considered high-risk flood zones, while 42.69% is under moderate flood risk.

  The DPWH has developed specific master plans for all 18 major river basins in the Philippines. The master plans were developed in close collaboration with LGUs, relevant national government agencies, and international partners. These master plans are tailored to address the specific characteristics and needs of each area, ensuring more efficient and targeted management of flood risks (DPWH, 2024). Several flood management projects have been completed in the past decade. These include the *Imus River Basin Flood Control Project* which aims to mitigate flooding in the highly-populated urban areas in Imus City and Bacoor, Cavite. Other completed flood control facilities include the *Flood Risk Management Projects* for the Cagayan and Tagoloan Rivers, the *Leyte Tide Embankment Project*, the *Integrated Disaster Risk and Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (IDRR CCA) Measures in the Low Lying Areas of Pampanga Bay - Stage 1*, and several phases of the *Pasig Marikina River Flood Control Project*.

  In 2017, the DPWH implemented the World Bank-assisted *Metro Manila Flood Management Project*. The project aims to improve flood management in selected areas of Metro Manila, focusing on 56 critical drainage areas with an approximate land area of 11,100 hectares. These areas account for or over 17% of the total area of Metro Manila where an estimated 3.5 million reside (ADB, 2024). The project involves modernizing drainage areas by constructing new pumping stations and rehabilitating existing ones, strengthening solid waste collection and disposal, and supporting participatory housing and resettlement. As of 2024, 15 of the 34 pumping stations have been rehabilitated, while four new stations are currently under construction.

  The *Pasig–Marikina River Channel Improvement Project (PMRCIP)* is another major flood control initiative led by the DPWH. Implemented through the support from JICA, the project aims to reduce flooding in Metro Manila by improving the flow capacity of the Pasig and Marikina Rivers. Phase III of the project which focuses on improving the river channel has been substantially completed, while Phase IV which covers the final downstream sections of the rivers is ongoing, with target completion in November 2025.

  Other major flood management infrastructure projects in Metro Manila in the pipeline include the Pasig–Marikina River Channel Improvement (Phases III–IV), Manggahan Floodway & Proposed Parañaque Spillway Tunnel, Laguna Lakeshore Expressway-Dike, and Urban Flood Monitoring Stations.

The Pasig–Marikina River Channel Improvement Project (PMRCIP) aims to mitigate flood damage in Metro Manila caused by channel overflow of the Pasig-Marikina River. The project will benefit residents of the cities of Pasig, Marikina, and Quezon City in Metro Manila, as well as the municipalities of Taytay and Cainta in Rizal.
Photos from DPWH dated May 29, 2024

To complement these initiatives, LGUs implement projects that also support flood management efforts. For instance, the Marikina River Park supported by Marikina City integrates river rehabilitation with flood control structures, while at the same time providing public spaces for recreation. The Pasig City Government implemented a Low-Rise Building

Project to resettle informal settler families along the Pasig River into participatory-designed housing units. This initiative not only improves safety, but also helps uplift the standard of living for the for the concerned households.

- ***Water security*** – Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and more frequent droughts and floods brought by climate change necessitate appropriate adaptation measures that focus on water security. In urban areas, these include diversifying water sources and implementing water conservation measures.

  Many cities in the Philippines face challenges in terms of water security. One of these is Baguio City, a highly urbanized city that sits in a mountainous area in the Cordillera. While the area receives abundant rainfall of up to 4,000 mm/year, Baguio City faces water shortages, especially during dry seasons and El Niño events. For many years, the city has relied on limited groundwater and spring water sources. However, rapid urbanization aggravated by the growing influx of tourists put more pressure to the city's water resources. As one of the solutions, the LGU mandated rainwater harvesting for all new buildings under the City's Green Building Ordinance. Harvesting rainwater will help convert excess rainfall into a usable resource. Moreover, the city's Environmental Code encourages water conservation through low-impact development strategies. Several urban areas such as in San Fernando City in Pampanga also have rainwater harvesting tanks installed in schools. Water is recycled and is used for gardening and toilet to conserve water.

  In Visayas, desalination plants are installed to reduce reliance on rain-fed sources in Boracay Island in Aklan. These facilities help reduce stress from freshwater sources in the island.

  In Quezon City, the City LGU piloted smart metering systems to detect leaks and improve water conservation. This is part of broader efforts to modernize urban utilities to be climate-resilient.

The Iloilo City Government allocated Php 20 million in 2023 to establish rainwater harvesting facilities and water purifiers in selected barangays where access to water is difficult. This was done in preparation for the El Niño phenomenon. (PNA, 2023)

Photo from Philippine News Agency dated August 28, 2023

- ***Heat Stress Reduction*** – Urban areas in the Philippines are increasingly adopting heat stress reduction strategies, combining nature-based solutions, urban planning, and technology. The DENR's Green Spaces Campaign promotes urban parks and green belts in urban areas. In several areas, urban design measures such as reflective pavements, shading structures, green walls, and other infrastructure are used to reduce urban heat. For instance, Cebu City has integrated reflective roofing and green rooftop gardens in its Local Climate Action Plan to help reduce localized heat. In many cities across the country, private developments and commercial buildings feature sustainable designs for natural ventilation and passive cooling. Several cities, including Legazpi City in Albay and Ormoc City in Leyte, utilize tree-lined streets, permeable pavements, and shaded public spaces as part of their respective local climate-resilient urban design strategies.

d. Develop systems to reduce the impact of natural and human-made disasters

In 2023, the World Risk Index (WRI) ranked the Philippines as the most disaster-prone country globally. The Philippines received a WRI score of 46.86, placing it at the top of 193 countries and territories assessed. This score indicates a very high level of risk due to natural disasters, including typhoons, earthquakes, and other extreme events.

The Greater Metro Manila Area (GMMA) — which covers the entirety of Metro Manila and the neighboring provinces of Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal to the east — is a megacity that experiences some of the world's worst natural disasters as a result of geological, climate-related, hydrometeorological, and anthropogenic hazards (PAGASA, 2021). The entire GMMA is exposed to a wide range of hazards due to its dense population and geographic location. The area lies near the West Valley Fault, which exposes the urban communities to earthquakes. It is also exposed to volcanic eruptions due to its proximity to active volcanoes such as Taal Volcano in Batangas and Mount Banahaw in Quezon. The GMMA is also exposed to hydrometeorological hazards, such as typhoons and flooding especially in low-lying areas like Marikina, Valenzuela, and Pasig; storm surges particularly in coastal areas such as Navotas; and rain-induced landslides in the hilly parts of Rizal and Marikina. The Pasig-Marikina River Basin, located at the heart of Metro Manila, is also identified as a critical area for flooding. Liquefaction risk is also a concern, especially in the Cities of Makati, Mandaluyong, and San Juan.

Other major Philippine urban areas such as Cebu City, Davao City, Iloilo City, Baguio City, Zamboanga City, Cagayan de Oro City, Tacloban City, and General Santos City are exposed to different hazards and risks. These include those that are geological (e.g., earthquakes, liquefaction, volcanic eruption), hydrometeorological (e.g., inland and coastal flooding, storm surges, intense rainfall, river overflow), climate-related (e.g., urban heat stress, rising sea level, extreme rainfall patterns, drought), and anthropogenic (e.g., fire, pollution, industrial accidents) in nature. A summary of the hazard exposure of selected Philippine major cities is presented as Annex to this report.

DRRM Policy and Planning

The Philippine Government recognizes that addressing the multi-faceted challenges posed by natural and human-made disasters in urban areas require a systems-approach that encompasses policy, planning, and coordinated implementation of initiatives. At the policy-level, Republic Act No. 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 institutionalizes a proactive approach to disaster preparedness and response by emphasizing mitigation, adaptation, and resilience-building measures.

The law established the *National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council* (NDRRMC) as the lead agency in coordinating efforts to reduce disaster risks and improve response capabilities. The NDRRMC is composed of over 40 member agencies, including the Department of National Defense (Chair), DILG, DOST, DOH, DepEd, DENR, DPWH, DSWD (Vice-Chairs for various thematic areas), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), and representatives from civil society and the private sector.

To complement this, the law also mandated the creation of *Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Councils* (LDRRMCs) at the local government level to spearhead and monitor the implementation of risk reduction plans tailored to specific regional vulnerabilities. LDRRMCs are established at different levels of local government (i.e., barangay, municipal, city, provincial) amd are primarily responsible for formulating, implementing, and coordinating disaster risk reduction and management policies and programs within their jurisdiction. The LDRRMC is headed by the Local Chief Executive (Governor, Mayor, Barangay Captain), with the Head of the Local DRRM Office as the Vice-Chairperson, while the heads of local departments of the concerned LGU as well as representatives from CSO, private sector, academe, and religious sector serve as members.

During Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013, considered one of the most powerful tropical cyclones ever recorded, the NDRRMC coordinated national response operations, mobilized military assets, and worked with international agencies to deliver aid and assess damage. The NDRRMC collated data and released situational reports that helped inform decision-making of both the government and non-government partners. Meanwhile, the LDRRMCs in Tacloban City and affected provinces and municipalities were instrumental in coordinating response and relief efforts, implementation of response the post-Yolanda rehabilitation, improving local early warning systems, and upgrading evacuation infrastructure.

Republic Act No. 10121 also mandates local governments to develop their own Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plans (LDRRMPs). These localized plans focus on disaster prevention and mitigation as well as in enhancing disaster preparedness and response capabilities at the LGU-level, incorporating climate change considerations to reduce vulnerabilities of communities. LDRRMPs define protocols for early warning, evacuation routes, roles and responsibilities, and resource allocation, which are important to ensure efficient and structured preparedness and contingency planning. The NDRRMC and the Office of Civil Defense provides technical guidance, resources, and training to LGUs to help them formulate and effectively implement LDRRMPs, while other national government agencies provide data and supplemental technical assistance. As of October 2024, 87.87% of all LGUs in the country have developed their respective LDRRMPs. Moreover, 67.93% of LGUs have Contingency Plans, while 87.33% have approved barangay-level Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction Plans.

LDRRMPs are meant to be integrated into CLUPs and CDPs, which will add risk-informed zoning and land-use policies. However, integration remains inconsistent across LGUs.

Moreover, specific plans that target specific disasters were formulated to guide a comprehensive and coordinated response across the national government, local governments, and other stakeholders. For instance, the NDRRMC in collaboration with the Metro Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (MMDRRMC) developed the *Metro Manila Earthquake Contingency Plan* in 2015 to prepare for the potential 7.2 magnitude earthquake from the West Valley Fault, that would significantly endanger the lives of more than 13 million residents in the nation's capital and cause tremendous damage to its infrastructure (NDRMMC, 2015). The said plan aims to operationalize an effective and efficient system of earthquake disaster preparedness and response among the government and non-state bodies by defining their roles and coordinating courses of action.

These plans have led to increased awareness on DRRM, fostered structured and targeted planning and preparedness initiatives, institutionalized DRRM at different levels of the government, enhanced collaboration leading to more cohesive disaster preparedness and response, and increased investments on systems and mechanisms to reduce risks and enhance resilience. Republic Act No. 10121 mandated the creation of a local disaster risk reduction and management fund (LDRRMF) to ensure that DRRM initiatives will be properly budgeted. Based on the NDRRMC, DBM, and DILG Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2013-01, the LDRRMF should not be less than five percent (5%) of the estimated revenue from regular sources of LGUs and shall be set aside to support DRRM initiatives.

Through the years, many local governments supported by the national government have increasingly adopted and implemented their respective disaster risk management initiatives such as implementing hazard mapping, installing early warning systems, developing coordinated evacuation plans, and capacitating first-responders and communities. The table below presents the proportion of LGUs that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies.

Table 34. Proportion of Local Governments that Adopt and Implement Local Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies by Region, 2016-2021

Region	Percentage of Provincial/City/Municipal LGUs (%)			
	2016	2018	2020	2021
Luzon				
National Capital Region (NCR)	52.9	76.5	82.4	100.0
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	94.0	97.5	79.5	61.5
Region I – Ilocos Region	44.8	100.0	74.4	76.7
Region II – Cagayan Valley	100.0	100.0	49.0	55.1
Region III – Central Luzon	59.0	99.3	100.0	100.0
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	99.8	100.0	100.0	74.8
Region IVB – MIMAROPA	82.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region V – Bicol Region	91.0	93.3	57.5	56.7
Visayas				
Region VI – Western Visayas	25.1	20.2	99.3	100.0
Region VII – Central Visayas	100.0	87.5	94.1	100.0
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	100.0	59.5	81.9	83.9
Mindanao				
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	100.0	45.3	94.6	96.0
Region X – Northern Mindanao	100.0	85.7	86.7	96.9
Region XI – Davao Region	100.0	100.0	88.9	100.0
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region XIII – Caraga	74.4	76.9	100.0	93.6
BARMM	12.5	53.7	60.9	13.0

(Sources: NDRRMC, OCD, PSA)

Early Warning and Monitoring Systems

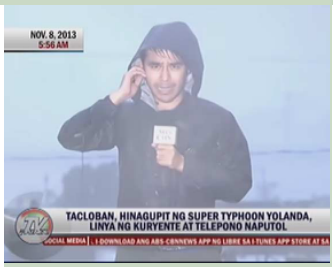
Early warning and monitoring systems are important tools for preparing for and reducing the impact of disasters, including for urban areas. These systems enable authorities to gather valuable information to understand hazards and vulnerabilities and monitor disaster occurrence. This valuable information are important in supporting decision-making to allow authorities to coordinate response efforts as well as allocate resources more efficiently during emergencies. At the same time, early warning and monitoring systems enable authorities to disseminate information to concerned communities, improving response time and empowering stakeholders to become active participants in disaster risk reduction.

Risk Knowledge

- Understanding Hazard
- Identifying Elements at Risk
- Assessment and Mapping of Vulnerabilities

Monitoring and Warning

- Installing Gauges and Monitoring Instruments
- Disaster Prompt
- Transmission to Response Team & Authorities
- Warning Decision



Dissemination and Communication

- Radio and TV Broadcast
- Telephone & Mobile Alerts
- Social Media Updates
- Household Warning Mechanism

Disaster Response

- Relief Efforts
- Search & Rescue Operations
- Calls for Evacuation

Figure 31. Components of End-to-End Early Warning Systems

In the Philippines, monitoring systems are installed within the 18 major river basins across the country. These systems involve a combination of water quality monitoring, flood forecasting and warning systems, as well as community-based monitoring initiatives. These systems utilize specialized sensors, monitoring equipment, and technologies like automated rain gauges, water level monitoring stations, and flood forecasting models to effectively monitor and send warnings to concerned agencies and communities about potential river overflows, flooding, flashflood, and other disasters. Some monitoring systems are also used to actively monitor for other hazard events such as earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, and storm surges, among others.

Examples of early warning and monitoring systems deployed across the country that directly impact cities and urban growth centers are as follows:

- ***Project NOAH (Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards)*** **–** This initiative was launched in 2012 and was transferred to the University of the Philippines Resilience Institute in 2017. Project NOAH develops and analyzes flood, landslide, and coastal hazard maps to provide a six-hour lead time for communities and authorities to support data-driven decision-making. The project was implemented nationwide, focusing on vulnerable LGUs like Cagayan de Oro City, Iloilo City, and Tacloban City (UP Resilience Institute, 2015). Project NOAH has an online platform for viewing maps with information on hazards (flood, landslide, storm surge), critical facilities (schools, police stations, fire stations, hospitals), and other satellite-based data.

- ***Metro Weather Automated Weather Stations*** – The project, also known as Metro Weather, is a public-private partnership that has established a network of 30 automated weather stations (AWS) in Metro Manila since 2012. This network of AWS provides free and near real-time weather data that can be used to prepare for severe weather conditions such as tropical cyclones and heavy flooding. The weather stations are spread over the cities and municipalities throughout Metro Manila. The project partners are Chevron, the Manila Observatory, Globe Telecom, MMDA, and the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU). (Manila Observatory, n.d.)

In 2021, DOST-PAGASA installed 40 lightning detection and automated weather stations all over Metro Manila and in selected regional Observation and Weather Stations. The system will provide data to determine the relationship of lightning strikes and torrential rainfall to put together a forecast method to predict the weather at a shorter time period

Photo from Business Mirror, March 21, 2021

In April 2025, DOST-PAGASA with support from JICA inaugurated the Cagayan de Oro River Basin Flood Forecasting and Warning System (FFWS). The system aims to enhance flood forecasting and provide timely warnings to communities in the Cagayan de Oro River Basin, including urban communities in Cagayan de Oro City and Iligan City.

Photo from Philippine Information Agency, April 7, 2025

- ***Flood Early Warning Systems*** – Developed and implemented by DOST-PAGASA with the support from the Government of South Korea, the initiative aims to provide advance notice of floods to the general public and authorities. Sensors and gauges are installed to track water levels in rivers and other waterways. These systems monitor water levels in rivers and send alerts when evacuation is needed, using real-time monitoring and data management tools. Warnings are delivered through various channels, including radio broadcasts and potentially mobile alerts. Phase I of the project focused on Toledo City and Dumanjug in the Province of Cebu and was completed in 2022. The second phase started in 2023 focusing on Danao and Argao, Cebu (DOST-PAGASA, 2023).

- ***DYNASLOPE Project*** – This is an early warning system for deep-seated and catastrophic landslides, through landslide sensor technology and community participation in the Philippines. The project was funded by DOST and implemented by the University of the Philippines Diliman. The system is being implemented by PHIVOLCS in 50 sites around the country (DOST-PHIVOLCS, 2023).

- ***Community Empowerment thru Science and Technology (CEST) Program in Metro Manila*** – The DOST-NCR has deployed automated rain gauges (ARGs), water level monitoring sensors, and early warning system devices to support DRRM efforts of barangay LGUs in 14 cities in Metro Manila (DOST-NCR, n.d.). Data from sensors and data logger system are transmitted every 30 minutes through a gateway and into the PHIVOLCS-Dynaslope Office. If the data exceeds the threshold set by PHIVOLCS, the alert level is raised and residents are evacuated when it reaches Alert Level 3. Leaders and residents from at-risk households are also taught to detect and geotag landslide features, and report this through the system (Gozum, 2023).

- ***Local Flood Early Warning Systems (LFEWS)*** – The LFEWS focuses on small to medium-sized river basins and is deployed in 12 provinces in the Philippines. When the system measures a potentially dangerous rise of the upstream water level as a result of heavy rain, information is

automatically sent to a local operations center, which in turn informs the districts at risk. From there, a warning message is disseminated to the communities and authorities for appropriate action. The initiative was implemented with the support from GIZ and in partnership with DOST, PAGASA, and University of Potsdam in Germany. (Global Institute on Disaster Risk Management, n.d.)

- ***PhilAWARE*** – Through a long-term partnership between the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) and the Philippines Office of Civil Defense (OCD), a custom early warning and risk intelligence platform known as PhilAWARE was deployed. This platform, powered by its core DisasterAWARE platform, provides near real-time warnings and analytical insights ahead of tropical cyclone landfall. This fast and accurate information aids disaster management operators with the identification and prepositioning of resources to protect communities, as well as ensures community awareness and preparedness prior to impact (Somilleda & Goering, 2025).

- ***Multi-hazard Impact-based Forecasting and Early Warning System for the Philippines Project*** – In 2023, the DOST-PAGASA launched the project which aims to develop a nationwide system for a "Multi-hazard Impact-Based Forecasting and Early Warning System" (MH-IBF-EWS). It also seeks to implement a pro-active government approach focused on the preventive aspects of disaster management by communicating to stakeholders as to what the weather "will do" rather than what the weather "will be", enabling the public to take appropriate actions during the window of anticipation before the hazard event even occurs. The initiative is the first project funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in the Philippines with a total budget of USD 22 million. It will be implemented in the vulnerable barangays of Tuguegarao City, Cagayan; Legazpi City, Albay; Palo, Leyte; and Bataan, Davao de Oro until 2027 (DOST-PAGASA, 2023).

DRRM Command Centers

Real-time information and clear coordination are key in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. In the Philippines, there are several command centers that provide communication support to coordinate efforts of government agencies, private sector, and other stakeholders during disasters and emergencies.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) Operations Center, located at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City, is the Philippines' central hub for coordinating disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. It is housed in a three-story, 600-square-meter facility and is maintained by the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) under the Department of National Defense (DND). The Operations Center was built as a direct response of the Philippines after its experience during Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013, which exposed the need for a centralized, high-tech command center. The center is equipped with 24/7 monitoring and coordination capabilities. Through the center, the NDRRMC coordinates information management from PAGASA, PHIVOLCS, LGUs, and other government agencies to develop timely situational updates; activates national response clusters; and provides support for LGUs in mobilizing resources and personnel during disasters. The center is also a venue for training and simulation, including hosting disaster preparedness drills and inter-agency coordination exercises. Since its establishment in 2017, the NDRRMC Operations Center has been instrumental in coordinating response, relief, recovery, and reconstruction efforts in many of the disasters faced by the Philippines.

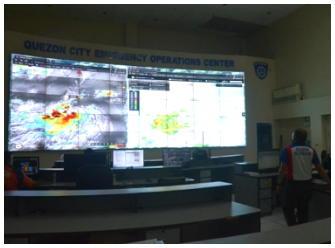
The Philippines also has a Disaster Response Command Center (DRCC), which serves as a central command center for the DSWD in coordinating and implementing disaster response operations. In times of disaster, the DSWD plays a crucial role in coordinating humanitarian assistance including provision of essential needs such as food, shelter, and hygiene. The DSWD DRCC employs cutting-edge technology including dashboards highlighting disaggregated data on displaced population and maps of DSWD warehouses including stockpile inventory to monitor disaster situations comprehensively (DSWD Disaster Response Management Bureau, n.d.). In 2024, the Philippine Government enhanced the DRCC to fully automate and

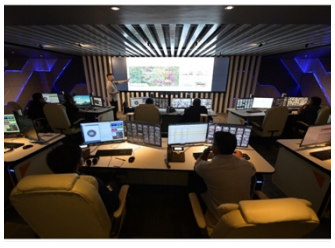
digitalize its inventory management system to ensure that relief goods and other supplies for emergencies are always prepositioned across the country (PNA, 2024). Technology and systems are improved to facilitate smooth coordination among the DSWD's National Resource Operations Center in Pasay City, the Visayas Disaster Resource Center in Cebu, and the warehouse and storage facilities across the 16 DSWD Field Offices across the country. Moreover, the DRCC is reinforced by Mobile Command Centers (MCCs), which bridge the communication gap during disaster or emergency operations. Each MCC is equipped with state-of-the-art satellite internet, gadgets, and generators that can be used as a source of power supply and internet connection for communities in disaster areas.

The Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF) Emergency Operations Center, located in Clark, Pampanga, is considered one of the first private sector-led disaster operations center in the world. This command center coordinates disaster response and logistics in close collaboration with the private sector. The center operates 24/7 and is a self-sufficient operations hub geared towards training for disaster preparedness and the coordination of relief and response efforts during major disasters. The center is equipped with advanced GIS and communications tools that allow real-time monitoring in times of disasters. The center coordinates warnings, disaster evacuation, asset inventory, and emergency services integration that complement government efforts. Clark was chosen as the site for the Emergency Operations Center due to its low-risk location and easy access to transportation networks such as the Clark International Airport, the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTex), and the Subic Bay seaport. (PDRF, 2021)

Several cities particularly in Metro Manila have also enhanced their disaster command centers with real-time monitoring technologies for floods, earthquakes, and typhoons, ensuring swift action during crises.

