

# Women2030 Monitoring and Review of the Sustainable Development Goals and Development Justice



## Philippines

Prepared by Centre for Women's Resources (CWR)

### Country Background

The Philippines is an archipelagic nation consisting of over 7,000 islands, and home to approximately 105 million people. In recent years, the Philippine government has committed to taking transformative steps to promote sustainable development. However, the government remains on track to pursue a neoliberal development model that promotes liberalised trade and investments, flexibilisation of labour, privatisation of public services, and cutbacks on public spending that past decades have shown serve only to reinforce inequalities. Deregulation of the private sector and the increased privatisation of services continue to transfer control of the economy and public services to a handful of private firms, leaving the majority of people to endure unfair market prices, a race-to-the-bottom for wages, and the unbridled plunder of resources and the environment. Women are the worst-impacted, as patriarchal values continue to reinforce women's lack of socioeconomic power and disproportionate susceptibility to poverty. The Philippine government also continues to prioritise enhanced militarism over addressing the systemic and structural roots of unrest such as poverty, displacement, and the monopolisation of land and resources by corporations. Realisation of the SDGs in the Philippines is further threatened by the nation's high vulnerability to the climate crisis, and it is women who bear the greatest impact of climate change.

### Architecture for SDGs Implementation

The government of the Philippines is integrating the SDGs into its plans and programs through its Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022, anchored in the Duterte administration's 0 to 10 Point Socioeconomic Agenda. The programs under this development blueprint aim at achieving the SDGs as well as the AmBisyon Natin 2040, the collective vision of Filipinos for the next 25 years. To build awareness around the SDGs, the government hosts various national agencies, universities, and some civil society organisations to collaborate in developing strategic awareness-building initiatives. Implementation of the SDGs will be funded largely through government plans to enact tax, fiscal, and policy reforms that seek to increase the number of Public Private Partnerships and spur economic growth. However, regressive tax schemes implemented to increase funding for infrastructure and other development initiatives, such as the nation's Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law, have thus far undermined the well-being of women and other vulnerable groups by failing to benefit the poor or those in informal employment and by causing increased inflation.



**Country population:**  
105 million (2017)

**GDP per capita:**  
2,988.953 USD<sup>1</sup> (2017)

**Palma ratio:**  
1.9<sup>2</sup> (2017)

**UNDP Gender Inequality Index Value:**  
0.427 (2017)

**UNDP Gender Inequality Index Rank:**  
97 (2017)

#### Government budget expenditure:

**Military Expenditure:**  
3.1 Billion USD (2018)

**Health Expenditure:**  
3.4 Billion USD (2018)

**Education Expenditure:**  
14.6 Billion USD (2018)

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, GDP per capita, Retrieved from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=PH>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Inequality adjusted Human Development Index, Retrieved from: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/IHDI>

Are CSOs included in the mechanisms for developing the national plan and implementation of the SDGs?

Are women's rights organisations included in the mechanisms for developing the national plan and implementation of the SDGs?

Is the information/ data accessible?

## Women's Priorities: Findings on selected targets and/or Indicators

The current status of the government of the Philippines in implementing Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16 is presented as follows:



**Goal 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Inequalities remain in accessing education based on gender and wealth.

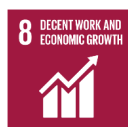
Nationally, an average of 94.2% of students graduate elementary school, while in poorer regions, such as the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, the rate is only 39.6%.

In 2017, there were 3.8 million out-of-school children and youth; 2.6 million of them were females.

The nation lacks an adequate number of school facilities, forcing approximately 70% of schools to implement 'double-shifts' where one group of students comes early in the morning, and another studies late into the evening.

Of the total higher educational institutions in the country, only 12% are state subsidised.

Among female out-of-school youth, marriage or family matters and financial concerns were identified as main reasons for not attending school.



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

Workers suffer under labour flexibilisation, insecurity of tenure, lack of access to basic social services and social protection, unsafe working conditions, and more. In 2018, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) listed the Philippines among the world's 'worst' countries to work in, where there is 'no guarantee of rights' for workers even if labour laws exist to protect workers.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, there were 840,000 unemployed women, while 2.04 million were underemployed. More than 1.43 million were unpaid workers.

Women comprise 60% of Overseas Filipino Workers, mostly relegated to low wage and low-skilled roles in household service, caregiving, cleaning, and nursing.



**Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries**

One in every five Filipinos live in poverty. More than 21.9 million Filipinos are unable to meet their basic needs. Five out of nine basic sectors have higher poverty incidence than the general population which include farmers, fisher folks, children, self-employed and unpaid family workers, and women.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the implementation of TRAIN Law, inflation rate reached 6.7%, significantly increasing the prices of commodities and services.

Workers receive different wages across the country. In the National Capital Region, the highest minimum daily wage is \$10.33, while in other regions, minimum wage could be as low as \$4.92



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

The Philippines ranks 5<sup>th</sup> as the most climate change-affected country,<sup>3</sup> with the nation's poorest, and mostly women, likely to face the greatest burdens of the climate crisis.

Poverty is the central factor that determines vulnerability to disasters. At least 1.76 million poor families have houses made of light and makeshift materials which could be very vulnerable to destruction during disasters.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the adoption of a number of climate-related laws and policies aimed at reducing carbon emission, the nation continues to rely on coal-fired plants to meet energy needs. Currently, there are 48 coal-fired power plants across the country.



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

The situation for human rights in the nation remains grave, with increasing militarism, drug-related killings, and the increased persecution of and attacks against human rights defenders.

As of June 2018, Duterte's war on drugs has claimed more than 22,000 lives, mostly of poor Filipinos living in urban cities.<sup>5</sup> From July 2017 to October 2017, there were 121 women who fell victim to drug-related killings.

More than 900,000 victims of various human rights violations have been monitored from July 2016 to March 2018, about 2,000 individuals have been illegally arrested and detained, and there are already 540 political prisoners of whom 45 are women.

74% of the victims are children.

At least 56 police officers have been involved in abuses against women and girls from July 2016 to October 2018.

1 International Trade Union Confederation. (2018). Global Rights Index. The World's Worst Countries for Workers.

2 Philippines Statistic Authority. (2016). Official Poverty Statistics

3 The 2018 Global Climate Risk Index Report

4 Bersales, Lisa Grace. (2017) Farmers, Fishermen and Children consistently posted the highest poverty incidence among basic sectors. Philippine Statistics Authority

5 Felipe, Cecille. (2018, June 11). PNP: 22,983 deaths under inquiry since drug war. Philstar Global.

## Recommendations

In order to achieve meaningful implementation of Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, and 16, the government of the Philippines must:

- Review and recall macroeconomic neoliberal policies of liberalisation, privatisation, deregulation, denationalisation;
- Consider an alternative development framework- one of Development Justice - that centers on and respects human rights and people's right to development by following the five foundational shifts that include redistributive justice, economic justice, social justice, environmental justice, and accountability to peoples as pillars for genuine sustainable progress; and
- Consider and deliver on the call made by women leaders at the Women Summit in 2016: 'Women Want CHANGE' meaning Comprehensive social services, Human rights, peace and social justice, Anti-Violence against Women and Children, and Discrimination, National sovereignty and social justice, Genuine land reform and national industrialisation, and Environmental protection.



The Centre for Women's Resources (CWR) is a research and training institution in Philippines that provides services to grassroots women particularly to peasantry, indigenous people, workers and the urban poor. Its mission is to empower grassroots women through awareness raising, and to support their endeavour in improving the quality life through structural change. In its 35 years of working for women across the country, it has conducted national consultations, documented national assessment reports, prepared and presented alternative country report by engaging with its network five national grassroots women organizations and 17 regional women centers. Contact: mjaguan@cwrrweb.org



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