Table 35. Disaster Command Centers of Selected Cities

Command Center	Description, Scope, and Capabilities	Photos
Davao City Public Safety and Security Command Center	As the first fully integrated emergency response system in the Philippines, the Command Center handles fire, medical, and police emergencies through a centralized 911 hotline. The center operates rescue units and mobile medical teams for natural disasters. Davao City LGU spearheaded the program, supported by telecom companies for emergency call routing and by international NGOs for training and capacity building.	
Quezon City Emergency Operations Center	The Emergency Operations Center manages disaster response operations with CCTV integration across major thoroughfares and flood-prone areas. It operates a centralized incident command system and supports inter-agency coordination. Smart Communications provided the mobile alert systems and data infrastructure, while DOST supported hazard and early warning technology.	

Command Center	Description, Scope, and Capabilities	Photos
Makati Command Control and Communications (C3) Center	Makati C3 functions as a smart city hub with real-time emergency alerts, traffic and disaster monitoring via over 300 CCTVs. It also serves as the city's central dispatch for fire, rescue, and medical services and initial response team for Hotline 168, the city's own emergency number. IBM contributed analytics and smart city technologies under its Smarter Cities Challenge.	
Manila Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO) Operations Center	This facility monitors disaster threats using a citywide CCTV network and supports integrated emergency operations during typhoons, fires, and pandemics. It also serves as the central hub for logistics and health crisis management. The Manila City LGU partnered with private tech providers for surveillance systems, while DILG and DOST assisted in designing response protocols and installing hazard detection systems.	
Caloocan City DRRMO Emergency Operations Center	Housed in the Caloocan City Hall, the Operations Center facilitates flood monitoring using early warning sensors and real-time weather updates. Through the center, the City LGU coordinates rapid emergency responses and manages temporary shelters during calamities.	
Pasig City Command Center	The center supports disaster response, rescue coordination, and public health crisis management. It was vital in managing citywide COVID-19 operations and now focuses on broader hazard response. CCTV cameras are installed across the city. In cases of typhoons, satellite imagery is actively monitored and digital water-level sensors installed across the city are used to assess the likelihood of rivers overflowing to anticipate flooding incidence and plan necessary measures.	
Cebu City DRRM Command Center	The command center manages multi-hazard operations and coastal disaster preparedness. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported funding for infrastructure and ICT upgrades, while DOST-PAGASA provided technical support in coastal and meteorological monitoring. In 2024, Cebu City upgraded its command center and launched a 911 emergency hotline and dispatch system, making Cebu City the first local government in the Visayas to offer this public service.	
Baguio Smart City Command Center	The center serves as the central hub for the city's disaster response, traffic management, and public safety operations. It integrates over 400 surveillance cameras and smart sensors throughout the city, enabling real-time monitoring of weather disturbances, traffic, emergencies, and public events. The center also specializes in climate and geohazard monitoring due to the city's landslide and earthquake risks.	

Capacity Building for First Responders, DRRM Personnel, and Local Communities

Efforts are also done to build the capacity of first responders and other personnel to respond to emergencies and natural disasters. These efforts are guided by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2011–2028.

The government provides training and workshops on emergency response, including first aid. The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) conducts regular training, simulation exercises, and certification programs for DRRM officers and emergency responders. Training programs include incident command system, community-based DRRM, and rapid damage assessment and needs analysis.

Local governments with technical support from OCD, Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and other national government agencies also conduct specialized DRRM training, capacity-building workshops, and community drills to simulate various disasters. These include basic life support, fire suppression, evacuation planning, and incident command system. Local communities are empowered to act as first responders. This fosters preparedness by enabling communities to understand what to do and what not to do during emergencies and enabling qualified first responders to efficiently do their work with less interruptions or delays.

In many areas, youth-led disaster preparedness initiatives are also done focusing on information dissemination, education, and advocacy. DRRM education is integrated into public schools through disaster drills and awareness campaigns. The OCD, BFP, and City LGUs partner with DepEd and schools to train teachers and students in emergency preparedness.

Collaboration with CSOs and Private Sector

The government also leverages public-private partnerships in disaster preparedness and response. Telecommunications companies work with local governments to establish resilient communication networks as well as to provide specialized means of communication that are necessary for first responders as well as LGUs during typhoons and calamities.

In many areas, local governments have partnered with energy companies to ensure uninterrupted power supply during emergencies, especially for critical facilities such as government command centers, hospitals, and evacuation centers. Collaboration with the private sector is also seen through joint capacity development activities that tap experts, information-sharing, and other initiatives.

e. Build urban resilience through quality infrastructure and spatial planning

With a growing economy, the Philippines requires more and better infrastructure investments, given its archipelagic landscape, expanding population and rapid urbanization. To support a higher growth trajectory and improve the quality of life in both urban and rural communities, infrastructure development will remain among the top priorities of the government over the medium term. In the past decade, the Philippines has focused on boosting infrastructure spending. The Philippine Government aims to sustain annual spending in infrastructure at 5% to 6% of GDP annually.

The Government seeks to enhance the linkage of planning, programming, and budgeting processes to foster an infrastructure investment climate that supports robust and inclusive economic development. Government agencies identified priority infrastructure programs/activities/projects (PAPs) that are responsive to the objectives of the PDP 2023-2028. Appropriate policies were be introduced, including among others, integrated provincial-level plans and regulatory reforms.

To support the growth of urban areas amidst challenges brought by climate change and other risks, the Philippines is focusing on disaster-resilient infrastructure, including responsive transportation systems, effective flood control systems, earthquake-resistant buildings and structures, evacuation centers and housing communities built in strategic areas and low-risk zones, among others.

Table 36. Medium-Term Infrastructure Program, 2023-2028

Infrastructure Spending	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Outlook)	Projections					
			2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
In Php, billion	1,123.6	1,230.6	1,248.4	1,369.8	1,434.7	1,569.6	1,857.5	2,263.9
In USD, billion	20.57	22.53	22.86	25.08	26.27	28.74	34.01	41.46
Percent of GDP (%)	5.8	5.6	5.2	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.4	6.0

(Source: 183rd DBCC Meeting on December 5, 2022 as cited by DEPDev, April 12, 2023)

In 2015, the DPWH released Design Guidelines, Criteria and Standards, which incorporates resilient design to address the impact of climate change on all transport infrastructure. The DPWH also released the Green Building Code, a referral code of the National Building Code of the Philippines (PD 1096) that aims to promote sustainable and energy-efficient buildings. The Code provides standards and guidelines to enhance energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions, improve water efficiency and indoor environmental quality, promote sustainable site planning and management of solid waste, and encourage use of eco-friendly materials and resource conservation.

Moreover, new economic centers are identified in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), which sets the direction of the spatial development of the country. It aims to contribute to inclusive growth by improving physical connectivity and providing equal access to quality social services across regions. It also seeks to decongest NCR and direct growth to key urban growth centers throughout the country where the benefit of agglomeration can have greater potential of being realized. In these areas, the Philippines is promoting climate and disaster-resilient structures and designs following established measures and standards. These include retrofitting and construction of climate-smart and disaster resilient infrastructures and, especially in hazard-prone areas and environmentally critical areas.

In the housing sector, the Philippines is revisiting policies on post-disaster housing and resettlement programs, including those related to land development. Housing, procurement and land development policies and process, particularly in areas affected by disasters, will be reviewed and amended as needed. Moreover, the identification of housing and resettlement areas should be in appropriate land use and will not encroach on environmentally critical areas and conservation sites.

Flooding is a significant problem in the Philippines, exacerbated by its geographical location. The country experiences frequent flooding due to frequent typhoons, stronger monsoons, and occurrence of storm surges, resulting in significant damage, displacement, and health risks. Many cities and urban growth areas are also located in low-lying areas. While more flood-prone areas have been protected, flood management has become more challenging due to climate change impact and institutional issues. In 2015, it was observed that flood waters in NCR subsided 25 minutes to 1.5 hours after heavy rains. The major challenge in the sector is the increasing frequency and intensity of flood occurrences due to climate change. Another concern is the unclear delineation of responsibilities of LGUs and NG on the implementation and O&M of flood management and drainage structures. Flood prone areas in Regions I, II, III, VI, XII, XIII, and ARMM are particularly huge. Specifically, the provinces of Zamboanga Del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Camarines Sur, and Compostela Valley, among others, are also considered highly susceptible to flooding.

g. Sustain community livability planning and implementation

Community-driven planning for the livability of communities shall be sustained. The People's Plan46 adopted for on-site, in-city, and near city resettlement programs to address the urban sprawl shall be broadened to improve livability elements.

Planning the livability of communities shall be linked with national housing and urban development, and regional spatial development policies, which promote urban–rural linkages to address transboundary risks, among others. The National Urban Development and Housing Framework and the National Spatial Strategy shall be updated to consider emerging trends in green and resilient development and promote multisectoral needs (e.g., housing, transport, telecommunications, and public works) for urban and regional development.

Sustained community livability planning shall be monitored and incentivized. DHSUD shall establish a comprehensive housing and urban development monitoring information system. The passage of the DHSUD Act provided an impetus to integrate all housing and urban development policies, plans, programs, and projects. DHSUD is mandated to develop and maintain a shelter and urban development management, standards, and monitoring information system which shall include, but not limited to, the following data sets: inventory of idle lands, CLUP, inventory of housing stock, and list of beneficiaries. DHSUD's role, as oversight to housing and urban development-related policies and programs, requires data collection, processing, and analysis to assess the effectiveness of policies and programs.

Meanwhile, the DEPDev shall develop standards to measure livability— such as travel time and distance between housing sites and schools and access to health facilities. These may be used in developing a livability index along with applicable indicators in DILG's Seal of Good Local Governance and DHSUD's monitoring information system to incentivize LGU initiatives.

To complement the strategies, legislative action was sought in support of the goal of building safe and secure shelter in well-planned communities. Below is the166 Legislative Agenda to Build Safe and Secure Communities, 2017-2022:

- *Creation of the DHSUD* - integrate all housing and urban development policies, plans, programs, and projects. This department is the sole NSP entity for planning and policymaking, regulatory, program coordination, and performance-monitoring.
- *Passage of the National Land Use Act (NaLUA)* - Establish a national land use framework that will define the indicative priorities for land utilization and allocation across residential, infrastructure, agricultural and protective uses; integrate efforts and monitor developments related to land use; and evolve policies, regulations and directions for land use planning processes.
- *Passage of the Idle Lands Tax* - Promote the productive use of land by rationalizing taxation of idle lands, thereby repealing sections of RA 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991.

A National Transportation Master Plan will be formulated and adopted. The National Master plan, which will integrate land use and urban planning methodologies (e.g., transit-oriented development, township approach, and high-density development), will guide the rational development of an intermodal transport infrastructure network that takes into consideration compatibility, economic feasibility, comparative advantages, climate risks, and linkages of desired transportation modes. Baseline data and information will be regularly collected, updated, consolidated, and managed.

Furthermore, the adoption of the Resilient and Green Human Settlement Framework (RGHSF) provides guidance on using green development and adopts a resilience-driven perspective to assess, develop, manage, and evaluate settlements and their component parts. It shall be used as a reference for all state actors involved in human settlement development and serve as a basis for mechanisms on post-disaster housing and resiliency planning, research and development and extension, and the monitoring and evaluation of programs, projects, and activities to protect vulnerable persons and communities in hazard-prone areas from the adverse effects of climate change and disasters.

6.3. SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Philippines is richly endowed by natural resources. It is also among the world's mega-diverse countries, with very high endemicity of its flora and fauna, and critical and varied habitats supporting its wildlife. In the Philippines, the DENR is the national government agency mandated to manage, conserve, and develop the country's environment and natural resources, focusing on sustainable development.

a. Strengthen the sustainable management of natural resources in urban areas

The Philippines recognizes the urgent need to strengthen the sustainable management of natural resources in urban areas, where rapid urbanization, population growth, and industrialization have increasingly put pressure on the environment. In Metro Manila, focus areas include:

- Strengthening the management of protected areas in Metro Manila;
- Identification and mapping of green spaces under urban biodiversity conservation programs/activities;
- Assistance to the planning and management of biodiversity conservation;
- Identification of potential carbon pool subject to Carbon Stock Valuation within Metro Manila;
- Involvement of stakeholders in Urban Forest Development and Urban Greening Initiatives.

National parks, wildlife reserves, and urban forests offer a wide range of benefits to cities and urban centers, including economic, environmental, and social owing to the ecosystem services that they provide.

The La Mesa Watershed Reservation is one of the most known rainforests and ecological centers in Metro Manila. Established in 2007 through Proclamation No. 1336, it encompasses an area of 2,659 hectares in the northern fringes of Quezon City, Caloocan and Rodriguez, Rizal. The area is home to diverse flora and fauna, including endemic and migratory species. Apart from its habitat functions, La Mesa Watershed is part of the Angat-Ipo-La Mesa water system, which supplies more than 90% of Metro Manila's potable water. The watershed serves as a natural filtration system, helping to maintain the quality of water before it reaches treatment plants. At the same time, the lush forest cover in the watershed absorbs carbon dioxide and other pollutants, helping to improve air quality and reducing urban heat in Metro Manila. Presently, the La Mesa Eco Park, located within the watershed, serves as an outdoor recreation space for activities like biking, hiking, and picnicking. It is also used as a venue for environmental education for schools and communities all over Metro Manila.

The La Mesa Watershed covers an area of 2,659 hectares. At least 1,800 hectares are forested, serving as important habitat for wildlife. Several portions of the reservoir are shallow with exposed mudflats, swamp forest, reed and other swamp vegetation.

Photo from NASA, dated May 6, 2016

The La Mesa Eco Park located within the watershed provides a conducive area for outdoor recreation for residents of Metro Manila.

Photo from Quezon City LGU, dated 2024

There are 248 nationally managed protected areas in the Philippines and the DENR vigorously pursues the responsible management of roughly 4.6 million hectares of land and 3.1 million hectares of sea within the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS). Below notable protected areas that overlap or border urban centers in the Philippines include the Las Piñas–Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA) in NCR;

In these areas, the DENR, together with their respective Protected Area Management Boards (PAMB) and with the support of local governments and other stakeholders, regularly conduct biodiversity monitoring, forest patrolling, boundary marking, advocacy and awareness raising campaigns, and other initiatives to conserve the area. The Philippine Government also strictly enforces anti-illegal logging ordinances and anti-wildlife trafficking measures. Resettlement and enumeration of communities within the reserve were also done to manage encroachment

Table 37. Notable Protected Areas within or near Urban Centers

Name of Protected Area	Area (hectares)	Description
Las Piñas–Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area (LPPCHEA)	181.63	• Located at the coasts of the cities of Las Piñas and Parañaque. The wetland is a declared Ramsar site under UNESCO. • Hosts 11 species of mangroves, mudflats, ponds, and salt marshes that support marine biodiversity and serve as coastal buffer. • There are at least 41 recorded migratory birds, including the little egret, black-crowned night heron and the common moorhen. Among the endemic species is the Philippine duck.
Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape	26,126	• Located in the Province of Rizal and adjacent to Antipolo City • Home to native and endangered species of flora and fauna. • Critical to flood control and water supply for the urbanized Marikina, Pasig, and Metro Manila. • It is also proposed as a future water source for Metro Manila.
Mounts Palay-Palay–Mataas-na-Gulod Protected Landscape	3,973	• At the border of Cavite and Batangas, roughly 60 km from NCR • Comprises one of Cavite's last lowland rainforests and serves urban and peri-urban hikers visiting Pico de Loro.
Central Cebu Protected Landscape (CCPL)	29,062	• Spans the highlands around Cebu City and nearby municipalities • Serves as Cebu City's watershed, supporting endemic threatened species (e.g., Cebu flowerpecker), and hosting several forest and dam zones.
Lake Danao Natural Park	2,244	• Located near Ormoc City in the Province of Leyte, the protected area is home to a volcanic lake. Lake Danao is a primary source of potable water for Ormoc City and several other towns in Leyte, including Tacloban. • Forested areas help prevent soil erosion and mitigate flooding in lowland areas like Ormoc City.

The Urban Biodiversity Program is a program launched by the Philippine Government focusing on regaining the ecosystem services to develop resiliency and improving the wellbeing of people through effective management of urban green spaces in the Philippines. In 2021, the DENR through its Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) issued a policy in 2018 prescribing the *Procedures in the Conduct of Assessment of Urban Biodiversity*. The same agency developed and the *Guidelines on Urban Biodiversity Management Planning Process* in 2021. The program is in line with the target of the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan 2015-2018 (PBSAP), which targets to increase the proportion of terrestrial natural areas in the five (5) largest cities by 2028. In line with the Urban Biodiversity Program, about 7,000 hectares (in 15 cities) of green spaces within urban areas have been profiled and assessed. The full implementation of the Program is currently focused in Quezon City, Caloocan City, City of Manila, Cebu City and Davao City.

Under the Enhanced National Greening Program (ENGP), efforts were sustained to restore and regenerate 7.1 million hectares of the remaining classified forestlands in need of critical rehabilitation. As of 2022, 34,357,275 seedlings of various species were planted in 45,997 hectares of new plantations while 191,082 hectares of existing plantations were maintained and protected.

Table 38. Area Reforested by Sector, 2014-2023

Sector	Area Reforested (in hectares)									
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Government Sector	315,278	360,357	284,089	206,136	141,148	21,901	47,187	95,660	45,997	17,155
Department of Environment and Natural Resources	306,468	360,070	284,089	206,136	141,148	21,901	47,187	95,660	45,997	17,155
Other Government Agencies	8,810	287	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Government Sector	19,024	0	0	0	162	24	114	6	0	0
Timber Licenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IFMA/ SIFMA/ CBFMA/ TFLA/ PLA/ ITPLA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Others	19,024	-	-	-	162	24	114	6	0	0
Grand Total	**334,302**	**360,357**	**284,089**	**206,136**	**141,310**	**21,925**	**47,301**	**95,666**	**45,997**	**17,155**

(Source: DENR Forest Management Bureau)

In more recent years, the public open space development program called the Local Government Support Fund (LGSF) - Green, Green, Green (GGG) Program has funded and implemented 391 projects from 2018 to 2021 which has assisted LGUs in making their communities more livable, sustainable, and well-connected through the development or enhancement of public open spaces and green infrastructure projects (Department of Budget and Management, 2024). Initially called the Local Government Support Fund - Assistance to Cities (LGSF-AC) which was first launched in 2017, the GGG Program has been continued in 2024 and 2025 with a combined budget allocation of Php 1,755,000.00 in the FY 2024 and 2025 General Appropriations Act allocated to 134 beneficiary LGUs consisting of provinces, cities, and municipalities.

The GGG program is part of the national government's infrastructure development program which provides local government units (LGUs) with financial and technical assistance to develop and implement green infrastructure projects which includes (i) green open spaces such as public/municipal parks and plazas, nature and family/recreational parks,

arboretum and botanical gardens; and (ii) infrastructure for active mobility such as physically separated bicycle lanes, bike racks, elevated or at-grade pedestrian footpaths and walkways, sports facilities, and recreational trails. These spaces contribute to the reduction of the urban heat-island effect and pollution, improvement of environmental quality, and establishment of more livable communities in the country.

Starting the revival of the LGSF-GGG Program in 2024, the DHSUD for LGUs outside Metro Manila, and the Metropolitan Manilla Development Authority (MMDA) for Metro Manila LGUs, have conducted numerous coordination activities, ocular inspections, workshops, assessment of proposals, and consultation meetings with the beneficiary LGUs to provide technical assistance in the validation and enhancement of proposed GGG projects to meet the program requirements specified in the corresponding local budget circulars.

Complementary to the GGG Program, DHSUD's Open Space Development (OSD) Guidelines aims to establish a synergized classification system of open spaces that will the basis of LGUs in preparing their own local open space inventory and open space maps, and the appropriate development strategies, policies, programs, and projects to be contained into a local OSD Plan. This local plan is envisioned to serve as a strategic roadmap for preserving, conserving, regenerating, and creating open spaces within the LGU that can address the unique environmental, social, and economic challenges that affect the LGU's open spaces.

b. Drive resource conservation and waste reduction, reuse, and recycling

- **Solid Waste Disposal –** Total solid waste generation of the Philippines is expected to reach 23.61 million tons in 2025, with about 35,580 tons of garbage generated daily. Solid waste management is a challenging issue in Philippines, especially in urban areas like Metro Manila.

  In 2021, the DENR Environmental Management Bureau closed all 1,174 illegal dumpsites in the country, by virtue of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act or Republic Act No. 9003.

  For the safe disposal of solid wastes, the LGUs are currently utilizing sanitary landfills (SLF) and Materials Recovery Facilities (MRF). As of 2022, there are 11,779 MRFs established servicing 17,636 barangays nationwide or 45% of the total barangays nationwide and 287 SLFs servicing 567 LGUs.

  Section 32 of the RA 9003 mandates the establishment of Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in every barangay or cluster of barangays in order to meet the mandatory waste diversion of solid waste from waste disposal facilities through re- use, recycling, and composting activities and other resource recovery activities.

  In addition, Section 16 of the Act requires that "provinces, cities or municipalities, through their local solid waste management boards, shall prepare their respective 10-year Solid Waste Management Plans (SWMPs) consistent with the National Solid Waste Management Framework". The SWMP shall contain all the components provided in Section 17 of the Act including the corresponding timetable for the implementation of the solid waste management program.

  The EMB Regional Offices assist the LGUs in the finalization and/or updating of their SWMPs. In CY 2022, the Bureau has reviewed 148 SWMPs, 20 of which were approved, 78 were endorsed to the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) Executive Committee chaired by the DENR for deliberation while 58 were endorsed to the NSWMC En Banc for approval. To date, a total of 1,147 Ten-Year SWMPs have been approved, or 72% of the 1,592 cities, municipalities and provinces nationwide.

  As part of the regulatory function of the Bureau and in support to the NSWMC, the EMB through the Regional Offices conduct compliance monitoring of

the LGUs' approved Ten-Year SWM Plans. As of December 2022, the Bureau has monitored 1,121 LGUs on their compliance to the approved 10-Year SWMPs.

The DENR, through the EMB Regional Offices, continues to provide technical assistance in terms of designing solid waste management facilities and site assessment of proposed sanitary landfills, monitoring of SWM facilities, development and updating of 10-year SWM plans, strengthening of Regional Ecology Centers, closure and rehabilitation of dumpsites, and develop an environmentally sound disposal system.

The Solid Waste Enforcement and Education Program (SWEEP) was implemented to augment the existing capacity of the EMB Regional Offices to monitor unclean sites, facilitate clean-up of unclean sites by the LGUs, monitor and inspect Solid Waste Management (SWM) facilities such as EMB-Funded MRFs, Sanitary Landfills, Residual Containment Areas (RCAs) and monitoring rehabilitation activities of the closed dumpsites. In CY 2022, 359 Environmental Monitoring Officers (EnMOs) were engaged to implement the objectives of the program.

- **Toxic Substances and Hazardous Waste Management** – The Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990 is concerned with the management of industrial chemicals in all aspects of its life cycle from importation, manufacture, distribution, use, and disposal. It also covers the management of hazardous wastes from its generation, handling, transport, treatment, and disposal. Complementary activities are the regulation of priority chemicals, the implementation of the Chemical Control Order, and the complete inventory and formulation of the National Implementation Plan for 12 persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

  The Philippines is a party to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. The overall goal of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects which may result from the generation and transboundary movements and management of hazardous wastes.

  As of 2022, there were 14,506 facilities validated/inspected to determine their compliance with different environmental laws, particularly Title III (Hazardous Waste Management) of Republic Act 6969. These are combination of TSD and Co-Processing facilities and Importers of recyclable materials containing hazardous substances. Of the monitored facilities, 3,624 were found non-compliant, hence, issued with Notices of Violations (NOVs).

  In addition, the issuance of DENR Administrative Order 2013-22 requires generators, transporters, and treatment, storage and disposal (TSD) facilities of hazardous waste, including waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) to be registered with EMB for proper documentation of the details of the movement of such wastes. On 2022, the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) formulated a policy on "Guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)" which mainly aims to provide a guideline for the appropriate management of WEEE.

c. Implement environmentally sound management of water resources and urban coastal ecosystems

- **Water Supply and Sanitation –** Attaining universal, adequate, and equitable access to safely managed water and sanitation services are at the core of inclusive and sustainable development. To maximize the use of the country's water resources and ensure that all water requirements are sufficiently distributed nationwide and ensure effective water management across all levels and sectors, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is strengthening water governance through Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) by consolidating all agencies with water-related functions under the Water Resource Management Office (WRMO).

This Office is created pursuant to Executive Order No. 22, s. 2023 issued by President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. on April 27, 2023 creating the WRMO in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The WRMO, in coordination with all stakeholders, shall primarily be responsible for the integration and harmonization of all government efforts and regulatory activities to ensure availability and sustainable management of water resources nationwide.

The WRMO is co-handling with DPWH and DILG the technical management of nationally funded water supply projects worth Php14.6B. This will provide water to about 1,600 barangays all over the country. Moreover, some of the Php276B worth of DPWH flood control projects will be repurposed to address multiple needs such as dams, water impoundment for irrigation, power generation, and domestic water use.

To address the potential impact of climate change and extreme weather events such as shortage of water supply in the country due to El Niño, the WRMO proposed the issuance of Memorandum Circular 22 directing all government agencies to conserve water. The conservation program, in coordination with the two Metro Manila concessionaires, is currently working with the top six government agencies that use the most water to reduce their consumption. The savings of at least five million liters of water per day is targeted through pipe replacement and internal conservation measures, including leaks management of government agencies in order to assure additional supply for Metro Manila. The WRMO issues national bulletins as guidance for water conservation for public and private sectors.

In addition, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) issued Memorandum Order No. 2023-1 entitled "Water Management and Conservation Measures" for water utilities/water service providers enjoining them to prepare and update or adopt and implement action plans designed and aimed to mitigate the expected impacts and adverse effects of El Niño phenomenon.

- **Coastal and Marine Resources Management –** The DENR places importance in managing the country's coastal and marine ecosystems while it continues to protect and rehabilitate the forests. Thus, we have assessed the status of 38,230.41 hectares of corals; 23,019.94 hectares of sea grasses; and 20,686.40 hectares of mangroves. This will ensure the continuous flow of ecosystem services including fisheries production and coastal protection.

  Further, to sustainably manage the country's coastal and marine resources, the DENR endeavored to avert the increasing generation of plastic wastes. RA No. 11898, "An Act Institutionalizing the Extended Producer Responsibility on Plastic Packaging Waste" or the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) was passed on July 23, 2022 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) issued on January 4, 2023.

  With the passage of the Act and the issuance of the IRR by the DENR, large private enterprises and MSMEs are obliged to undertake waste recovery schemes in pursuit of a circular economy. These obligations include the diversion, transportation and disposal of recovered waste and the clean-up in coastal and public areas. To comply with these obligations, enterprises are required to establish diversion or disposal facilities and partner with local governments, communities and informal waste sectors.

  The EPR Law requires obliged enterprises to divert 20% of plastic waste they produced in 2022 by the end of 2023 and further to 80% by 2028. These initiatives promote sustainable consumption and production through effective waste management and support the development of green jobs and industries thereby reducing emissions and increasing efficient use of natural resources.

  As of June 2023, 642 enterprises have registered in the Extended Producer Responsibility Program nationwide.

- **Water Resources Management –** Comprehensive Water Resources Assessment, especially for Major River Basins, was done as a long term program to

formulate a scientific report of the available water considering the current changes and trends in the use of water resources, such as climate change and increasing developments, which will be the basis for policy, planning, programming and project implementation. It involves the assessment and updating of water availability and quality situation that could sustain the projected population and developments using the river basin as appropriate planning area. The main objective of this endeavor is to garner a holistic knowledge on the current water resources situation of the area which will be used in the effective implementation of the National Water Resources Board's (NWRB) regulation and policy formulation functions.

Comprehensive Water Resources. Assessment (CWRA) for the 18 Major River Basin (RB) was first conceptualized in 2016. As of 2022, there are already seven (7) major river basins with comprehensive water resources assessment, namely, Agno Riverbasin, Panay Riverbasin, Davao Riverbasin, Jalaur Riverbasin, Bicol Riverbasin, Cagayan de Oro Riverbasin, and Tagoloan Riverbasin.

The results of the study provided scientific basis towards more responsive and flexible policies in addressing current water issues particularly the impact of climate change on water. Recommended water policies and management strategies based on the project results are tools to enhance water resource allocation. LGUs can adopt and use the study results in their water resource development and management initiatives.
Development of Groundwater Management Plan for Groundwater Constrained Areas.

- **Establishment of Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) in Water Constrained Areas –**

  In pursuance to the urgency of protecting the groundwater resource of the groundwater constraint areas and recognizing it as a reserve resource that may be tapped during extreme drought and disasters, the NWRB proposed the development of groundwater management plan (GMP) in groundwater constraint areas or highly urbanized water constraint cities. This is in collaboration with LGUs, NGAs, private and academic institutions. It will provide a comprehensive picture of the groundwater aquifer not only in terms of defining their locations and areal extent, but also in terms of their hydraulic properties and internal characteristics.

  Development of GMP for Highly Urbanized Water Constraint Areas was piloted in the city of Iloilo in 2014. As of 2022, GMPs have been developed for 12 areas, namely, Cagayan de Oro City, Angeles City in Pampanga, Bacolod City, Iloilo, Baguio City, Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, Cavite, Zamboanga, Batangas, Tagbilaran City, and Masbate.

  In addition to the previously identified priority water-constrained areas, the agency now considers all the highly urbanized cities and tourism areas for the development of GMPs as the population and/or water users are rapidly increasing in these areas.

- **Establishment of Groundwater Monitoring Wells in Groundwater Constrained Areas –**

  A major component of the program is the establishment of groundwater monitoring wells in the critical areas with GMP. Its goal is to effectively and equitably manage the groundwater resources of the study area through the development of a systematic and science-based management strategies that do not only consider current situation but as well as the future impact of climate change to ensure long-term sustainability of this resource.

  As of date, 62 groundwater monitoring wells have been constructed in 13 water-constrained areas. A minimum of 10 wells for each water-constraint area are planned to be developed from 2023 onwards until all said areas are covered.

  The Local Government Units (LGUs) and the Department of Education (DepEd) are involved in the identification of the monitoring wells' site and provision of land area for the installation of the wells through a Tripartite MOA amongst LGU, Department of Education (DepEd) and NWRB. They will be responsible for the protection of the wells and conduct groundwater data collection.

CHAPTER 7

Urban Governance

Urban Governance refers to the organization and management of urban areas by governments, institutions, and individuals. Good governance requires adequate and transparent legal frameworks, efficient political, managerial and administrative processes, as well as capable and accountable institutions that work towards short- and long-term development of cities and municipalities.

As the country experiences rapid urbanization, expanding economy and increasing vulnerability to climate change, reforms and their ability to create lasting impact to address these challenges are buttressed on the synergies between vertical and horizontal government units, as well as their relationships with private sectors, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

7.1. DECENTRALIZATION AND FULL DEVOLUTION FOR ENHANCED IMPLEMENTATION OF 2030 AGENDA

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires an integrated, inclusive, and locally contextualized approach to planning and implementation of initiatives. In the Philippines, LGUs have vital roles in development as they play frontline roles in the delivery of public services, local development planning, and implementation of programs and projects.

Executive Order No. 138 or the "Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Government, Creation of a Committee on Devolution, and for Other Purposes", issued on June 1, 2021, directs the full devolution of functions, services, and facilities (FSFs) under Section 17 of the Local Government Code of 1991 and other special laws passed thereafter. Section 5 of the said Executive Order requires all LGUs and NGAs to submit their respective Devolution Transition Plan (DTP) to help ensure a smooth transition.

The DBM–DILG Joint Memorandum Circular No. 11, which was issued on August 11, 2021, operationalized the guidelines on the preparation of LGU DTPs. The LGU DTP serves as the roadmap to ensure strategic perspective and coherent actions toward the assumption of devolved FSFs. It shall also serve as a reference for strengthening institutional and organizational capacities throughout the transition period, monitoring the progress of full assumption, and providing information that can be considered in the integration of these devolved FSFs in the regular local government processes.

Efforts are also being made to strengthen the capacity of local governments in light of the increased budget resources brought about by the implementation of the 2019 Mandanas-Garcia Supreme Court ruling, which took effect in 2022. This ruling expanded the National Tax Allotment (NTA) shares of LGUs to 40% of all national taxes, extending beyond collections made by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). The intent was to enhance LGUs' fiscal autonomy by granting them a larger share of the national tax base. With the infusion of additional budget resources and initiatives to bolster fiscal capacity, LGUs are now better positioned to advance local governance and contribute to achieving the SDGs at the community level (UNDP, 2022). As primary providers of public services, LGUs also play a critical role in crafting urban policies and implementing initiatives that directly shape urban development.

7.2. ROLE OF LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG AND NUA

With the unavailability of approved NGA DTPs to serve as a guide in the preparation of LGU DTPs, the latter only referred to the LGUs' perceived level of assumption of the devolved functions under the Local Government Code, together with the technical and financial assistance needed for them to fully implement the basic functions and services. LGU DTP Analytics was developed by the DILG to gather and analyze data from LGU DTPs to inform policy and programmatic support to LGUs for them to fully assume and implement the devolved functions under the LGC and other special laws. In summary, the results of the LGU DTP Analytics provide information on the perceived level and phasing of assumption of devolved FSFs, the additional budget required for the implementation of these devolved FSFs, and the proposed additional plantilla positions and their corresponding budget.

To provide a more detailed overview of the inventory of devolved FSFs, the LGUs' perceived level of assumption is categorized as:

i. fully assumed, or when the LGU has assumed full responsibility and accountability in implementation the FSF prior to the implementation of EO 138;
ii. partially assumed, or wherein the implementation of the FSF is shared between the LGU and the NGA; and
iii. not yet assumed, when the LGU has yet to take full responsibility and accountability in implementing the devolved FSFs.

Policy recommendations from the results of the LGU DTP Analytics were consolidated as inputs for national government actions to assist LGUs during the transition period. Looking at the LGU DTP Analytics results, devolved functions along the thematic area of urban governance mostly fall under three sectors. These devolved functions, derived from Section 16 (General Welfare Clause) and Section 17 (Basic Services and Facilities) of the LGC, along with subsequent laws devolving responsibilities to LGUs, include:

i. infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, inter-municipal waterworks, drainage, sewerage, flood control, reclamation projects,
ii. environmental programs such as community-based forestry projects, pollution control, and small-scale mining, and
iii. institutional programs such as information services which include investment, tax, and marketing information system, and land inventory, and the identification of lands for socialized housing and resettlement areas.

Disaggregating the results by LGU level, it was found that at the provincial level, FSFs under the infrastructure sector, such as provincial roads and bridges, provincial buildings, and drainage and sewerage systems were found to be the most fully assumed FSFs by 54.79%, 60.00%, and 57.58% of LGUs, respectively. Moreover, most FSFs under the environmental sector related to urban governance have been partially assumed by LGUs, while the mini-hydroelectric projects for local purposes are the FSF not yet assumed by most LGUs (75%).

At the highly urbanized cities/independent component cities (HUC/ICCs) and city levels, FSFs under the environmental sector were also the most fully and partially assumed FSFs by LGUs. On the other hand, spring development projects, under the infrastructure sector, has not yet been assumed by most of the HUC/ICC LGUs (41.18%), while the sharing of responsibility in the management and maintenance of air quality within their jurisdiction is the most not yet assumed FSF, with 38.10% of city LGUs yet to assume.

At the municipal level, infrastructure projects such as municipal buildings and roads, and bridges are the most fully and partially assumed FSFs by 58.88% and 50.33% of the LGUs, respectively. Meanwhile, the establishment of tree parks, greenbelts, and similar forest development projects is the most not yet assumed FSFs by 45.77% LGUs. Despite the ongoing implementation of the devolved functions related to urban governance, there is still a need for further assistance from the national government for these LGUs to fully assume the said FSFs as shown by the high percentage of partially and not yet assumed FSFs across all LGU levels.

Priority FSFs to be fully assumed by 2022 across LGU levels include environmental functions such as the implementation and enforcement of solid waste

management by the LGUs and the planning, financing, and implementation of climate action/measures and formulation of Local Climate Change Action Plans (LCCAPs); whereas, other environmental functions like enforcement of pollution control laws, implementation of community-based forestry projects, and management and improvement of water quality within the jurisdiction of LGUs are prioritized to be fully assumed by 2024.

In line with the urban greening initiative, the Philippine Government allocated Php 2.5 billion (approx. USD 45 million) in 2019 to support city local governments to establish more forest parks, arboretum and botanical gardens; improve livability of urban areas through installation of eco-friendly street furniture, fixtures, and shading. Local governments also used the budget to construct green infrastructure like bioswales and pervious surfaces, which help prevent flooding during the rainy season. The budget was divided among the country's 145 highly urbanized, independent, are component cities (DBM 2019).

7.3. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY - SDG AND NUA LOCALIZATION EFFORTS

Cities and Municipalities Competitiveness Index (CMCI) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) where cities and municipalities are ranked based on their competitiveness in five pillars, namely, government efficiency, economic dynamism, infrastructure, resiliency, and innovation. The various dimensions of the CMCI such as compliance to national directives, road network, transportation vehicles, disaster risk reduction, and land use plans are aligned and could potential contribute in attaining the goals of the NUA. In addition, LGUs with high competitiveness rankings in the CMCI can be considered in identifying case studies on how the NUA can be mainstreamed in the local development processes.

DILG Efforts on the Localization of the PDP 2017-2022 Results Matrices and SDGs

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) leads efforts in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals. They conducted a series of regional and provincial workshops to strengthen the awareness of the LGUs and support for AmBisyon Natin 2040 and the SDGs and ensuring their integration in LGU plans and programs. In 2018, the DILG and DEPDev issued Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) 2018-01 entitled "Guidelines on the Localization of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 Results Matrices and the Sustainable Development Goals." The guidelines encouraged local governments to identify and implement PPAs that will contribute to the achievement of targets of the PDP's priority sectors and areas. Additionally, results matrices that are formulated of sub-national (regional, provincial, and city/municipal) plans must be consistent with the target outcomes of the PDP. This ensured vertical linkage of national, sub-national, and local priorities, and allocation of corresponding budgets that will contribute to their achievement.

The reporting system should be determined given that there are 82 provinces and 1,635 municipalities and municipalities in the country.

As of March 2018, workshops (excluding those located in ARMM) have been conducted in all the regions, 76 provinces, and 1,373 municipalities. Meanwhile, DEPDev, in collaboration with the PSA and DILG, are working on the inclusion of an assessment criteria (or checklist) related to SDG implementation to the evaluation of LGU compliance to the Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG). Activities promulgated by JMC 2018-01 highlighted the:

i) adoption of a geographic-based perspective in planning and investment programming by provinces that encompasses cities and municipalities within its administrative boundaries to include highly urbanized cities (HUCs) and independent component cities (ICCs) within its periphery;
ii) exercise of provincial oversight vis-a-vis planning, implementation, and monitoring;
iii) strengthening of provincial-city/municipality interface and dialogue; and
iv) strengthening province, city, and municipality database management system.

7.4. RESULTS OF SDG LOCALIZATION, CHALLENGES, AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Several Philippine cities are now taking the lead in championing the SDGs and have taken bold actions to promote and implement the global goals at the local level. One example is the City of Cauayan in Northern Luzon. The city's 2019-2022 Executive Agenda, "Labingpitong Hamon sa Bawat Cauayeño," is patterned after the 17 SDGs. It was as early as 2016 that the city localized the goals to make the impact felt at the local level. One of the city's well-known initiatives is the establishment of the city food bank in support of SDG 2.

Similarly, Tabaco City ensures that all local government offices align their PAPs with the 17 goals. This practice was carried over from the momentum generated by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which Tabaco City utilized as a framework for their local development. The city localized the MDGs through its internal tagline: "MDG: Mga Dapat Gibuhon (What We Need to Do)," wherein all city PAPs were designed to help achieve the set goals. Tabaco City has since further refined this practice through capacity development training of the city's department heads on the importance of the SDGs. This is done to ensure that their PAPs are aligned with the new global development agenda. The projects and activities approved during the start-of-term executive and legislative agenda are then earmarked in the city's Annual Investment Plan, in which the city identifies and tags the budget items with each related SDG.

Iriga City has mainstreamed the SDGs into the city's local development planning process. Apart from mainstreaming the goals into the city's land use and development plans, it created a structured approach to the localization of the SDGs. The 17 goals were clustered as building blocks of the Iriga SDG Program and were assigned to the responsible local government offices for implementation of PAPs. In addition, in Iriga City's roadmap to become a "sports, culture and arts as well as agro-ecotourism center," the SDGs were ingrained as part of the city's good governance pillar.

In adherence to the principles of good governance, some cities have also advocated for a more transparent and participatory local budgeting process. Naga City in the province of Camarines Sur enacted the "People's Budget Ordinance of Naga City" to ensure that public funds are allocated and expended only for public purpose or use and are truly responsive to the needs of their constituents. Under this ordinance, the city then adopted the SDGs to serve not only as a measure of their annual performance, but also as a guide in their governance process and vision for local development. The Naga City People's Council (NCPC), one of the active stakeholders of the city, played a vital role in the adoption of the said budget ordinance.

In terms of commitment undertaken to support the SDGs, most of the surveyed cities reported to have adopted a formal commitment to localize the SDGs. However, it does not necessarily mean that cities that do not have formal declarations do not take actions to implement the SDGs. For the 49% that reported not adopting or developing such formal commitments yet, 92% have already aligned local plans with the different goals.

Additionally, only a small percentage of the surveyed cities report having a separate, dedicated office for the implementation and localization of the SDGs. Most cities lodge the responsibility to the City Planning and Development Office (CPDO) or to multiple offices or departments the handling of the SDG-related work. The CPDO may be tasked to monitor and oversee the localization of the goals, while the other departments are accountable for the actual implementation. For example, the City Health Office is often the main proponent of PAPs dedicated to the achievement of SDG 3.

Progress Made in the Implementation of the Goals and Targets

SDG efforts of cities can be classified into two: (1) City-led initiatives as part of the city agenda and PAPs and (2) League-led or interventions initiated by the League in collaboration with development partners.

Apart from SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 11 being prioritized by cities in their strategies and PAPs, strides in achieving the targets of SDGs 5 in cities are documented by LCP in the succeeding case studies, implemented through an effort initiated by the LCP with external funding support. Meanwhile, efforts to enhance urban resilience in cities and contribute to the targets of SDG 11 came with support from international development partners (e.g., UN Environment Programme, VNG International). These efforts to create sustainable cities and communities also

contribute to hitting other goals (e.g., 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13), consistent with the goals of the NUA.

Implementation of Project-Driven SDG-Related Initiatives

The NUA has emphasized how the battle to achieve the SDGs will be won or lost in cities. With urbanization becoming inevitable in most parts of the world, sustainable urban development is key to address urbanization issues and further accelerate progress of the SDGs at the local level. SDG 11 is a critical link to the achievement of other SDGs. With 11 out of the 17 goals having an urban component, addressing urbanization issues is indeed crucial to implement and localize the SDGs.

All anchored on the principles of the NUA, the League's strong partnerships with development organizations in the implementation of projects has enabled cities to further enhance efforts and strategies to address local urban development challenges. Several cities can demonstrate and level up their strategies and interventions with adaptability, resilience, and sustainability elements. These projects are also programmed to improve institutional linkages and deliver positive outcomes to the lives of the people at the local level considering the changing climate. These interventions also significantly address the challenges in SDG implementation, particularly financial resource limitations.

Cities can craft development plans and urban designs integrating the SDGs. These plans are crucial in guiding the local chief executives and the local council in taking the lead in raising awareness, implementing nature-based interventions, and formulating policies in support of the SDGs. Technical assistance and capacity-building activities are conducted to engage different sectors and stakeholders at the local and national levels.

Bacolod City became the pilot site in the Philippines to introduce UNEP's Integrated Guidelines for Sustainable Neighborhood Design for its planned resettlement project. It introduced sustainability interventions in the community and housing design, therefore, advancing goals 7, 9, 11, and 12.

With support from development partners, cities can enhance their access to funding opportunities, encourage people's participation, and reduce their exposure to risks and threats brought by the changing climate. In turn, LCP's pivotal role in enabling cities to participate in the achievement of the SDGs, anchored on the advocacy to create sustainable and resilient cities, allowed the pilot cities' capacities and awareness of the goals to become reinforced.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in partnership with LCP, piloted the Integrated Guidelines for Sustainable Neighborhood Design in Bacolod City which aims to integrate sustainability strategies to the housing and neighborhood design of the proposed third cluster of the Progreso Village Relocation Site. The housing development hopes to better connect people and the environment, creating the concept of a community where relationships and citizen participation are strengthened and a sense of ownership is developed. The sustainability strategies employed aim to make the housing project become a low-carbon, resource-efficient, resilient and inclusive neighborhood.

The Progreso Village Relocation Site Third Cluster (PVRS III) Project is a sustainable and resilient neighborhood project intended for minimum wage earners and informal sector workers in Bacolod City. To realize its vision of becoming a liveable city, several sustainable strategies from the UNEP Neighborhood Guidelines have been integrated into the housing and neighborhood design, which also contribute to several global goals and their specific targets.

In all stages of the project planning and implementation process, PVRS III has ensured the incorporation of sustainability and resilience (SDG 11.3, 11.b). The design of the housing units served as the main entry point to introduce these interventions. Despite the limited data, the project team was able to recommend strategies to guide the city in its development of the neighborhood project. To achieve a low-carbon neighborhood, PVRS III will establish an efficient public transportation route system (SDG 11.2) and a localized and integrated waste management system (SDG 12.5). The provision of connectivity and digital infrastructure (SDG 9.1) and the use of renewable energy to power streetlights will minimize the contributions to GHG emissions (SDG 7.2).

Regarding resource efficiency in the neighborhood, PVRS III will look for alternative sources of energy and water (SDG 12.2). The housing units will then adapt the green housing design and approaches. Installation of solar panels in the housing units may lessen the reliance on the power supplied by the electric cooperatives in the city. The PVRS III will practice rainwater harvesting at the household level. The provision of rainwater collector facilities for households will minimize the dependence on groundwater. The harvested water will be used in various household activities, hence efficiency in the use of water (SDG 12.4, 12.5).

To further promote resilience and inclusivity in the neighborhood, the city will prioritize selecting woman-led households as one of its target beneficiaries (SDG 5.1, 5.a) while considering the proportion of male and female homeowners. PVRS III will establish a homeowners' association of the beneficiaries to foster a sense of community and strengthen the relationship of the members. Their active participation is vital in stimulating resilience, especially during the implementation of disaster management plans and programs (SDG 13.3).

The inclusion of the livelihood component is likewise crucial in achieving a sustainable and liveable community (SDG 8.5). The development of green and open spaces will enhance the ventilation and air quality in the neighborhood, benefiting the health and well-being of residents (SDG 11.7). To realize these sustainability strategies, the strategy paper recommended integrating the PVRS III into the city's Local Shelter Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Plan (SDG 11.a)

7.5 EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT

To champion multi-stakeholder dialogues and innovations on sustainable urban development and housing, the first DHSUD-led Philippine Urban Forum was held on October 5-6, 2023 which generated broad-based inputs, knowledge exchange, and strong stakeholder support for housing and urban development programs.

DHSUD, in partnership with United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and other partner organizations, successfully conducted the forum which was attended by more than a thousand stakeholders, tackling measures to address complex urban challenges facing the country. With the theme, ***"Transforming our Cities and Building Resilient Communities"***, the PhUF promoted a participatory and whole-of-nation approach towards the implementation of the Philippine NUA and SDG 11. The event featured simultaneous activities which included dialogues and sector assemblies, roundtable and panel discussions, training events, and exhibits on various urban development topics spanning affordable housing, harmonized land use and transport planning, green building and architecture, nature-based solutions, smart cities, migration and development, urban economies, and financing sustainable urban development, among others. One of the key highlights of the forum was the expression of the commitment of all sectors and urban actors through the Manila Urban Declaration which serves as a catalyst to accelerate the attainment of the Philippine NUA through a whole-of-society collaboration.

The Philippine Urban Forum is the local version of the World Urban Forum (WUF), which is recognized as the biggest international gathering for sharing practical knowledge, innovations, and experiences of countries in managing their human settlements and urbanization. The WUF, conducted every two years, was last held in Cairo, Egypt in 2024 wherein representatives from the Philippine government shared the results of the country's forum as well as other recent initiatives to innovate urban planning and development in the Philippines.

Activities during the Philippine Urban Forum at the PICC last October 5-6, 2023

In line with empowering communities, Republic Act No. 9904 also known as the "Magna Carta for Homeowners and Homeowners' Associations", uphold the rights of the people to form unions, associations, or societies, and to recognize and promote the rights and the roles of homeowners as individuals and as members of the society and of homeowners' associations (HOA). These HOAs shall complement, support and strengthen LGUs in providing vital services to their members and implement local government policies, and programs.

As provided in the law, government shall provide resources and assistance that will help these HOAs fulfill their roles in serving the needs and interests of their communities, in complementing the efforts of LGUs in providing vital and basic services to our citizens, and in helping implement local and national government policies, programs, rules and ordinances for national development. Thus, the DHSUD through its Homeowners Associations and Community Development Bureau (HOACDB) is continuously providing technical assistance to HOAs .These capacity building activities include trainings on the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 9904, training workshop on community demographics and other social data in community development, gender and development including ending violence against women and children, disaster preparedness, and recognition of exemplary HOAs and HOA leaders.

CHAPTER 8

Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development

7.5. DIRECTING SPATIAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR BALANCED ECONOMIC AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) sets the direction of the spatial development of the country. It aims to contribute to inclusive growth by improving physical connectivity and providing equal access to quality social services across regions. It also seeks to decongest NCR and direct growth to key urban growth centers throughout the country where the benefit of agglomeration can have greater potential of being realized.

The NSS strategies of regional agglomeration, connectivity, and reduction of vulnerability are aligned with the principles and strategies in the Philippine NUA and the NUDHF. As a planning framework, the NSS is complemented by more detailed sectoral plans such as those for transport and other infrastructure, as well as master plans for specific metropolitan areas. Implementing the NSS requires cooperation across national and local governments to ensure coherence of development plans and efforts. The NSS also provides a basis for identifying more specific projects that can serve as the catchment and market or service areas of the various centers. It can then be a reference for sectoral plans, spatial development frameworks of *Regional Development Plans* (RDPs), *Regional Physical Framework Plans* (RPFPs), *Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plans* (PDPFPs), and *Comprehensive Land Use Plans* (CLUPs) of cities and municipalities.

The NSS identifies a three-tiered settlements network based on population, service catchments, and economic activities:

n. **Metropolitan Centers** — These are the economic centers of the country's three main island groups. They have distinct functions in innovation and advanced services, culture and tourism, education and research, transportation and trade (e.g., primary international gateway), manufacturing, and technology development. There are three metropolitan centers in the country: the National Capital Region (NCR) or Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Metro Davao. NCR is the metropolitan center of Luzon and the Philippines and is envisioned to remain as the seat of the national government. Metro Cebu is the country's second largest urban center with extensive domestic and international links. Its central location makes it a natural hub for economic, commercial, and logistics activities in the Visayas. Metro Davao is a major international gateway and Mindanao's premier commercial hub; center for education, health, and services; and tourist attraction. By 2025, Metro Cagayan de Oro (in Mindanao) will become the 4th metropolitan center based on its projected population growth and functional role as a major gateway and trans-shipment hub in Northern Mindanao. It will also remain as a key educational center in Northern Mindanao.

o. **Regional Centers** — They are regional markets and service centers for several provinces. They have markets that are large enough to support a range of services and investments. Regional centers have the most direct linkages to metropolitan centers. They are regional administrative centers, international gateways, and tourism hubs.

p. **Sub-regional Centers** — These large settlements serve as market catchments of regional centers.

They also connect to and serve as service centers of smaller provincial and local centers. As they grow, these sub- regional centers tend to merge with adjacent regional centers to form even larger metropolitan areas as those formed by the NCR, CALABARZON, and Central Luzon.

Horizontal and Vertical Linkages of Development Plans in the Philippines

Vertical integration and horizontal coordination are essential for integrated planning. Plans should be conceived at higher levels to ensure consistency with the plans of the local areas where the development and/or projects are located. Likewise, it is necessary for local plans and projects to conform to those of the higher levels. In the same way, there is also a need for all plans to have horizontal coordination at each administrative level. For comprehensive and sectoral plans, a long-term physical framework plan for a specific level should guide the preparation of short-term and medium-term development plans. In turn, the development plans shall guide the preparation of programs and projects, investment budgets, regulatory measures, and other instruments of plan implementation.

Following the bottom-up and top-down approach (vertical alignment of plans), the national land use policy and physical planning process are formulated. The National Physical Framework Plan (NPFP) guides the planning and management of the country's land and other physical resources at the national and sub-national levels. The plan specifically provides direction on the utilization of land for settlement, production, protection, and infrastructure development which is linked and aligned to subsequent national and local sectoral plans. The Regional Physical Framework Plans (RPFPs), Provincial Physical Framework Plan (PPFPs) or Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plans (PDPFPs), and Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs), covers the physical development of their respective territories, and are consistent with the National Physical Framework Plan.

The city and municipal CLUP provides the guidelines for the development of plans for parts of the city or municipality. The CLUP delineates actual boundaries on the ground within the territorial jurisdiction, embody the desired land use patterns of the barangay, city or municipality, translate and integrate sectoral plans, and provide appropriate policies for each of the four land use planning categories.

The spatial directions prescribed in the CLUP is translated into a legal document/tool or an integrated Zoning Ordinance and other complementary ordinances. The Zoning Ordinance provides more detailed information on zone boundaries and use regulations/ controls, among others. It provides a mandate for an LGU to enforce development controls and zoning restrictions on public and private lands in the upland, lowland, and coastal ecosystems of the LGU. Generally, zoning can also provide the opportunity to stimulate or slow down development in specific areas. Zoning allows local and national authorities to regulate and control land to ensure complementary uses.

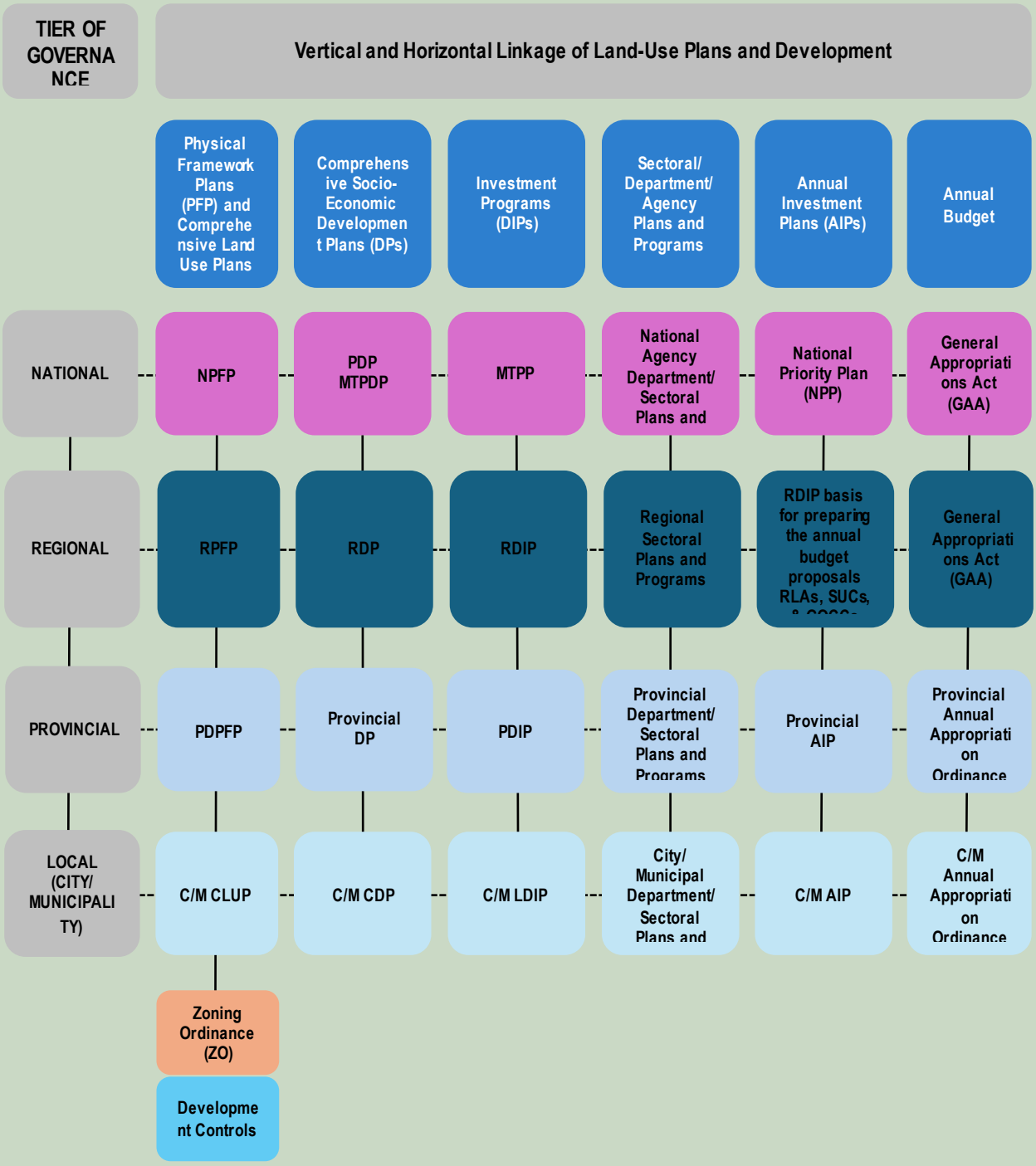


Figure 32. Horizontal and Vertical Linkages of Land Use and Development Plans

Ridge-to-Reef Integrated Watershed Ecosystems Management Framework

The watershed covering the ridge-to-reef features of the land serves as the common strategic physical planning (vertical) platform for the formulation and preparation of all land uses and physical plans. It shall be the unifying and integrating (horizontal) framework in the identification of both public and private land use management strategies and policies including disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

The CLUP Guidebooks advocates the ridge to reef management framework which highlights the interrelationship of all ecosystems. The guidebook highlights the importance of co-management and cooperation in overseeing ecosystems and achieving economic growth.

The increasing threat and impact of climate change and natural disaster and calamities arising from extreme weather occurrences further highlights the need to analyze local physical planning and development initiatives using an area's bio-physical condition as critical focal point. This is particularly significant at the provincial level where watersheds and sub-watershed are more clearly defined and interrelated. The integrated watershed or ecosystems management framework shall also be the physical reference for the formulation of specific sectoral and development plans by national and local government agencies which are also essential elements of development controls. The figure below shows the horizontal transect of the ridge-to-reef framework. It shows the coverage of plans that are applicable in the various ecosystems.

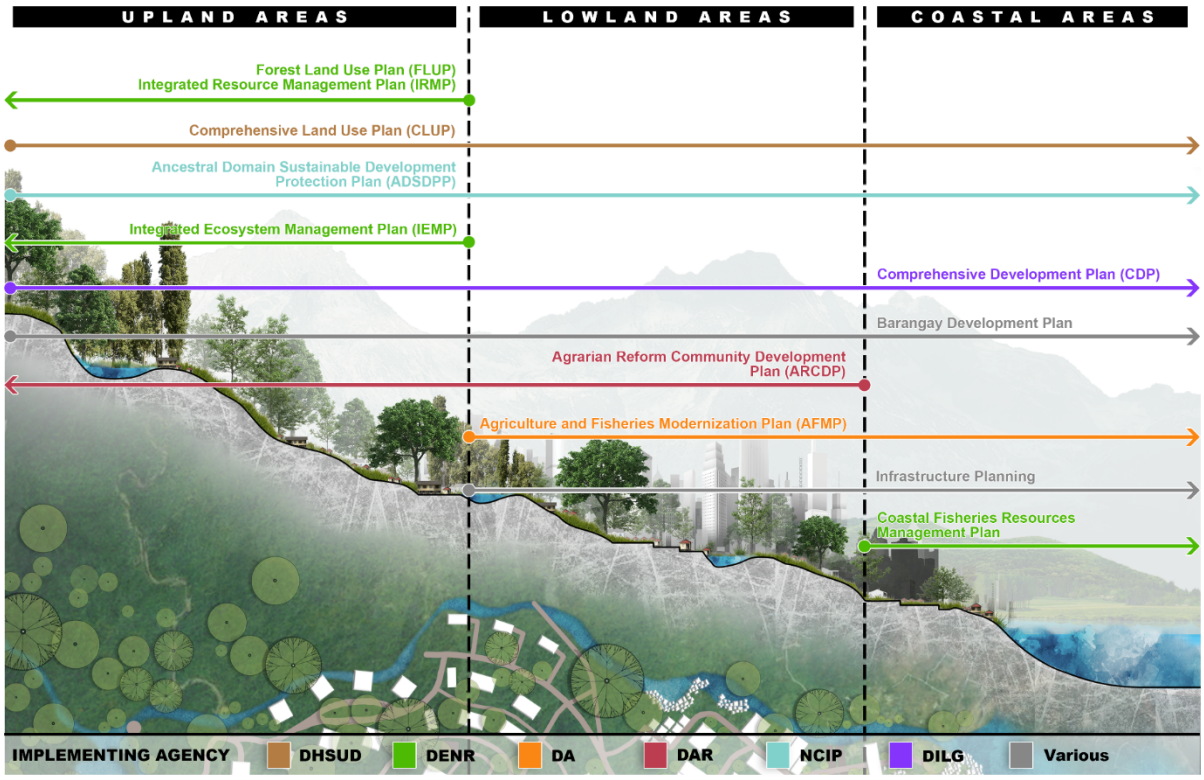


Figure 33. Horizontal Transect of the Ridge-to-Reef Framework

7.6. PLANNING AND COORDINATION BODIES FOR METROPOLITAN AREAS AND AUTONOMOUS AREAS

Consistent with the NSS' network of settlements, Metro Manila, Metro Cebu, and Metro Davao are the three major metropolitan centers in the country that serve as centers of commercial, financial, and administrative activities. Metro Manila had the largest population with 12.9 million among the metropolitan areas in 2015, followed by Metro Cebu (2.9 million), Metro Davao (2.5 million).

The NHUDSP recognizes the trend of metropolitanization in the country and globally and aims to draw benefits from such agglomerations towards creating sustainable communities. It also aims derives lessons from Metropolitan Manila and seeks to transform these into better development strategies for emerging metropolises. As such, one of the identified banner programs of the DHSUD is the Metropolitan Development Program which aims to develop policies and guidelines in consultation with concerned local governments and national government agencies (e.g. DEPDev, DPWH, DOTr) to facilitate the sustainable development of settlements within metropolitan centers as well as vertical and horizontal integration of metropolitan-scale plans, to effectively incorporate critical concerns such as housing, land use, and urban mobility.

Metro Manila and Metro Davao are governed by planning and policy-making bodies enacted by national laws. For Metro Cebu, its planning body was formed through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between local government executives, regional heads of national government agencies, and leaders of the private civil society sector.

Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA)

Metro Manila is recognized as a special development and administrative region due to the presence the National Government Offices and its status as a center for private business. It is the only region that is not composed of provinces but rather it is subdivided into 17 LGUs comprising of 16 cities and one municipality as shown in the map. Each city and municipality is governed by a mayor. Its status led to the need and creation of its own development authority to make sure that the region develops as a livable, dynamic urban center. The MMDA was created in 1995 and is mandated as the responsible body in directing the region's development. The Metro Manila Council (MMC) created under Republic Act (RA) No. 7924, composed of the local chief executives of Metro Manila and selected national government agencies, serves as the governing board and policy making body of the MMDA. Like the functions of the Regional Development Councils (RDCs), the MMC approves metro-wide development and investment plans, programs and projects, as well as promulgate rules and regulations and set policies and standards for metro-wide application governing the delivery of basic services, prescribe and collect service and regulatory fees, and impose and collect fines and penalties.

The MMDA is mandated to perform a wide range of services which have a metro-wide impact and transcend local political boundaries or require huge expenditures which would not be viable for individual LGUs to provide. Specifically, the MMDA is involved in Development Planning, Transport and Traffic Management, Solid Waste Disposal and Management, Flood Control and Sewage Management, Urban Renewal, Zoning and Land Use Planning and Shelter Services, Health and Sanitation, Urban Protection and Pollution Control, and Public Safety. As part of its development planning functions, the MMDA is responsible for preparing medium and long-term development plans, investment programming and coordination and monitoring of plan, program, and project implementation.

In line with its development planning mandate, the MMDA has prepared the first part (Part I) the Metro Manila Greenprint 2030 or The Greenprint 2030 which provides a common vision for the region's future that sets developmental priorities for the region and provides strategic direction to the preparation of comprehensive spatial and development plans by national and local government agencies, related to Metro Manila and Mega Manila which considers adjacent provinces.

The Greenprint 2030's vision is a "Metro Manila for all; Green, connected, resilient; Offering talent and opportunity; Processing knowledge and delivering

services at home and abroad." The vision will be achieved through a two-pronged approach which divides goals into strategic areas. The first strategic area is on Fostering a Metropolis of Opportunity which identifies major economic opportunities that could improve livelihoods in Metro and Mega Manila. The second strategic area on Building a Green, Connected, and Resilient Metropolis for All focuses on physical interventions that will attract and sustain competitive industries and talent by making Metro Manila an inclusive, connected, and resilient metropolis. These strategic areas complement and reinforce each other. Together, they are the foundation for the spatial strategies that will be developed in Phase 2 of the Plan (forthcoming). The Greenprint 2030 sets the goals, principles, and strategies under each strategic area to achieve the overall vision.

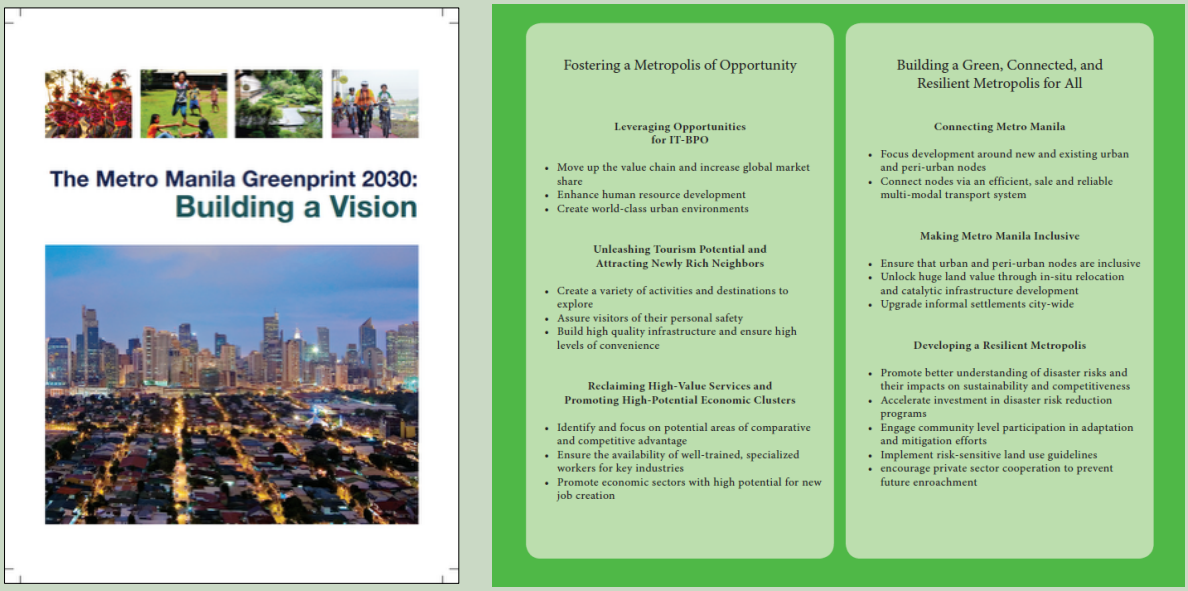


Figure 34. The Metro Manila Greenprint 2030 (Phase 1: Vision)

The Greenprint 2030 will be crucial in addressing the many pressing challenges in Metro Manila such as traffic congestion, weak and fragmented urban development planning, inadequate housing, very limited green spaces and access thereof, vulnerability to climate and disaster risks such as flooding, and huge disparity of economic opportunities and living conditions of the affluent and marginalized sectors, among other issues and challenges.

Metro Davao Development Authority (MDDA)

Recognizing the rapid urbanization in Davao City and its surrounding local governments, and to spur progress and development in the area, the Metropolitan Davao was considered as a special development and administrative region. The Metro Davao Development Authority was newly created through Republic Act (RA) No. 11708 in April 2022 establishing the special development and administrative region to be known as Metropolitan Davao, which consists of six cities and nine municipalities which are Davao City; the cities of Panabo, Tagum and Island Garden City of Samal in Davao del Norte; Digos City in Davao del Sur; Mati City in Davao Oriental; and the municipalities of Sta. Cruz, Hagonoy, Padada, Malalag, and Sulop in Davao del Sur, Carmen in Davao del Norte, Maco in Davao de Oro, and Malita and Sta Maria in Davao Occidental.

The creation of the MDDA shall provide a metropolitan level management, and to permanently govern the affairs of Metropolitan Davao. It shall also perform planning, implementation, monitoring and coordinative functions and exercise regulatory and supervisory authority over the delivery of area-wide services with Metropolitan Davao including development planning, transport management, solid waste disposal and management, flood control and sewerage management, urban renewal, zoning, and land use planning, housing, health and sanitation, urban protection, pollution control, and public safety. The MDDA is likewise mandated to prepare and adopt a masterplan that shall serve as the framework for the local development plans of its component LGUs.

Like the MMC, the Metropolitan Davao Development Council (MDDC) serves as the governing board and policy-making body of the MDDA and is composed of local chief executives from the provinces, cities, and municipalities covered by Metro Davao, selected regional line agencies, and the Chairperson of the Davao Regional Development Council.

Metro Cebu Development and Coordinating Board (MCDCB)

The Metro Cebu Development and Coordinating Board (MCDCB) is a coordinating body for metro-wide planning and development created on April 1, 2011, through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by local government executives, regional heads of national government agencies, and leaders of the private – civil society sector. MCDCB is a consortium of the Province of Cebu; 13 cities and municipalities located on the eastern side of Cebu Island, including the cities of Carcar, Naga, Talisay, Cebu, Mandaue, Lapu-Lapu and Danao and municipalities of San Fernando, Minglanilla, Cordova, Consolacion, Liloan, and Compostela; regional line agencies; and private and civil society organizations. The MCDCB is composed of four focus area-based committees namely: Integrated Development & Planning; Environment and Public Safety; Human resources, Assets and Partnerships; and ICT and Knowledge Management.

Figure 35. Mega Cebu 2050 Development Strategy

The creation of the MCDCB is a manifestation of the heightened desire of public and private stakeholders to lead and plan for an envisioned collective future for Metro Cebu. The Mega Cebu 2050 vision is "A vibrant, equitable, sustainable and competitive environment that embraces Cebu's creativity and its cultural, historical, and natural resources, with strong citizen participation and responsive governance." It consists of the following four strategic pillars (Competitiveness, Mobility, Livability and Metropolitan Management), which further translate into 15 development directions.

However, unlike the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), the MCDCB does not have legal and institutional powers. As such, Mega Cebu has been pushing for the creation of a Mega Cebu Development Authority (MCDA) to act as its legal entity, but the bill seeking to achieve that is still pending in Congress. Despite challenges in legislation and some political issues, the MCDCB has prepared and has started to implement its roadmap to realize the Mega Cebu Vision 2050 starting with the replication of the MCDCB's structure within local government units and incorporate the Mega Cebu vision into its provincial development and physical framework plan.

Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

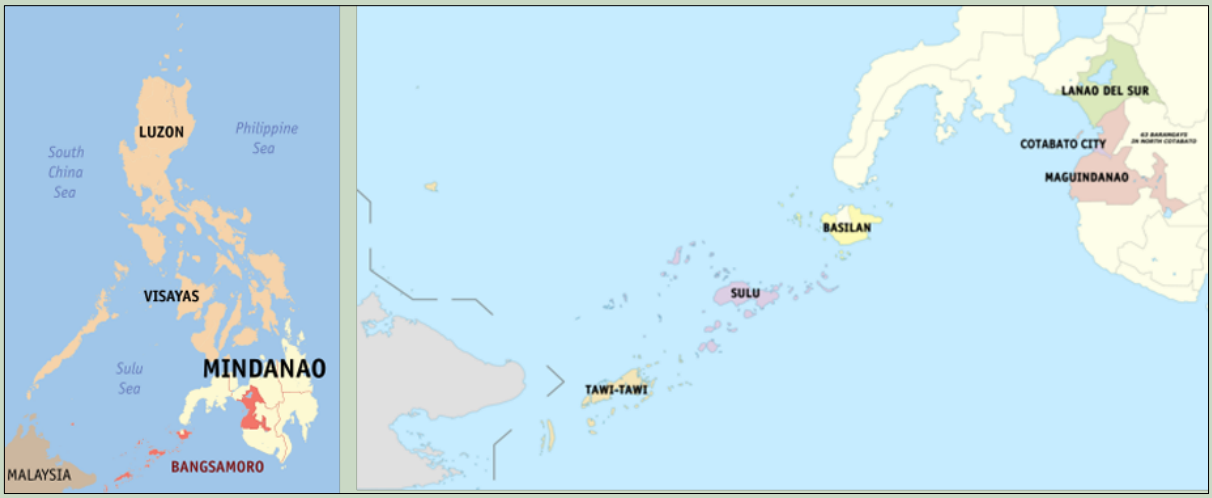
One of the recent landmark legislations to strengthen governance, promote peace, and accelerate development in Muslim areas in Mindanao is the passage of Republic Act No. 11054 or the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) in 2018 which aims to end decades-long armed conflict and recognized the need for self-determination of Muslims in the island of Mindanao. RA 11054 provided for the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) which replaced the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) established in 1989. The BARMM is composed of six provinces (Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao del Norte, Maguindanao del Sur), three cities (Lamitan, Marawi, and Cotabato), and 116 municipalities which has a population of 4,404,288 as of May 2020 which accounts for around 4 percent of the country's total population.

In 2019, a successful plebiscite was held which paved the way for the establishment of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) with the transitional authority taking their oath of office, swearing in the new government's Chief Minister, Cabinet and Parliament.

BARMM has more autonomy than other regions in the Philippines. While the national government will retain powers over constitutional and national matters such as foreign affairs and defense, the Bangsamoro government will have exclusive powers over some areas including budgeting, administration of justice, agriculture, customary laws, creation of sources of revenue, disaster risk reduction and management, economic zones, ancestral domain, grants and donations, human rights, local government units, public works, social services, tourism, and trade and industry.

Various intergovernmental bodies were also created to improve relations and resolve issues between the national and Bangsamoro governments. These bodies include the Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum, the Fiscal Policy Board, the Joint Body for Zones of Joint Cooperation, the Infrastructure Development Board, the Energy Board, and the Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board.

With the creation of the BARMM and more human and financial resources made available for various programs and projects, economic development in the region has greatly improved. In 2021, BARMM recorded an increase by 7.5 percent and recorded the second-fastest growth among all regions. The top industries that registered the highest growths were: Human health and social work activities, Mining and quarrying, Accommodation and food service activities, and Construction. This translated to a significant decline in poverty incidence over the last three years, from 55.9 percent in 2018 to 39.4 percent in 2021.



Map 4. Location Map of BARMM

The Case of New Clark City: An Integrated Government Center and Government-Led Township

New Clark City or NCC is a 9,450-hectare project by the Bases and Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) located in Capas, Tarlac Province designed to be a sustainable and smart city, with plans for mixed-use development including institutional, residential, commercial, industrial, and educational facilities. NCC is at a confluence of industry and agriculture with existing infrastructure and connectivity to Manila and rest of the Philippines. With favorable location in the region and appropriate distance from Metro Manila, NCC is poised to become the next big metropolis.

The NCC is aligned with the government's thrust to promote and encourage development outside of the greater Metro Manila area to help decongest the already crowded metropolis and spread growth in Central Luzon. It is being developed and promoted as a destination where nature, lifestyle and business, education, and industry converge into a global city based on principles of sustainability. On township development, there are already investments by both local and international real estate and commercial developers.

The NCC features a National Government Administrative Center (NGAC) which includes an Athletics Stadium, Aquatics Center, Athletes' Village, The Residences, government buildings and the River Park. In 2020, Executive Order No. 119 was issued establishing the NGAC in NCC to serve as an integrated government center outside of NCR, and in case of a disaster, a recovery center and back-up administrative hub. The EO directs the "whole of government" to put up satellite or field offices in the government hub. There are already a number of government offices which have signified or are currently putting up their facilities in the NCC, these include the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' minting and currency production facility, the first Virology Science and Technology Institute of the Philippines, and a number of educational institutions such as the National Academy of Sports, and the University of the Philippines.

The New Clark City is being developed by BCDA as the Philippines' first and largest resilient city. It is a master-planned community made of smart buildings, green spaces, and intelligent and environment-friendly transport systems. It Large areas of the city will be walkable and efficient transportation systems are being planned so there will be less need for cars and, therefore, less pollution. Roads will have generous pedestrian sidewalks, bike lanes, and automated people mover at full build-out. Public utilities will use greener energy sources, such as solar energy, liquefied natural gas, and waste-to-energy facilities. Buildings are also being designed to consume less energy. The target is to have 30% of New Clark City's power come from renewable energy by 2030.

The NCC is also designed to be disaster resilient such that facilities in NGAC can withstand a number of natural hazards such as a magnitude 8.5 earthquake, 700-millimeter thick ashfall, and storm drainage is designed to accommodate a 1,000-year flood level. Due to surrounding mountain ranges, the NCC is also shielded from devastating effects of strong typhoons.

Figure 36. New Clark City Aerial View

CHAPTER 9

Means of Implementation and Monitoring

The Philippine Government continues to spearhead initiatives and monitor progress towards the achievement of the strategies in the PNUA Roadmap. Securing adequate and suitable financing, providing strategic and targeted capacity development across different levels of the government, enhancing enhanced knowledge sharing, and maximizing technology and innovation to improve urban planning and monitoring of key indicators are crucial in advancing the NUA commitments.

8.1. NATIONAL AND LOCAL FINANCING

Sustainable finance is critical to achieving the SDGs and NUA. In the past decade, the Philippines continues to experience a steadily growing economy. The country remains one of the fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia. Annual GDP growth rates between 2016 to 2023 range from 5.6% to 7.6%, well within the government's target growth rates, except in 2020 where the economy slowed down by 9.5% due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, as a middle-income country, the Philippines has limited fiscal space to support the country's development agenda, particularly programs and initiatives that directly contribute to country-level targets in the NUA and the 2030 Agenda for the SDGs.

This constraint was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic as the government had to realign resources to address urgently needed healthcare, social protection services, and other short-term measures as well as initiate recovery and rebuilding measures in the following years after the pandemic. Data indicates that the country's fiscal gap has more than doubled in the years 2020 to 2021 compared to pre-pandemic levels. Full-year budget deficit surged from Php 660.2 billion (3.55% of GDP) in 2019 to Php 1.7 trillion (8.6% of GDP) in 2021, although it has improved to Php 1.6 trillion or 7.33% of GDP in 2022 (Bureau of Treasury, 2022). agenda and sustainability commitments.

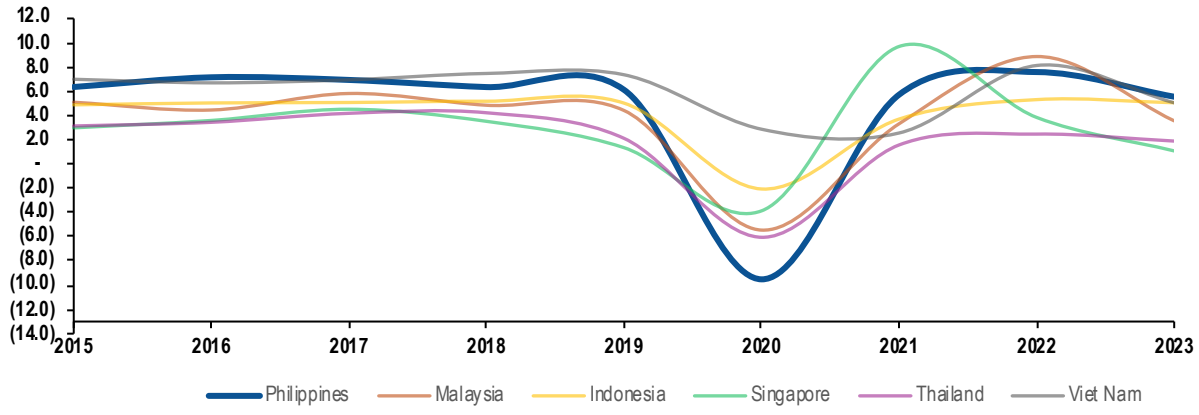


Figure 37. GDP Growth Rates of Selected ASEAN Nations, 2015-2023

Public Budget Targeting

In general, the limited fiscal space serves as a significant constraint for the Philippines as the government needs to weigh prioritizing short-term initiatives necessary to boost the economy and cushion the impacts of the pandemic particularly for the vulnerable and most affected sectors, while pursuing the country's long-term development

Amidst the challenges brought by the narrowing fiscal gap and the need to catch up with progress towards the SDGs, the government has implemented numerous measures to improve budget targeting and enhance overall efficiency to maximize limited resources for programs, activities, and projects (PAP) that directly contribute to the SDGs and NUA. The Philippines implements several national and local financing mechanisms to support the implementation of the SDGs and NUA. The Philippines is one of 85 countries globally that utilize the *International National Financing Frameworks* (INFF) approach, which aims to address financing gaps by facilitating better alignment between planning and financing processes across government agencies (INFF, 2022). Initiatives on the budget tagging for the 2030 SDG Goals began in December 2021 and covered both national and local levels under the Philippines' Joint Programme on INFF. In 2022, the Philippines received assistance from the United Nations SDG Fund for the development and implementation of an INFF to assist the country in achieving the SDGs while addressing the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the "Joint Programme on Reaping the Demographic Dividend and Managing the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 by Applying an Integrated National Financing Framework in the Philippines", the UN Joint SDG Fund provided catalytic support, tools, and technical assistance to strengthen systems, coordination, and consensus building on priorities as part of a "whole-of-government" approach.

Given the interlinkages and indivisible nature of the SDGs, the country also implements the Program Convergence Budgeting (PCB) approach, which aims to strengthen collaboration across different government agencies with regards to planning, budgeting, and monitoring. Specifically, the PCB enables government agencies to work together, ensuring consistency in program targets, beneficiaries, focus areas, implementation timelines, and resource requirements. The implementation of the PCB is also consistent with the strategies in the PDP 2023-2028 which advocates a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in achieving its intended outcomes. While PCB has started in 2012, the Philippine Government continued to expand its implementation to cover more sectoral convergence areas and include more government agencies. In March 2025, the DBM and DEPDev issued a Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) to strengthen the implementation of the PCB across government agencies. The JMC also created the PCB Steering Committee (PCB-SC) that will oversee inter-agency coordination, track program performance, and drive improvements in efficient resource allocation and budget execution to maximize the impact of the PCB approach. Furthermore, the PCB on Water Resources Program and PCB on SDGs were initiated during the FY 2025 budget preparation (DBM, 2025).

These government budgeting approaches have resulted in significant progress in several indicators in the NUA. In line with Agenda 1.4 on "safeguarding the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups", the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) tracks progress on the increase in government budget allocated and utilized for gender-responsive programs to protect the rights of women and children, persons with disability (PWDs), and indigenous peoples (IPs). As provided for in Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women and various guidelines issued by the PCW, Gender and Development Programs (GAD) have been instituted across national government agencies, local governments, and public institutions. As part of this initiative, each government agency/office has a GAD Focal Point System (GFPS) that will serve as a structured mechanism for mainstreaming gender and social inclusion concerns as well as integrating gender perspectives into policies, programs, and processes of the concerned agencies/offices. The existing GAD budget policy in the Philippines also requires all government agencies, including state universities and colleges (SUCs), to allocate a minimum of 5% of their total annual budget for gender programs, projects, and activities.

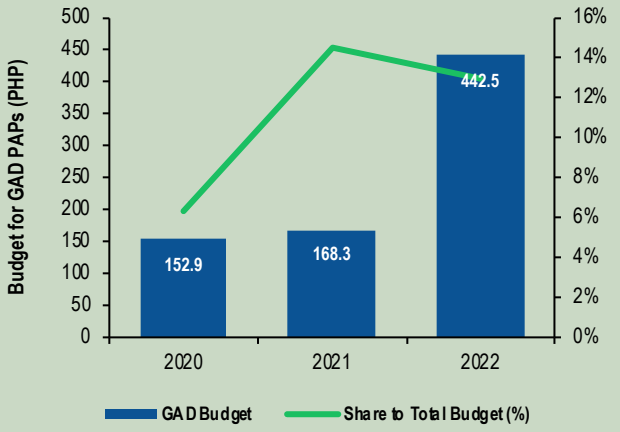


Figure 38. Government Budget for Gender-responsive Programs and Projects, 2020-2023

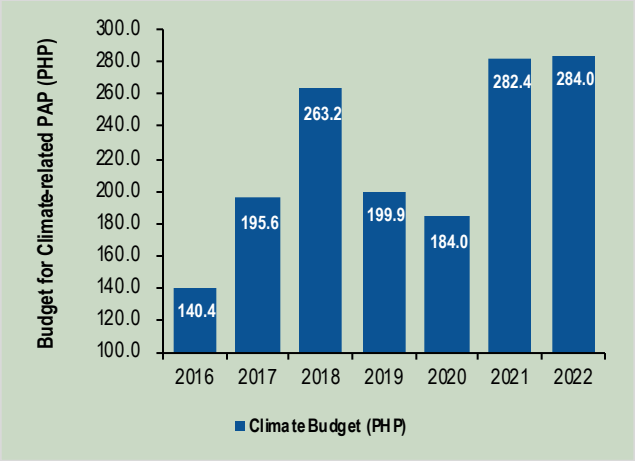


Figure 39. Government Budget for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Initiatives

While not all have successfully completed this target allocation, there has been an increased interest and intentionality among government agencies to design gender-responsive programs, activities, and projects.

For its part, the PCW continues to provide training and assistance to various government agencies in the preparation of their GAD budget and review of GAD accomplishment reports. Based on PCW's monitoring, the total budget of selected government agencies and public institutions for gender-responsive programs and projects has significantly improved from only Php 152.9 billion or 6.33% in 2020 to Php 442.5 billion accounting for 13% of the total budget of all government agencies covered in 2023 (PCW, 2023).

In recent years, the Philippines continued to demonstrate its resolve to address the challenges brought by climate change by bolstering resources for climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives (Borje, et al., 2022). In line with Agenda 3.1 on "boosting the capacity for highly effective climate change actions and disaster risk reduction and management", the Philippine Government tags climate change expenditures at the national and local levels through the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET). Initiatives to integrate of climate and risk data in urban planning, raise awareness and conduct capacity-building on climate change concerns, and expand climate budget tagging across government agencies have drastically improved the level of resources allocated for DRRM initiatives. At the national level, the Philippine Climate Change Commission (CCC), together with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), ensures compliance of national government agencies, government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), and state universities and colleges to the CCET, which is implemented in parallel with the annual national budget process. CCET compliance has grown from only 45 agency submissions in FY 2017 to 210 agencies in FY 2023, although this still corresponds to only 64% of the total 326 government agencies targeted for the CCET. In terms of budget, in 2015, only Php 140.4 billion or 5% of the total national budget was tagged as climate change mitigation and adaptation actions. By 2021, the total budget for climate change actions increased to Php 284 billion or 5.84% of total national budget (CCC, 2021). This continued to increase to Php 284 billion (5.84% of national budget) in 2022 as more government agencies update their plans and programs to incorporate climate considerations. From 2016 to 2022, total national government budget tagged for climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives reached Php 2.01 trillion.

At the local level, climate budget tagging is done through the annual investment plans of LGUs. The DBM, CCC, and DILG collaborate to provide technical support for LGUs in local planning and preparation of climate budget. Borje, et al. (2022) reports that majority of local

resources for climate change mitigation and adaptation by LGUs are in transportation and communications (45%), flood protection (23%), and settlements and local land use (9%). Meanwhile, fisheries (0.04%) and forest and biodiversity conservation (0.44%) related to climate change adaptation received the least resources during the reporting years. Local government participation and compliance in CCET is low at only 18% and should be increased in the coming years.

Complementary Funding Sources

The government is also tapping various sources of financing to complement its budget through tax reforms, private sector partnerships (PPP), and official development assistance (ODA), among others.

Proceeds from innovative tax reforms such as Republic Act No. 11467 issued in January 2020 provide additional financing for PAPs contributing to SDGs and NUA. Pursuant to this law, 60% of the excise tax revenues on alcohol products, heated tobacco products, and vapor products shall be allocated for the implementation of universal healthcare, while another 20% shall be allocated for medical assistance and enhancement of health facilities nationwide. More importantly, 20% of the excise tax revenues on said products shall be allocated for PAPs contributing to the attainment of the SDGs. From 2019 to 2021, collections from sin taxes reached around Php 200 billion (Joint SDG Fund, 2022). Based on the implementing guidelines, priority is given based on responsiveness to the target SDGs as well as geographical areas that are most lagging behind top promote inclusiveness.

In 2022, the Philippines developed and rolled out its Sustainable Finance Roadmap, which provides a comprehensive approach in mainstreaming and securing financing for initiatives that address sustainable development challenges. The roadmap presents a high-level action plan for a whole-of-government approach to promote sustainable finance in the Philippines (BSP, 2022). The roadmap lists a variety of sources and financial instruments, including green loans and bonds from the national government, that could be used by local governments to finance urban development initiatives consistent with the NUA and SDGs. The roadmap also noted that how government financing can also help attract private sector resources to support programs and projects aligned with NUA and SDGs through PPP models, blended finance and business models, and subsidies.

Considerable attention is also devoted in strengthening the capacity of local governments given the increased budget resources with the full implementation of the 2019 Mandanas-Garcia Supreme Court ruling, which took effect in 2022. This ruling increased the National Tax Allotment (NTA) shares of LGUs to 40% of all national taxes beyond those collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). This development was intended to enhance the fiscal autonomy of LGUs by granting them a more substantial share of the national tax base. Additional budget resources for LGUs and initiatives to strengthen their fiscal capacity present opportunities to improve local governance and improve their position to realize SDGs at the local level (UNDP, 2022). Furthermore, LGUs are at the forefront of delivery of public services and are directly involved in the formulation of urban policies as well as implementation of initiatives that directly impact urban development. To support the implementation of the 2019 Mandanas-Garcia Supreme Court ruling, a Growth Equity Fund (GEF) amounting to Php 1.2 billion was included in the FY 2022 National Budget pursuant to Executive Order No. 138 issued in 2021. This GEF was earmarked to support LGUs that still lack capacity to properly implement the newly devolved functions. It was meant to address regional marginalization, unequal development, disparities in the fiscal capacities, and high poverty among the poorest LGUs.

8.2. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 espouses the key role of local government units (LGUs) and highlights the importance of greater collaboration between the national and local governments in the development agenda of the country. In terms of the NUA, LGUs are responsible for identifying and implementing local projects aimed towards NUA's key themes of building better, greener, smarter, and inclusive cities. These projects focus on enhancing urban infrastructure, promoting environmental sustainability, leveraging technology, fostering balanced urban development, and ensuring equitable access to services.

Along these lines, key national government agencies have provided targeted capacity building for LGU staff in terms of formulation and implementation of urban development policies, plans, and strategies that directly contribute to the NUA. The objective of these capacity building initiatives is to enhance the knowledge and skills among planners at all levels of government on urban planning and design, physical and land use planning, financial planning and management, and data collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data. The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), for instance, has conducted annual training for LGUs on the formulation and updating of enhanced Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUPs) that integrate important components such as ecosystems management, cultural heritage conservation, ancestral domain concerns, urban design and green growth, and climate change and disaster risk reduction considerations, among others. These enhanced CLUPs is an important management plan that will help LGUs adopt a more robust and forward-thinking approach to land use planning, ultimately aiming to create more sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities. In 2017, DHSUD capacitated a total of 353 LGUs on formulating and/or updating CLUP, accounting for 23% of all cities and municipalities across the country. DHSUD continued to conduct annual capacity-building activities and has successfully trained 567 LGUs (37%) in 2021 and 436 LGUs (29%) in 2022. As a result of DHSUD's capacity-building initiatives, more LGUs have incorporated climate change action and disaster risk reduction and management in urban planning through their respective enhanced CLUPs (Agenda 2.1). From only 34% LGUs in 2016, more than 64% of LGUs across the Philippines have updated CLUPs as of 2022.

In a similar manner, other national government agencies provide specialized training for LGUs on the formulation and implementation of other resource management plans and urban development policies. These include the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) on the development of Comprehensive Development Plans (CDP) for local development councils; the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) on Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (LDRRMP) to reduce and manage the impacts of disasters; and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) on the Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP) focusing on addressing climate change concerns and outlining adaptation and mitigation initiatives for LGUs.

Capacity-building initiatives supported by national government agencies help ensure that local resource management plans and urban development policies of LGUs remain updated, consistent with best practices and national/international standards, and are aligned with higher plans and policies at the provincial, regional, and national levels. Capacity development initiatives initiated or supported by national government have translated to concrete programs and initiatives at the local level. For instance, updated LDRRMP and LCCAP enable LGUs to identify, allocate budget, and implement appropriate local disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) strategies. Then table below shows an increasing share of LGUs across all regions that have local DRRM strategies that are in line with national government strategies.

8.3. USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS FOR URBAN PLANNING, LAND ADMINISTRATION, AND URBAN SERVICES

Lastly, while there is no data on the proportion of Filipino population with access to government services through digital platforms and electronic systems, access to internet may be used as proxy indicator to understand the reach of these platforms and systems. Data from the International Telecommunication Union indicate that the proportion of Filipino households with access to the internet has significantly grown from only 41.6% in 2017 to 75.2% in 2022 (International Telecommunication Union, 2023). This covers all individuals who have used the internet from any location through computer, mobile phone, or any gadget. However, majority of Filipinos use mobile phones to access the internet.

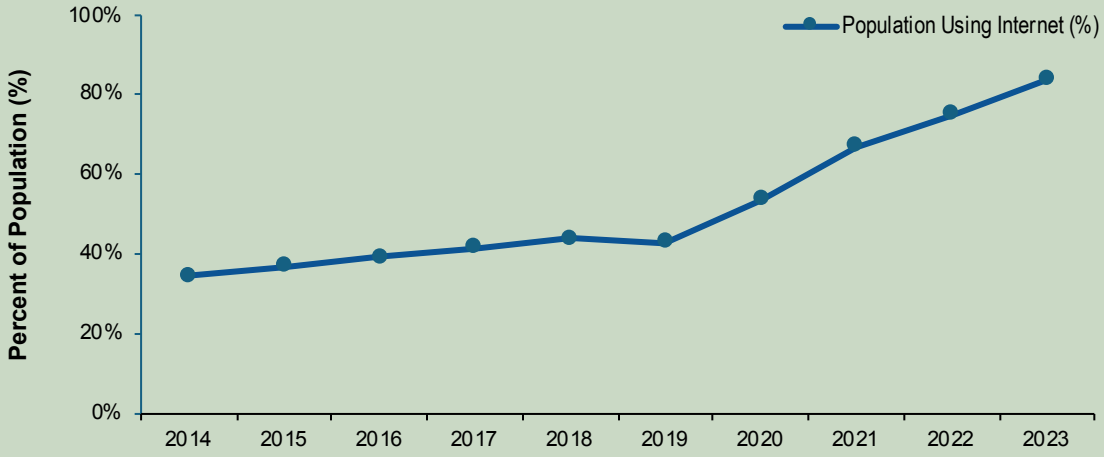


Figure 40. Share of Total Population with Access to Internet

Digital tools are important in advancing the PNUA by improving urban governance and enhancing planning and service delivery. For instance, the use of geospatial information systems (GIS) enables local government planners and policymakers to gather spatial data from various sources such as satellite imagery, aerial photography, and remote sensors to better analyze, visualize, and understand land use patterns and infrastructure. In turn, this fosters a data-driven approach in urban planning which leads to a more informed and effective decision-making on resource allocation.

Additionally, the availability of geospatial information allows planners and policymakers to observe and assess the effectiveness of resource management plans and urban policies through visual analysis of trends and changes over time in a particular area. This aids in ensures that land use plans and urban policies both at the national and local levels remain adaptive and responsive to the present and emerging needs and challenges of urban communities. Presently, updated GIS information is required for all resource management plans developed by the national government as well as resource management plans by LGUs.

In addition to its value in urban planning, using digital tools and geospatial information helps facilitate stakeholder engagement by communicating the scope and potential impacts of urban policies and plans with the concerned communities and local stakeholders. For instance, using GIS data to create maps and generate visualizations will stakeholders understand projected changes of specific urban initiatives. In general, this promotes transparency, helps in gaining community support, fosters collaborative decisions and citizen engagement in urban development processes.

With the advent of internet, both national government agencies and LGUs now maximize online platforms and tools to communicate urban policies and broaden access to services for their citizenry. Many government agencies and LGUs also have different electronic systems that automate processes and digitize services to improve service delivery. These include developing online portals to facilitate permitting, licensing, and other administrative processes. Furthermore, mobile apps are strategic tools that can improve access of citizens to public information and government services. Apps can include a variety of features such as reporting urban issues; accessing news, government information, and public transportation schedules; participating in community activities; and submitting requests for government services. It is important to note thought that the level of digitalization; maturity of websites; and scope and efficiency of government electronic systems vary across different government agencies and LGUs. Many government websites are limited in content and only allow users to access information and download forms, while others have advanced systems that allow users to create accounts and conduct transactions through the online portals (League of Cities of the Philippines, 2014).

There is currently no available data on the number of cities utilizing e-governance and citizen-centric digital governance tools as well as number of ICT applications on urban data collection, retrieval, and analysis. However, based on data from the DILG, it is estimated that more than 60% or 921 out of 1,634 cities and municipalities in the country use electronic systems to process business permits and licenses as of January 2024. Of these 921 LGUs, 799 LGUs employ the Electronic Local Government Unit or the eLGU system developed by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) as part of the Gov.PH Super App. The remaining 122 LGUs have developed their own ICT systems. The DICT targets to roll out the eLGU system in an additional 240 LGUs in 2025. (DILG, 2024).

Digitalization initiatives not only helped widen the reach of vital government services but have improved the revenue collection efficiency for participating LGUs. The DILG estimated that electronic systems for processing business permits and licenses have increased total revenue collection from Php 50 billion in 2018 to an estimated Php 288 billion in 2024 for the participating LGUs.

Table 39. Cities with eLGU Systems, by Region, as of April 2025

Region	Cities with eLGU	No. of LGUs per Region	No. of Cities with eLGU System	Percentage (%)
Luzon				
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	City of Tabuk, Kalinga	77	1	1.30
Region I – Ilocos Region	City of Batac, Ilocos Norte City of Candon, Ilocos Sur City of Laoag, Ilocos Norte City of San Carlos, Pangasinan	125	4	3.20
Region II – Cagayan Valley	City of Ilagan, Isabela	93	1	1.08
Region III – Central Luzon	City of Palayan, Nueva Ecija City of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan Mabalacat City, Pampanga	130	3	2.31
Visayas				
Region VI – Western Visayas	City of Escalante, Negros Occidental City of Himamaylan, Negros Occidental City of Iloilo, Iloilo City of Kabankalan, Negros Occidental City of La Carlota, Negros Occidental City of Sagay, Negros Occidental City of Sipalay, Negros Occidental	133	7	5.26
Region VII – Central Visayas	City of Canlaon, Negros Oriental City of Dumaguete, Negros Oriental City of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental City of Mandaue, Cebu	132	4	3.03
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	City of Borongan, Eastern Samar City of Catbalogan, Samar City of Maasin, Southern Leyte	143	3	2.10
Mindanao				
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	City of Isabela, Basilan	72	1	1.39
Region X – Northern Mindanao	City of El Salvador, Misamis Oriental City of Gingoog, Misamis Oriental City of Ozamiz, Misamis Occidental City of Tangub, Misamis Occidental	93	4	4.30
Region XI – Davao Region	City of Digos, Davao del Sur City of Mati, Davao Oriental	49	2	4.08
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	City of Kidapawan, Cotabato	49	1	2.04
Region XIII - Caraga Administrative Region	City of Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte City of Surigao, Surigao del Norte City of Tandag, Surigao del Sur	73	3	4.11
BARMM	City of Lamitan, Basilan	42	1	2.38
	Total	**1,211**	**35**	**2.89%**

(Source: DICT)

CHAPTER 10

Conclusions and Way Forward

9.1. PROGRESS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The *Philippine New Urban Agenda* (PNUA) reflects the collection aspirations of the Filipino people for sustainable urban development by advocating better, greener, and smarter cities in an inclusive Philippines. Since its launch during the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in 2016, the Philippines has made significant progress on most of its commitments across the five PNUA thematic areas, namely: urban demography, land and urban planning, environment and urbanization, urban economy, and housing and basic services. Many of these commitments are covered in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 or are being actively monitored as part of the SDG Watch and other international commitments. Despite the accomplishments, significant gaps remain in several areas. The sections below summarize the overall progress, gaps and challenges, and key recommendations across the five PNUA themes.

The Philippine Government continues to spearhead initiatives and monitor progress towards the achievement of the strategies in the Philippine New Urban Agenda (NUA) Roadmap. Securing adequate and suitable financing, providing strategic and targeted capacity development across different levels of the government, enhancing enhanced knowledge sharing, and maximizing technology and innovation to improve urban planning and monitoring of key indicators are crucial in advancing the NUA commitments. This chapter presents some of the key initiatives and progress in this area.

a. Urban Demography

Capturing the youth dividend is an important pillar in the Philippine economic and social development path. The Philippine Government continues to invest in its people by focusing on improving access to quality education, facilitating employment opportunities, and providing targeted skills development programs to empower young Filipinos. While the proportion of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training remain high, the drastic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic emphasizes the necessity to come up with strategies to make the education sector more resilient and more accessible especially for the marginalized sectors. Recommended strategies include mainstreaming hybrid learning approaches that combine in-person and remote education models, investing in digital infrastructure and maximizing the use of technology to make learning more accessible for students regardless of location, and continuing training for educators to improve their capacity to adapt to new teaching methods to maintain high-quality education despite changing circumstances. In the coming years, more investments should also be done to ensure inclusivity of education by targeting communities in last mile areas to ensure that no one will be left behind. Moreover, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) should be strengthened given its importance in opening diverse career paths and bridging employment opportunities. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) should continue strengthening its collaboration and coordination with both training institutions and industry partners to ensure that TVET programs align and remain relevant with industry needs.

The Philippines also made significant strides in mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in urban planning and urban development policies. Existing guidelines require planners to integrate gender concerns in the formulation of land use plans and other resource management plans, ensuring that urban systems are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all genders. In terms of governance, the Philippines

exhibits strong gender inclusivity, which is evident in its Constitution,[9] existing laws and policies, as well as its relatively high ranking in global gender equality indices.[10] Moreover, the presence of formal and structured mechanisms such as the GAD Focal Systems in all government agencies/offices will help ensure continued intentionality in mainstreaming gender concerns and perspectives into policies, programs, and processes.

Lastly, initiatives to formulate, update, enhance, and harmonize important plans that provide the overall growth strategy at the sub-national level, such as Regional Development Plans (RDP), Provincial Development and Physical Framework Plans (PDPFP), and Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUP), should be prioritized and expedited. While these plans are mandated by law and are guided by national policies, many plans remain outdated. These plans are of utmost importance as they guide development strategies that consider factors like physical resources and land use, social and cultural considerations, demographics, and others that are important for urban planning. Ensuring that these plans are up to date and aligned with each other is crucial in fostering a balanced growth among the regions.

b. Urban Planning and Urban Environment

Existing guidelines require the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) in all national and local development plans. Hence, there has been considerable attention given to incorporate both CCA and DRRM concerns as LGUs endeavored to update their CLUP during the reporting period. However, most LGUs still rely on both data and technical assistance from DHSUD, CCC, and other national government agencies in updating their respective CLUPs which has become a bottleneck. Continuous capacity-building is needed to ensure that planners at the LGU level have sufficient capacity in this area. Furthermore, as a country that is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to its geographic location, extensive coastlines, topography, and high population density, the Philippine Government should continue to invest in programs and initiatives that would boost climate resilience of communities, incorporating both infrastructure, community-based, as well as nature-based solutions. This is especially true in urban areas where there is high population density. In addition to allotting budget for climate initiatives through their annual investment plans, local government should also maximize funding opportunities that are specifically earmarked for climate change adaptation such as the People's Survival Fund.

Moreover, initiatives to prevent urban sprawling through strict enforcement of zoning ordinances and stimulating growth in secondary cities should be prioritized. In many cities and urban areas across the Philippines, traffic congestion has also become a serious and growing concern. The Philippine Government should intensify investments towards inclusive and efficient public transportation systems to enhance urban mobility and reduce congestion. Aside from vehicle-based transportation, open spaces for public use, appropriate sidewalks, bike lanes, and similar facilities should be expanded to foster people-centered and pedestrian-friendly urban centers.

c. Urban Governance

To achieve the PNUA, the Philippine Government sought to strengthen sector leadership in urban governance with clear and well-defined multi-level and inter-government relationships. In 2019, the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) was created by virtue of Republic Act No. 11201, which was signed into law on February 14, 2019. Since then, DHSUD has taken a leadership role in pursuing the PNUA, engaging concerned national government agencies, LGUs, private sector partners, and other stakeholders through dialogues and consultations. Moreover, the DHSUD has also been at the forefront in providing technical assistance to provincial, city, and municipal

[9] Section 14, Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution recognizes the equal role of women and men in nation-building and ensures their equality before the law.

[10] The Philippines ranked 25th out of 146 countries in the 2024 Global Gender Gap Index, placing it among the top performers globally in closing the gender gap. However, this is a lower rank compared to its 2023 ranking where it placed 16th out of 146 countries. (World Economic Forum, 2024)

LGUs in formulating urban policies, developing their respective local resource management plans, as well as capacitating urban planners and other LGU staff, among others.

In recent years, the Philippine Government has also taken massive efforts to utilize information and communication technology (ICT), including social networking, to expand access to government services, further enhance the transparency and accountability of urban governance mechanisms, and enhance citizen engagement. Electronic systems designed for and/or by LGUs, including but not limited to systems that facilitate business permitting, collection of local taxes and fees, and filing of requests and permits, have enabled local governments to enhance internal operational efficiency as well as improve the delivery of vital government services for their constituency. Many LGUs have adopted electronic platforms that improve public financial management, ensuring that urban development projects are financially sustainable and effectively managed. Additionally, technology have significantly improved the collection and analysis of data for the preparation of urban plans and policies. Digital tools have also improved citizen engagement by facilitating better communication between the government and citizen, thereby ensuring that urban planning is participatory and urban development inclusive. The PNUA underscores the importance of inclusive urban planning, ensuring that the priorities, needs, and interests of sectors of the community, including the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, are considered.

While there is still much to be done towards complete digitalization of government systems and services, several ICT undertakings of the Philippine Government are either ongoing or are in the pipeline. For instance, the DICT is currently implementing the Philippine Government Network (GovNet) to enhance government interconnectivity by providing high-speed broadband connection to government offices. Many government agencies, schools, and public hospitals have already been connected in pilot provinces like Davao and Ilocos Norte.[11] DICT is actively working to expand GovNet's reach across the country as a key tool for promoting efficient governance, facilitating data sharing and collaboration among government agencies, which will greatly aid urban planning and governane. In partnership with the DILG and local governments, the DICT has also rolled out digital platforms like the eGov PH App, which help streamline transactions and empower citizens. One of the key features of this platform is the eTravel subsystem, which speeds up immigration and customs processing for international travelers at the ports of arrival or departure, thus facilitating smoother and more efficient urban transportation. The eTravel system was launched as a limited web-based platform in December 2022 and was fully institutionalized through Administrative Order (AO) No. 24 in August 2024. At the local level, another key feature of the eGov App is the eLGU system, which provides citizens convenient access to various local-government systems, ranging from local registration to tax processing.

d. Urban Economy

The Philippines is home to several developing cities that have continued to grow through the years. These cities are not only focusing on urbanization and economic growth, but also in creating sustainable and livable urban environments that improve the quality of life of their residents.

Since the launch of PNUA, there has been significant efforts to support urban economy and promote local economic development. Several cities in Metro Manila have been focusing on sustainable urban development practices. In recent years, there have been many policies and initiatives launch centered on green spaces and green building standards, waste management programs, more efficient transportation systems, and the promotion of renewable energy sources, among others.

While Metro Manila remains the capital of the Philippines, major urban centers like Cebu and Davao also continue to flourish and serve as economic, cultural, and administrative hubs in their respective regions. These cities attract investments, create job opportunities, and serve as models for innovative and

[11] As of March 2025, 122 government offices in Davao are now connected through the network. Meanwhile, 85 government offices are targeted to be connected by May 2025.

sustainable urban development. Additionally, the continued growth of secondary cities like Puerto Princesa City, Cagayan de Oro City, Iloilo City, Batangas City, Tagbilaran City, Zamboanga City, General Santos City, Legazpi City, and Tacloban City in the past decade helps reduce concentration of economic activities in Metro Manila, allowing other regions to flourish. A study on the gross regional domestic product (GRDP) of the Philippines over the past two decades reflect the growing contributions of urban areas outside Metro Manila in the national economic growth. The share of the National Capital Region's (NCR) GRDP decreased from 34.6% in 2000 to 31.4% in 2022 even as the Philippines GDP continued to rise over the years. On the other hand, the GRDP share increased in almost all regions in Luzon (from 37% to 37.8%), Visayas (from 13.6% to 13.8%), and significantly Mindanao (from 16% to 17.1%).

The Philippine Government continues to work to ensure that growth in urban areas across the country will continue, and that development will be sustainable and inclusive. The PDP 2023-2028 highlights the importance of enhanced collaboration between the national government and local governments. In terms of development planning, urban economy has been firmly integrated in the development planning at the national, sectoral, and local levels to ensure that strategies and programs are aligned. This includes ensuring alignment of development plans, strategies, and programs in transportation and connectivity infrastructure, logistics, social services, and other sectors. There is also deliberate focus in enhancing the investment climate in these cities to accelerate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and alleviate poverty. In 2021, the DICT launched the *Strengthening Initiatives for Balanced Growth and Opportunities at the Localities* (SIBOL) initiative together with key government agencies. This initiative aims to strengthen LGUs in developing their Local Investment and Incentive Code (LIIC) and Workforce Development Plan (WDP) to foster balanced growth and opportunities at the local level. The program aims to spearhead workforce development aimed at priority areas and industries to boost local and foreign investments.

In terms of financing, the potential resource base of LGUs have grown following the full implementation of the 2019 Mandas-Garcia Supreme Court ruling, which increased the National Tax Allotment shares of LGUs. The policy took effect in 2022. Increased financing will enable LGUs to improve local governance and improve their services. This also means improving the LGUs' capacity to implement urban programs to realize the PNUA and attain SDGs at the local level. In 2023, the Philippines passed Republic Act No. 11964, which institutionalized the automatic income classification of LGUs to provide a more responsive approach to the promotion of local autonomy and to enable LGUs to realize their full economic potential. Parallel to these, several technical assistance and capacity-building support programs have been provided for LGUs to enhance their public financial management capabilities and enhance operational efficiency. Full disclosure and public financial management reforms, including those provided in Republic Act No. 11032 or the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018 as well as Republic Act No. 11292 or the Seal of Good Local Governance Act of 2019, have improved transparency among LGUs.

e. Housing and Basic Services

PNUA targets on housing and basic services align with the PDP 2023-2028 vision to establish livable communities. This is also aligned with the aspiration of Filipinos for a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life as stated in the AmBisyon Natin 2040. Establishing livable communities means upgrading and planning human settlements in a way that offers equitable, inclusive, and resilient opportunities that improve human well-being while contributing to the economic vitality of the community. Initiatives focus on investments in affordable housing for informal settler families (ISF) and the urban poor, enhancing access to basic services and employment and livelihood sources, and improving urban infrastructure and making transportation systems inclusive and green.

The proportion of urban population in the Philippines who live in slums remained at 3.2% from 2015 to 2020 (PSA, 2025). Investments in socialized housing and basic services particularly in urban communities must be accelerated in order to attain the country's target of

reducing this to less than 1% by 2030. As of 2022, at least 47 LGUs have slum upgrading programs with housing projects. Moreover, at least 311 LGUs across the country have approved Local Shelter Plans that integrate housing policies and regulations in their local development plans as of 2021 (DHSUD, 2024). These initiatives are expected to reduce ISFs in urban areas. At the same time, access to basic services has also steadily improved. For instance, access to basic sanitation improved from 76.65% to 2015 to 84.76% in 2022, while access to drinking water services has increased from 91.98% in 2015 to 94.88% in 2022.

The Philippine Government has also launched several initiatives that promote inclusive and green urban transportation systems. These initiatives aim to shift to sustainable means of transport by promoting public transportation and non-motorized transportation. In 2020, the Department of Transportation (DOTr) started the Active Transport and Safe Pathways Program to build a network of safe and interconnected cycling routes in urban areas. As of 2024, the DOTr and DPWH have constructed approximately 812 kilometers of bike lanes in regions across the country, including Metro Manila, Ilocos, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, Bicol, and the Davao Region. The government targets to expand this by building an additional 260 km of bike lanes include more cities and municipalities, with a target to develop a bike lane network totaling 2,400 kilometers by 2028 (PIA, 2025).

In addition, there are at least 749 LGUs that have formulated Local Public Transport Route Plans (LPTRP) as of 2021 (Pontawe, 2022). The LPTRP is a detailed plan that outlines the network of public transport routes, the modes of transport used, and the number of vehicles needed to serve a specific area, which will serve as an LGU's blueprint in improving its public transportation system by ensuring that routes are responsive to demand.

Despite progress in these areas, much is still needed to towards promoting livable communities and adequately addressing the housing backlog amidst the Philippines' rapidly increasing population. The rapid rate of urbanization poses challenges in human settlements and urban development (UN Habitat, 2023). As of 2021, there is an estimated 3.7 million ISFs that do not have security of tenure across the country, half a million of who live in slums and high-risk areas within Metro Manila. In general, population is unequally distributed among urban areas. It is estimated that half of the country's 109 million population live in urban areas, with urban growth concentrated in the 16 most populous cities. Moreover, housing needs is estimated at 6.8 million from 2017 to 2022, but only 66% of the government's targeted 1.6 million direct housing assistance was completed during this period. The housing backlog is projected to balloon from 6.8 million in 2022 to 22 million by 2040 (UN Habitat, 2023).

9.2. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACCELERATE PNUA IMPLEMENTATION

a. Securing political commitment and multi-level governance

Strong political commitment is necessary to advance the PNUA given the challenges in funding, competing priorities of the government, and other constraints. The DHSUD should play a more active and intentional role in engaging concerned national government agencies and coordinating policies, setting targets and indicators, and actively monitoring progress towards the PNUA. This will help increase awareness among national government leaders and enable them to prioritize urban development in policy agendas as well as allocate resources to implement urban development plans.

Meanwhile, local governments should be further empowered given their roles in urban planning and development as well as the devolved functions bestowed upon LGUs. National laws and guidelines should be translated to local policies issued by LGUs to ensure that implementation will be tailored to local needs.

Multi-level governance where there is strategic and efficient coordination among national government agencies as well as between national government and local governments is necessary for coordinated urban development. This will foster a whole-of-government approach and ensure that economic, social and

environmental initiatives reinforce each other rather than compete.

At the same time, there needs to be a stronger push for legislation focused on improving urban development policies and advancing the NUA commitments. Policies that specifically focus on housing, urban development, and land use should be reviewed and updated accordingly. These include reviewing potential enhancements to Republic Act No. 7279 or the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992, which contains provisions on socialized housing, urban renewal, and resettlement, as this law was enacted decades before the NUA. The proposed National Land Use Act which has been pending in Congress for many years will also facilitate access to affordable, suitably located urban land.

At the local level, a stronger link between the executive and legislative branches of local governments will improve planning, investment programming and budgeting process to support critical urban development programs and initiatives. This is a political exercise that may entail buy-in from the Local Chief Executive and Provincial, City, or Municipal Councils (Sanggunian), whose members have a fixed term of office but wield key decision-making and policymaking power on priority development programs.

b. Ensure integration in the national and local development planning process

Strong alignment of NUA to national policies and the national development planning process is of utmost importance and should be continued and strengthened. Currently, the NUA is aligned with the *Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028*, whose development was led by DEPDev, as well as the *National Urban Development and Housing Framework (NUDHF) 2023-2028*, which was formulated by DHSUD in consultation with stakeholders. The PDP is considered the national blueprint that guides the government's socioeconomic policies and development strategies. It also serves as a framework for its strategic programs and key initiatives towards the attainment of the country's long-term vision in AmBisyon Natin 2040. Housing and urban development is identified as a key sector in AmBisyon Natin 2040. In the PDP 2023-2028, the NUA is specifically framed under the sub-chapter "establish livable communities" under the pillar to "Promote Human and Social Development". Given the interconnected nature of the development strategies, NUA priorities are also reflected in other chapters of the PDP such as expanding and upgrading infrastructure as well as reducing vulnerabilities, among others.

Meanwhile, the NUDHF serves as the country's urban policy and development framework. It depicts the urbanization and spatial policies of the PDP and links with the SDGs and the National Framework for Physical Planning. Together, the NUA and the NUDHF comprise the national urban policy of the Philippines, which are intrinsically connected to the PDP 2023-2028 (ESCAP, UN Habitat, and DHSUD, 2023). Moreover, both the NUA and NUDHF are aligned to the National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP) 2040, which is the long-term vision for housing and urban development in the country. The NHUDSP 2024 is also aligned with the overall long-term vision contained in AmBisyon 2040.

These national plans serve as guides and anchors for sectoral plans as well as local development plans such as Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), and Local Shelter Plan (LSP) that are formulated and implemented by local governments.

As the Philippines work towards fulfilling the NUA, ensuring alignment across all these national development plans as well as the derivative sectoral and local plans will ensure coherence in policies and strategies, synergies in the programs and initiatives across government agencies, and promote collaboration among national government, local governments, and non-state actors.

c. Facilitate robust data collection, sharing, and monitoring

Monitoring and tracking progress in many of the PNUA commitments remain a challenge due to unavailability of time-series data to measure progress over time. Each PNUA commitment has a specific indicator and lead agency, but some of these are not proactively

monitored by the government agency assigned. In these instances, proxy indicators were used as substitutes, but this poses limitations on targeting, potential inaccuracy, and inability to compare changes between time periods. Moreover, many of the commitments only have data that cover one or several years but do not have proper baselines.

Majority of the indicators are also reported in terms of national aggregate or averages. Given the differences across regions and provinces of the country, national-level data may not adequately represent the specific context and urban development challenges that vary across different urban communities. Granular data that disaggregate at the regional or provincial level, or those geared towards specific urban centers, will significantly help in formulating urban plans, policies, and projects that are more responsive to local concerns.

Moving forward, it is strategic to integrate NUA in the national reporting on the SDGs, particularly the Voluntary National Review being undertaken by the DEPDev. Currently, several NUA commitments are already aligned with the indicators being monitored under the SDG Watch. However, there needs to be a more deliberate effort to ensure that a holistic approach in monitoring NUA progress is done. Reporting on SDG 11, for instance, as well the inclusion of urban dimension in other SDGs, would reinforce the value of the NUA and further provide impetus for its full implementation (ESCAP, UN Habitat, and DHSUD, 2023).

d. Initiate proactive monitoring of urban development plans

There are several guidelines and resource materials that help LGUs to formulate urban development plans and local resource management plans. However, technical assistance from national government agencies for LGUs focuses mainly on gathering and analysis of data as inputs to the plan as well as support in the actual plan formulation. There is currently no formal mechanism that captures and monitors the implementation of many of these plans.

For instance, while existing guidelines require city and municipal LGUs to incorporate climate data and climate resilience initiatives in the formulation of CLUPs, there is currently no mechanism to monitor how proposed CCA and DRRM initiatives stipulated in the CLUPs were realized and how DRRM funds were utilized across LGUs. In addition, submission of reports by both national government agencies and LGUs on compliance to mandated budget allocation – such as allocating specific budget for gender responsive projects, climate initiatives, and/or programs and projects that directly contribute to SDGs – are mostly voluntary, without or little disincentive for non-compliance.

e. Develop financial estimates and financial roadmap

Presently, there is no single plan or roadmap that comprehensively integrates the PNUA commitments detailing the specific responsibilities by the concerned government agencies, although many NUA commitments are covered in the PDP 2023-2028 and other national-level plans. Another key concern is the absence of a concrete estimate on the overall investments required to achieve PNUA targets as well as the strategies to finance the gaps towards meeting the goals and targets.

While it is generally understood that meeting the PNUA commitments requires collaboration among the government, private sector, civil society, and communities, the lack of a central plan as well as a financial roadmap limit targeted collaboration and partnerships.

f. Promote collaboration with civil society and private sector

The NUA recognizes the critical role of both state and non-state actors in creating better, smarter, greener, and inclusive urban communities. Sustainable urban development requires multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure that policies and initiatives reflect the diverse needs of urban communities. Urban development plans and policies should be formulated through a participatory approach that incorporates the needs and interests of its diverse stakeholders, including the concerned urban communities.

Facilitating stronger and strategic partnerships with the private sector, civil society organizations (CSO), the academe, and other development partners will enable the Philippine Government to leverage the resources as well as expertise of these stakeholders towards attaining the shared goals in the NUA. For instance, urban infrastructure projects implemented through public-private partnership (PPP) schemes not just address fiscal constraints of the government but also benefit from advanced technologies and expertise that may be offered by the private sector. When structured properly, PPPs create high incentives for both government and private sector partners to ensure high-quality service, implement projects faster, and provide appropriate mechanism for continuous operations and maintenance to ensure that the infrastructure remains functional in the long-term. There are also numerous opportunities for strategic partnerships in housing and urban renewal initiatives. Local governments can engage private developers not just in investing in socialized housing, but in establishing functional facilities and establishing businesses to create economic opportunities for the urban communities.

Strategic collaboration with academic institutions and think-tanks can help bridge the gap between research and policy development to help improve standards of living in urban communities. These could include conducting studies and gathering data to improve urban planning, adopting innovations to improve urban transportation systems and environmental sustainability, enhancing platforms to improve government service delivery, as well as providing evidence-based recommendations to improve urban policies. Experts from academic organizations could serve as policy advisors for both national government agencies and local governments to ensure that urban policies and systems remain at par with international best practices. At the same time, these institutions could be partners in capacity development by designing and providing targeted training, workshops, and degree programs to improve the knowledge and capacities of urban planners and practitioners both at the national and local levels.

Meanwhile, collaboration with civil society organizations is also important in fostering inclusive urban communities. CSOs that directly work with local communities at the grassroot level help amplify the voices of marginalized sectors in urban planning to ensure that policies and programs are responsive to the communities' needs. These organizations can also be partners in serving as watchdogs to ensure transparency and accountability in implementation, increasing the level of trust between the government and the local communities. In certain areas, many local CSOs could become partners with private and public sectors to pilot innovative projects in housing, transportation, and environmental protection in a smaller scale before expanding for national implementation.

g. Pursue international cooperation and exchange of best practices

The Philippines will benefit greatly from participating in international dialogues and exchanges that distill good practices on urban development. The Philippines can draw valuable lessons on how other countries, especially those with similar conditions and urban challenges, have successfully implemented and attained their PNUA commitments.

International partners can provide technical assistance on improving urban planning, adopting innovative solutions for sustainable development and disaster resilience, and effective urban development strategies. International development partners may also be tapped for additional funding through grants, loans, and investments, to accelerate the implementation of urban projects.

Collaboration with universities and international think tanks can also help Filipino leaders/officials, urban planners, and practitioners from both national government and local governments to gain through capacity-building tie-ups, collaborative research projects, forum, and learning exchanges.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Population in Highly Urbanized Cities in the Philippines, 2020

Name of City	Total Population (2020)	Name of City	Total Population (2020)
Within NCR		**Outside NCR**	
Quezon City	2,960,048	City of Davao	1,776,949
City of Manila	1,846,513	City of Cebu	964,169
City of Caloocan	1,661,583	City of Zamboanga	977,234
City of Taguig	886,722	City of Cagayan de Oro	728,402
City of Pasig	803,159	City of General Santos	697,315
City of Valenzuela	714,978	City of Bacolod	600,783
City of Paranaque	689,992	City of Lapu-Lapu (Opon)	497,604
City of Makati	629,616	City of Angeles	462,928
City of Las Pinas	606,293	City of Iloilo	457,626
City of Muntinlupa	543,445	City of Baguio	366,358
City of Marikina	456,059	City of Mandaue	364,116
Pasay City	440,656	City of Butuan	372,910
City of Mandaluyong	425,758	City of Iligan	363,115
City of Malabon	380,522	City of Puerto Princesa	307,079
City of Navotas	247,543	City of Lucena	278,924
City of San Juan	126,347	City of Olongapo	260,317
		City of Tacloban	251,881

(Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing)

Notes:

- As of 2020, the Philippines has 33 highly urbanized cities (HUCs), 16 of which are in the National Capital Region (NCR), while 17 are outside the NCR.
- Total population of all 33 HUCs was 23,146,944 as of 2020, which accounts for 21.23% of the total national population of 109,035,343 that time.
- Four of the HUCs had surpassed the one million population mark, namely, Quezon City (2.96 million persons), City of Manila (1.85 million persons), City of Davao (1.78 million persons), and City of Caloocan (1.66 million persons).

Appendix B. Ten Most Populous Component Cities in the Philippines, 2020

Rank	Most Populous Component Cities			
	City	Province	Region	Population (2010)
1	City of Antipolo	Rizal	4A (CALABARZON)	887,399
2	City of Dasmariñas	Cavite	4A (CALABARZON)	703,141
3	City of Bacoor	Cavite	4A (CALABARZON)	664,625
4	City of San Jose del Monte	Bulacan	3 (Central Luzon)	651,813
5	City of Calamba	Laguna	4A (CALABARZON)	539,671
6	City of Imus	Cavite	4A (CALABARZON)	496,794
7	City of General Trias	Cavite	4A (CALABARZON)	450,583
8	City of Santa Rosa	Laguna	4A (CALABARZON)	414,812
9	City of Biñan	Laguna	4A (CALABARZON)	407,437
10	City of Tarlac	Tarlac	3 (Central Luzon)	385,398

(Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing)

Appendix C. Ten Least Populous Component Cities in the Philippines, 2020

Rank	Least Populous Component Cities			
	City	Province	Region	Population (2010)
1	City of Palayan	Nueva Ecija	3 (Central Luzon)	45,383
2	City of Vigan	Ilocos Sur	1 (Ilocos Region)	53,935
3	City of Batac	Ilocos Norte	1 (Ilocos Region)	55,484
4	City of El Salvador	Misamis Oriental	10 (Northern Mindanao)	58,771
5	City of Canlaon	Negros Oriental	7 (Central Visayas)	58,822
6	City of Candon	Ilocos Sur	1 (Ilocos Region)	61,432
7	City of Tandag	Surigao del Sur	13 (Caraga)	62,669
8	City of La Carlota	Negros Occidental	6 (Western Visayas)	66,664
9	City of Tangub	Misamis Occidental	10 (Northern Mindanao)	68,389
10	City of Borongan	Eastern Samar	8 (Eastern Visayas)	71,961

(Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing)

Appendix D. World Risk Index Rating of ASEAN Countries, 2024

Global Rank (n=193)	Country	Risk Index (2024)
1	Philippines	46.91
2	Indonesia	41.13
6	Myanmar	35.85
16	Viet Nam	24.24
21	Thailand	21.70
34	Malaysia	14.50
65	Cambodia	8.15
69	Timor-Leste	7.55
117	Lao PDR	117
169	Brunei Darussalam	1.29
186	Singapore	0.80

(Source: World Risk Index Report, 2024)

Appendix E. Key indicators on Investments in People and Capturing the Youth Dividend

Indicator	Baseline	Progress / Accomplishments						Means of Verification
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Proportion of learners completing levels of education from Grade 7 to Grade 10 (Cohort Survival Rate for Junior High School)	83% (2016)	85.7%	89.5%	87%	82.8%*	-	-	PSA data derived from DepEd's Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS)
Proportion of learners completing levels of education from Grade 10 to Grade 12 (Cohort Survival Rate for Senior High School)	82.6% (2018)	-	-	78.7%	71.3%*	-	-	PSA data derived from DepEd's Enhanced Basic Education Information System (EBEIS)
TESDA certification rate for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)	91.9% (2016)	93.2%	92.4%	94.3%	93.7%	92.0%	97.7%	TVET Statistics Annual Reports from 2016-2022
Proportion of household population 5-24 years old attending formal and non-formal education and training	69% (2015)	-	-	-	75%	-	-	Census of Population and Housing***
Proportion of household population 5 years old and over who completed a short-cycle tertiary or college degree from a recognized tertiary education institution	14.2 (15%)**	-	-	-	15%	-	-	Census of Population and Housing***
Total number of individuals trained in technical and vocational education (TVET) (in thousand)	2,151 (2016)	2,066	2,252	2,241	715	1,157	1,231	TVET Statistics Annual Reports from 2016-2022
Portion of youth population ages 15-24 years old not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	23% (2015)	22%	20%	-	-	15.8% (Apr)	11.9% (Apr)	Labor Force Surveys

(Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing)

Notes:

* Period during COVID-19 pandemic

** Academic degree holders

Appendix F. Household Population Five Years Old and Over by Highest Educational Attainment, 2020

Highest Educational Attainment	Both Sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
No Grade Completed	2,602,420	2.7	1,356,078	2.8	1,246,342	2.6
Early Childhood Education	2,519,908	2.6	1,321,204	2.7	1,198,704	2.5
Elementary	28,806,239	29.5	15,465,383	31.4	13,340,856	27.6
Undergraduate	19,500,675	20.0	10,680,117	21.7	8,820,558	18.3
Graduate	9,253,373	9.5	4,754,446	9.6	4,498,927	9.3
Special Needs Education (SPED) / Second-Chance Education	52,191	0.1	30,820	0.1	21,371	<0.1
High School	37,678,856	38.6	18,994,493	38.5	18,684,363	38.7
Undergraduate	16,432,432	16.8	8,492,943	17.2	7,939,489	16.4
Graduate	21,151,909	21.7	10,450,115	21.2	10,701,794	22.2
Special Needs Education (SPED) / Second-Chance Education	94,515	0.1	51,435	0.1	43,080	0.1
Post Secondary	846,131	0.9	521,840	1.1	324,291	0.7
Undergraduate	59,272	0.1	34,670	0.1	24,602	0.1
Graduate	786,859	0.8	487,170	1.0	299,689	0.6
Short-Cycle Tertiary	1,548,974	1.6	806,677	1.6	742,297	1.5
Undergraduate	36,353	<0.1	20,485	<0.1	15,868	<0.1
Graduate	1,512,621	1.5	786,192	1.6	729,429	1.5
College	22,870,213	23.4	10,496,991	21.3	12,373,222	25.6
Undergraduate	9,742,196	10.0	4,748,297	9.6	4,993,899	10.3
Graduate	13,128,017	13.5	5,748,694	11.7	7,379,323	15.3
Post Baccalaureate	327,063	0.3	125,347	0.3	201,716	0.4
Undergraduate	47,247	<0.1	17,091	<0.1	30,156	0.1
Graduate	279,816	0.3	108,256	0.2	171,560	0.4
Not Reported	400,532	0.4	216,813	0.4	183,719	0.4
Total	**97,600,336**	**100.0**	**49,304,826**	**100.0**	**48,295,510**	**100.0**

(Source: 2020 Census of Population and Housing, PSA)

Note: Total proportion may not add up to 100.0% due to rounding off.

Appendix G. GINI Coefficients by Region, 2015-2021

Region	Percent of Families (%)		
	2015	2018	2021
Philippines	0.4438	0.4267	0.4119
Luzon			
National Capital Region	0.3908	0.3520	0.3259
Cordillera Administrative Region	0.4209	0.4437	0.4191
I – Ilocos	0.3977	0.3893	0.4015
II – Cagayan Valley	0.4063	0.4278	0.4201
III – Central Luzon	0.3969	0.3717	0.3619
IV-A – CALABARZON	0.4011	0.3952	0.3773
IV-B – MIMAROPA	0.4564	0.4230	0.4193
V – Bicol	0.3960	0.3967	0.4100
Visayas			
VI – Western Visayas	0.4361	0.4241	0.4283
VII – Central Visayas	0.4645	0.4425	0.4344
VIII – Eastern Visayas	0.4647	0.4457	0.4531
Mindanao			
IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	0.4359	0.4231	0.4050
X – Northern Mindanao	0.4633	0.4059	0.4128
XI – Davao	0.4294	0.4108	0.4071
XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	0.4624	0.4303	0.4181
XIII – CARAGA	0.4336	0.4383	0.4474
ARMM / BARMM	0.2800	0.2819	0.2764

(Source: PSA)

Appendix H. Laws, Policies, and Guidelines concerning Gender-responsive Urban Infrastructure

Policy	Title
Republic Act No. 11313, series of 2019	An Act Defining Gender-Based Sexual Harassment in Streets, Public Spaces, Online, Workplaces, and Educational or Training Institutions, Providing Protective Measures and Prescribing Penalties Therefor
DPWH Department of Order No. 37, series of 2009	Enforcement of the Accessibility Law (BP 344) along National Roads
DPWH Department of Order N. 48, series of 2011	Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender Equality Actions in Road Infrastructure Projects
DPWH Department of Order No. 93, series of 2012	Guidelines for the Preparation of Annual Gender and Development (GAD) Plan and Budget and Accomplishment Report
DPWH Department of Order No. 130, series of 2016	Guidelines for the Implementation of the Provisions of Republic Act No. 6685 and Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women
DPWH Department of Order No. 159, series of 2022	Implementation of the Social and Environmental Management Systems Operational Manual

Appendix I. Laws and Executive Issuances on Housing and Urban Development

Policy	Abbreviated Title
Republic Act No. 11201, series of 2019	An Act Creating the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development
DHSUD Department Circular No. 2022-004 (2022)	Declaring the Pambansang Pabahay Para Sa Pilipino (4PH) Program as a Priority Program of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) and Providing Guidance for the Implementation Thereof
DHSUD Memorandum Circular No. 2023-002 (2023)	Providing for the Implementing Guidelines for The Pambansang Pabahay Para Sa Pilipino (4PH) Program (Operations Manual)
Executive Order No. 34, series of 2023	Declaring the Pambansang Pabahay Para sa Pilipino (4PH) Program as a Flagship Program and directs all government agencies to submit a detailed inventory of all available lands suitable for housing

Appendix J. Proportion of Leadership Positions held by Women in Public and Private Sector, 2015-2022

Indicator	Baseline	Progress / Accomplishments						Means of Verification
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Proportion of elected seats held by women in Congress (combined Senate and House of Representatives)	27.24% (2015)	29.45%	29.45%	27.96%	27.96%	27.96%	27.33%	COMELEC data / info collected by World Bank
Proportion of elected seats held by women in Local Governments	31% (2016)	-	-	29.10%	-	-	-	COMELEC data / info collected by World Bank
Proportion of managerial positions held by women in the private sector	47.1% (2015)	51.5%	52.7%	50.5%	53.0%	53.4%	48.6%	Estimated from the Labor Force Surveys

(Sources: COMELEC List of elected officials; Labor Force Surveys)

Appendix K. Share of Women to Total Employment by Major Occupation Group, 2018-2021

Occupation Group	Baseline (2018)	Share to Total Employment (%)		
		2019	2020	2021
Managers	52.7%	50.3%	53.0%	53.0%
Professionals	63.8%	64.8%	64.5%	65.5%
Technicians and Associate Professionals	48.3%	50.1%	50.5%	48.8%
Clerical Support Workers	59.4%	58.9%	59.4%	58.7%
Service and Sales Workers	53.8%	58.5%	59.1%	61.6%
Skilled Agricultural Forestry and Fishery Workers	17.1%	17.4%	17.5%	18.2%
Craft and Related Trades Workers	14.5%	14.6%	14.7%	15.6%
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	10.5%	10.3%	9.9%	9.3%
Elementary Occupations	33.2%	33.1%	32.8%	34.7%
Armed Forces Occupations	4.2%	4.0%	6.9%	6.7%

(Source: Labor Force Surveys)

Appendix L. Key Indicators on Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives

Indicator	Baseline	Progress / Accomplishments						Means of Verification
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Percentage of LGUs with climate change and disaster risk informed Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUP)	34% (2016)	38%	47%	53%	56%	60%	64%	Approved CLUPs; DHSUD data
Proportion of LGUs with approved climate change and disaster risk informed Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (LDRRMP)	-	-	-	-	-	80.35%	-	Data from Office of Civil Defense
Proportion of LGUs with approved climate change and disaster risk informed Local Climate Change Action Plan (LCCAP)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Data from Climate Change Commission (CCC)
Amount and percentage of national government budget dedicated to climate change mitigation and adaptation actions (in Php, billion)	140.40	195.62	263.19	199.86	183.95	282.36	284.00	CCET data based from National Expenditure Program (NEP) and General Appropriations Act (GAA)
Share of climate-tagged budget to total national government budget (%)	5%	-	-	-	-	6.26%	5.84%	CCET data based from National Expenditure Program (NEP) and General Appropriations Act (GAA)

(Sources: DHSUD, OCD, CCC)

Appendix M. Philippine Laws that Influence Integration of Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives relating to Urban Planning and Development

Policy	Description
Republic Act No. 9729 (Climate Change Act of 2009)	Mainstreams climate change into government policy formulations, ensuring that all sectors consider climate impacts in their planning and decision-making. It also established the Climate Change Commission to coordinate and monitor government programs related to climate change.
Republic Act No. 10121 (Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010)	Mandates the creation of a National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework to guide the country's efforts in disaster risk reduction and management. The law also institutionalizes the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan, which aims to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities. It also mandates the integration of DRRM in planning at all levels.
Republic Act No. 7279 (Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992)	Provides for a comprehensive and continuing urban development and housing program, establish the mechanism for its implementation, and for other purposes
Republic Act No. 7160 (Local Government Code of 1991)	Empowers LGUs to manage and maintain ecological balance within their jurisdictions, supporting climate change initiatives
Republic Act No. 8749 (Clean Air Act)	Provides for a comprehensive air pollution control policy, which includes the formulation of a national program for air pollution management. This helps ensure that urban areas maintain clean air, improving the health and quality of life for urban dwellers.
Republic Act No. 10174 (People's Survival Fund)	Provides long-term financing for climate change adaptation projects through an annual budget allocation of Php 1 billion (approx. USD 22.2 million) to support climate adaptation initiatives of local governments and communities. The PSF supports various adaptation activities, including water resources management, land management, agriculture, fisheries, health, infrastructure development, and natural ecosystems.

Appendix N. Compliance of LGUs to the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET), 2015-2023

Region	No. of LGUs								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Luzon									
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	0	2	8	1	2	1	1	0	0
National Capital Region (NCR)	1	5	9	3	4	5	2	2	0
Region I – Ilocos Region	0	27	71	22	13	7	16	10	6
Region II – Cagayan Valley	3	38	72	65	62	11	8	4	3
Region III – Central Luzon	0	32	39	18	78	21	24	13	9
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	6	13	36	37	42	45	27	14	11
Region IV-B – MIMAROPA	3	2	14	10	18	3	7	3	2
Region V – Bicol Region	1	23	19	22	14	4	10	4	4
Visayas									
Region VI – Western Visayas)	4	87	67	55	97	28	34	20	19
Region VII – Central Visayas)	0	32	32	21	13	10	10	9	8
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas)	2	8	22	7	11	4	9	7	13
Mindanao									
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula)	0	30	42	13	11	7	8	7	3
Region X – Northern Mindanao)	2	13	25	33	34	13	18	7	3
Region XI – Davao Region)	0	11	27	4	32	8	12	9	6
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN)	0	5	20	25	31	11	8	5	6
Region XIII – Caraga Administrative Region	4	29	50	27	24	13	12	7	5
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) / Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**26**	**359**	**553**	**363**	**486**	**191**	**206**	**121**	**98**

Appendix O. Passenger Movement Statistics in Aviation Sector, by Airport Authority

Year	Volume of Passengers (in millions)							
	CAAP	MIAA				MCIAA	CIAC	TOTAL
		Terminal 1	Terminal 2	Terminal 3	Terminal 4			
2017	24.6	7.7	9.6	20.6	4.1	10.1	1.5	88.3
2018	26	8.4	10.5	21.2	4.9	11.4	2.7	96.5
2019	29.3	8.3	10.7	23.2	5.7	12.7	3.8	106.3
2020	6.8	2.2	2.6	5.2	1.2	2.7	0.9	24.4
2021	5.3	0.4	0.9	1.7	0	1.3	0.08	11.1
2022	20.1					1.2		22.9

(Sources: CAAP, DOTr, MCIAA)

Airport Authorities:

- CAAP - Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines
- MIAA - Manila International Airport Authority
- MCIAA - Mactan Cebu International Airport Authority
- CIAC - Clark International Airport Corporation

Appendix P. Volume of Passengers in Maritime Sector, by Port Authority

Year	Volume of Passengers		
	Philippine Ports Authority (PPA)	Cebu Port Authority (CPA)	TOTAL
2017	72,438,609	20,945,736	93,384,345
2018	76,798,175	21,963,151	98,761,326
2019	83,721,395	22,988,076	106,709,471
2020	24,886,437	6,267,236	31,153,673
2021	23,076,974	5,000,237	28,077,211
2022	59,192,976	14,920,028	74,113,004

(Sources: DOTr, Philippine Ports Authority)

Appendix Q. Volume of Passengers in Railway Sector, per Railway System

Year	Volume of Passengers				
	LRT-1	LRT-2	MRT-3	PNR	TOTAL
2017	157,000,000	66,000,000	140,100,000	16,448,037	379,548,037
2018	165,200,000	64,700,000	104,200,000	14,707,022	348,807,022
2019	161,300,000	57,000,000	96,300,000	13,185,097	327,785,097
2020	50,600,000	12,500,000	31,500,000	5,066,128	99,666,128
2021	42,900,000	11,700,000	43,900,000	3,812,251	102,312,251
2022					

(Source: PSA Statistical Yearbook)

Appendix R. Number of Established Urban Gardens under the DA National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP), by Region

Region	Number of Sites
Luzon	
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	10
Region I – Ilocos Region	12
Region II – Cagayan Valley	9
Region III – Central Luzon	11
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	87
Region IV-B – MIMAROPA	14
Region V – Bicol Region	22
Visayas	
Region VI – Western Visayas	23
Region VII – Central Visayas	55
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	11
Mindanao	
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	66
Region X – Northern Mindanao	15
Region XI – Davao Region	3
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	21
Region XIII – Caraga Administrative Region	20
Other DA Offices	
Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)	32
Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI)	30
Agricultural Training Institute (ATI)	100
Total	**541**

(Source: DA)

Appendix S. Number of Sites Established under the DA High Value Crops Development Program

Program / Initiative	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Urban Agriculture Garden		50	26	22	2,390	236	139	2,863
School Gardens		2,650	8,489	4,564	3,162	4,030	2,462	25,357
Gulayan sa Barangay						475	684	1,159
Gulayan sa Likod Bahay		7			430	475		912
Gulayan sa Bakanteng Lote with Hydroponics System and Drip Fertigation System						27		27
Containerized Gardening						150		150

(Source: DA)

Appendix T. Number of Trained Individuals on Urban Agriculture, 2022-2025

Year	Number of Individuals
2022	1,264
2023	1,565
2024	939
2025	341 (as of Apr)
Total	**4,109**

(Source: DA)

Appendix U. Proportion of Local Governments that Adopt and Implement Local Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies, by Region, 2016-2021

Region	Percentage of Provincial/City/Municipal LGUs (%)			
	2016	2018	2020	2021
Luzon				
National Capital Region (NCR)	52.9	76.5	82.40	100
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	94	97.5	79.50	61.5
Region I – Ilocos Region	44.8	100	74.40	76.7
Region II – Cagayan Valley	100	100	49	55.1
Region III – Central Luzon	59	99.3	100	100
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	99.8	100	100	74.8
MIMAROPA – MIMAROPA	82	100	100	100
Region V – Bicol Region	91	93.3	57.5	56.7
Visayas				
Region VI – Western Visayas	25.1	20.2	99.3	100
Region VII – Central Visayas	100	87.5	94.1	100
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	100	59.5	81.9	83.9
Mindanao				
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	100	45.3	94.6	96
Region X – Northern Mindanao	100	85.7	86.7	96.9
Region XI – Davao Region	100	100	88.9	100
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	100	100	100	100
Region XIII - Caraga Administrative Region	74.4	76.9	100	93.6
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	12.5	53.7	60.90	13.00

(Sources: NDRRMC, OCD, PSA)

Appendix V. Key Employment Statistics, 2016-2022

Indicator	Baseline	Progress / Accomplishments					
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Unemployment rate (%)	5.45% (2016)	5.71%	5.30%	5.11%	10.26%	7.79%	5.39%
Underemployment rate (%)	18.32% (2016)	16.13%	16.36%	13.79%	16.24%	15.92%	14.24%
Number of employed persons by sex							
Both Sexes	41,156,535 (2018)	-	-	41,937,808	39,377,844	43,988,292	-
Male	25,424,310 (2018)	-	-	25,697,753	24,179,074	26,367,112	-
Female	15,732,228 (2018)	-	-	16,240,057	15,198,772	17,621,180	-

(Source: Labor Force Surveys)

Appendix W. Hazard Exposure of Major Philippine Cities

Urban Area	Geological Hazards	Hydrometeorological Hazards	Climate-Related Hazards	Anthropogenic Hazards
Metro Manila (NCR)	• Earthquakes (esp. areas near West Valley Fault) • Liquefaction in selected areas	• Flooding • Typhoons • Storm surge in coastal barangays	• Urban heat • Drought • Sea-level rise & land subsidence	• Fire, especially in informal settlements • Traffic congestion • Industrial wastes and spills • Air, noise, and light pollution
Cebu City	• Earthquake risk from Visayas fault systems • Landslides	• Flooding due to monsoon • Typhoons	• Urban heat stress • Water scarcity	• Urban fires, especially in informal areas • Traffic congestion • Poor waste management
Davao City	• Earthquakes (Philippine Fault Zone and Mindanao faults)	• Heavy rainfall & flooding • Landslides triggered by typhoons	• Heat waves • Occasional drought	• Industrial pollution • Urban expansion pressure
Baguio City	• Earthquake risk (Northern Luzon Faults) • Landslide-prone slopes	• Intense rainfall leading to flash floods and landslides	• Shifting temperature patterns • Cold surges	• Traffic congestion • Inadequate waste disposal infrastructure
Iloilo City	• Moderate earthquake risk from Panay Fault • Liquefaction in low-lying areas	• River and coastal flooding • Typhoon exposure	• Sea-level rise • Groundwater salinization	• Port pollution • Drainage clogging by wastes
Tacloban City	• Earthquake risk (Leyte fault lines)	• Extreme storm surge & typhoon (Yolanda/Haiyan) impacts; flooding	• Sea-level rise • Increasing storm surge vulnerability	• Disruption in port operations • Reconstructive urban pressure
Zamboanga City	• Earthquake • Liquefaction risks	• Storm surges • Heavy rains • Flooding	• Sea-level rise • Coral reef degradation	• Conflict-related issues • Industrial wastes • Urban pollution
Cagayan de Oro City	• Earthquake • Liquefaction potential	• Flood-prone in 54/80 barangays • Landslides in 25 barangays • Coastal storm surge risk in 11 barangays	• Increased heavy rain frequency due to climate change	• Informal settlements on floodplains • Traffic congestion • Urban wastes
General Santos City	• Earthquake (due to Mindanao seismicity) • Landslide potential	• Occasional heavy rain and river flooding	• Drought and water supply variability	• Runoff pollution from agriculture • Rapid informal urban expansion

Sources:

- Hazard occurrences based on PAGASA, PHIVOLCS, and disaster reporting
- Comprehensive Land Use Plans (CLUP) of selected cities
- News resources during typhoons and earthquakes
- Situational reports produced by NDRRMC

Appendix X. Budget allocated for Sewerage and Septage Management under the National Sewerage and Septage Management Program (NSSMP), 2016-2025

Fiscal Year	Budget Allocated (Php)		Remarks
	Sewerage and Septage Government Subsidy	Feasibility Studies for NSSMP	
2016	200,000,000	10,000,000	FS completed for Butuan City and Cagayan de Oro City
2017	50,000,000	-	No budget allocated for NSSMP Feasibility Study
2018	100,000,000	12,000,000	Feasibility Study completed for Iloilo City and Bacolod City. Zamboanga City was granted a subsidy in the amount of Php 79.39 million.
2019	125,000,000	13,000,000	Feasibility Study completed for General Santos City and Puerto Princesa City
2020	200,000,000	14,000,000	Feasibility Study completed for Iligan City and Olongapo City
2021	150,000,000	15,000,000	Ongoing Feasibility Study for Ozamis City and Los Banos City
2022	80,000,000	10,000,000	Ongoing Feasibility Study for Alaminos City, Pangasinan. Cotabato City was granted a subsidy in the amount of Php 42.33 million.
2023	154,139,000	1,000,000	Insufficient budget for Feasibility Study
2024	100,000,000	1,000,000	Insufficient budget for Feasibility Study
2025	200,000,000	2,500,00	-
Total	**1,359,139,000**	**76,000,000**	

(Source: DPWH)

Appendix Y. DPWH Solid Waste Management Training, 2014-2022

Year	Title of Training	Number of Persons Trained
2014	2014 Recognition and Awards for Eco-friendly Government Offices (with IEC activity)	1,467
2016	Training of Trainers on DPWH EMP and SWM for DPWH Regional Offices	34
2017	Orientation Meeting with the Security Guard Officers on the DPWH Environmental Management Programs	6
	2017 Search for DPWH Eco-friendly DPWH Eco-friendly Regional Office (with IEC activity)	432
2019	Focus Discussions of Regional Coordinators on DPWH Solid Waste Management Policy with Actual Monitoring on its Implementation 2019	57
	Information Education Campaign on DPWH Environmental Management Programs 2019	241
2021	Conduct of DPWH Solid Waste Management Workshop for the District Engineering Offices 2021	619
2022	Orientation on DPWH Solid Waste Management Policy for the Laging Qlean Janitorial Service	324
	Meeting with the Security Officers on the DPWH Environmental Management Programs	27
	Total	**3,207**

(Source: DPWH)

Appendix Z. Cities with eLGU Systems, by Region, as of April 2025

Region	Cities with eLGU	No. of LGUs per Region	No. of Cities with eLGU System	Percentage (%)
Luzon				
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	City of Tabuk, Kalinga	77	1	1.30
Region I – Ilocos Region	City of Batac, Ilocos Norte City of Candon, Ilocos Sur City of Laoag, Ilocos Norte City of San Carlos, Pangasinan	125	4	3.20
Region II – Cagayan Valley	City of Ilagan, Isabela	93	1	1.08
Region III – Central Luzon	City of Palayan, Nueva Ecija City of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan Mabalacat City, Pampanga	130	3	2.31
Visayas				
Region VI – Western Visayas	City of Escalante, Negros Occidental City of Himamaylan, Negros Occidental City of Iloilo, Iloilo City of Kabankalan, Negros Occidental City of La Carlota, Negros Occidental City of Sagay, Negros Occidental City of Sipalay, Negros Occidental	133	7	5.26
Region VII – Central Visayas	City of Canlaon, Negros Oriental City of Dumaguete, Negros Oriental City of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental City of Mandaue, Cebu	132	4	3.03
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	City of Borongan, Eastern Samar City of Catbalogan, Samar City of Maasin, Southern Leyte	143	3	2.10
Mindanao				
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	City of Isabela, Basilan	72	1	1.39
Region X – Northern Mindanao	City of El Salvador, Misamis Oriental City of Gingoog, Misamis Oriental City of Ozamiz, Misamis Occidental City of Tangub, Misamis Occidental	93	4	4.30
Region XI – Davao Region	City of Digos, Davao del Sur City of Mati, Davao Oriental	49	2	4.08
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	City of Kidapawan, Cotabato	49	1	2.04
Region XIII - Caraga Administrative Region	City of Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte City of Surigao, Surigao del Norte City of Tandag, Surigao del Sur	73	3	4.11
BARMM	City of Lamitan, Basilan	42	1	2.38
	Total	**1,211**	**35**	**2.89%**

(Source: DICT)

Appendix AA. Proportion of Urban Population Living in Slum Areas in ASEAN Member States

Country	Income Group	Proportion of Urban Population in Slum (%)			
		Baseline (2014)	2016	2018	2020
Viet Nam	Lower middle income	10.71%	5.77%	5.77%	5.77%
Thailand	Upper middle income	9.90%	8.87%	7.83%	6.79%
Indonesia	Upper middle income	23.55%	21.89%	20.24%	19.41%
Lao PDR	Lower middle income	30.40	27.00%	23.60%	21.80%
Philippines	**Lower middle income**	**40.13%**	**38.72%**	**37.32%**	**36.62%**
Cambodia	Lower middle income	45.40	39.70%	39.70%	39.70%
Myanmar	Lower middle income	51.86%	55.07%	58.28%	58.28%
Brunei Darussalam	High income	-	-	-	-
Malaysia	Upper middle income	-	-	-	-
Singapore	High income	-	-	-	-

(Source: World Bank)

Appendix BB. Proportion of Population with Access to Basic Services, 2015-2022

Indicator	Baseline	Progress / Accomplishments						Means of Verification
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Proportion of households with access to basic sanitation services [a]	76.65% (2015)	78.94%	80.09%	81.25%	82.42%	83.59%	84.76%	World Health Organization (WHO) / UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene
Proportion of population using at least basic drinking water services [b]	91.98% (2015)	92.81%	93.22%	93.64%	94.05%	94.46%	94.88%	
Proportion of population with access to the internet [c]	36.9% (2015)	41.6%	44.1%	43.0%	53.8%	63.4%	75.2%	ICT Indicators Database from International Telecommunicatio n Union (ITU)
Proportion of families with access to secure tenure	97% (2016)	95%	-	96.40%	96.90%	-	-	PSA online database

Notes:

a - Indicator encompasses both people using basic sanitation services as well as those using safely managed sanitation services. Improved sanitation facilities include flush/pour flush to piped sewer systems, septic tanks or pit latrines; ventilated improved pit latrines, compositing toilets or pit latrines with slabs.

b - Basic drinking water services is defined as drinking water from an improved source, provided collection time is not more than 30 minutes for a round trip. Improved water sources include piped water, boreholes or tubewells, protected dug wells, protected springs, and packaged or delivered water.

c - Internet users are individuals who have used the Internet from any location in the last three (3) months. The Internet can be used via a computer, mobile phone, personal digital assistant, games machine, digital TV, among others.

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International Organizations

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United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

National Government Agencies

Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR)
Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev)
Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)
Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)
Department of Agriculture (DA)
Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)
Climate Change Commission (CCC)
Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)
Department of Health (DOH)
Department of National Defense (DND)
Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)
Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
Department of Transportation (DOTr)
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
Department of Budget and Management (DBM)
Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS)
Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA)
Office of Civil Defense (OCD)
Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP)

Key Shelter Agencies

National Housing Authority (NHA)
Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC)
Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF)
National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC)
Human Settlements Adjudication Commission (HSAC)

Local Government Units

League of Cities of the Philippines
City of Naga

Academe

UP School of Urban and Regional Planning (UP-SURP)
Ateneo de Naga University-Institute of Environmental Conservation and Research
Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners (PIEP)

Civil Society Organizations

Technical Assistance Movement for People and Environment, Inc. (TAMPEI)
Sandigan ng Maralitang Nagkakaisa North Triangle
Naga City People's Council

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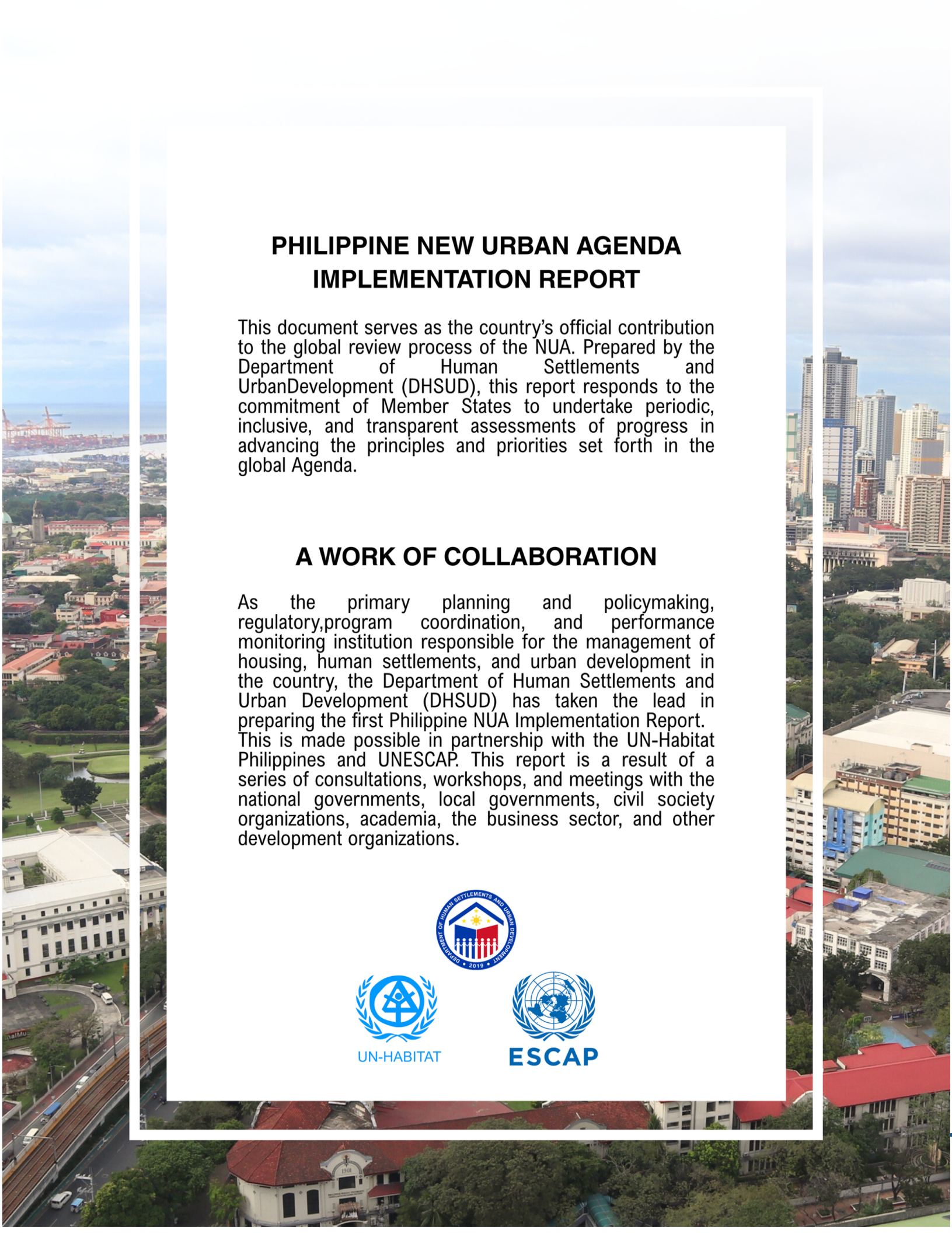

PHILIPPINE NEW URBAN AGENDA IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

This document serves as the country's official contribution to the global review process of the NUA. Prepared by the Department of Human Settlements and UrbanDevelopment (DHSUD), this report responds to the commitment of Member States to undertake periodic, inclusive, and transparent assessments of progress in advancing the principles and priorities set forth in the global Agenda.

A WORK OF COLLABORATION

As the primary planning and policymaking, regulatory,program coordination, and performance monitoring institution responsible for the management of housing, human settlements, and urban development in the country, the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) has taken the lead in preparing the first Philippine NUA Implementation Report. This is made possible in partnership with the UN-Habitat Philippines and UNESCAP. This report is a result of a series of consultations, workshops, and meetings with the national governments, local governments, civil society organizations, academia, the business sector, and other development organizations.

UN-HABITAT

ESCAP