



YOUTH CALL TO ACTION PHILIPPINES

Transformative, equitable, innovative and coordinated actions for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs for a sustainable future for young people in all their diversity.

Situational Analysis

The Philippines has crafted legislations that align with the 2030 agenda and SDG targets. While facing systemic gaps in implementation, it must strengthen means to provide social services and substantively include marginalised, excluded, and vulnerable groups in decision-making.

SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

The Philippines is severely off track on SDG 6, with only 48% of Filipinos accessing safely managed drinking water and 62% accessing safely managed sanitation—leaving millions exposed to disease and inequality. Rural barangays depend on unprotected wells and rainwater, many testing positive for E. coli, showing chronic contamination worsened by typhoons that damage systems and leave communities without safe water for months. Further, water governance remains fragmented, and many Local Government Unit(s) lack the capacity and financing to deliver reliable

water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, deepening regional disparities. Despite Department of Education’s Wash in Schools efforts, schools remain vulnerable without sustained investment. Women and girls bear disproportionate burdens in unsafe WASH environments. Privatisation debates persist as affordability issues and service gaps remain unresolved.

SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

The Philippines’ market-driven energy framework—shaped by Electric Power Industry Reform Act (2001), the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023–2028, and deliberations on a Low Carbon Economy Bill—promotes liberalised renewable energy (RE) investments and carbon markets, including efforts to retire the South Luzon coal plant. Yet universal access remains limited as centralised, fossil-dependent grids, high electricity prices, and interconnection

Co-convended by



In collaboration



In partnership



constraints keep communities in energy poverty, especially Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) and Indigenous Peoples (IP) benefiting more from distributed micro-solar systems. Despite abundant solar and wind resources, coal imports dominate and public awareness of affordable RE remains low, with no explicit fossil phase-out in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Reliance on foreign capital trumps national funding for research and development (R&D), with contested “clean” options like nuclear and LNG imports gaining traction. Meanwhile, expanding critical mineral extraction and transport transitions occur within weak public consultation and free prior and informed consent (FPIC) gaps. Without a just, people-centered energy transition (JET), SDG7 risks further backsliding.

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The PDP 2023-2028 and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) programs strengthen technical-vocational education and training (TVET) and facilitate youth transitions from education to employment, thereby laying the groundwork for inclusive national industrialisation. However, persistent skills gaps and mismatches limit opportunities in green and digital industries. Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) remain under-supported, restricting resource diversification and higher-value production beyond raw materials and labor exports. Further, infrastructure initiatives under Build Better More target climate-resilient roads, ports, and transport networks, but rural areas and GIDAs still face unreliable connectivity and ICT access. R&D investment remains low at 0.2% of GDP, constraining locally driven innovation in RE, technology, and climate-resilient industrial solutions. Without coordinated investment in infrastructure, workforce development, and innovation, regional and socio-economic disparities risk intensifying.

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Filipino youth yearn for cities with efficient public transportation, parks, accessible national libraries, and PWD-inclusive infrastructure. For 2026, the

Department of Transportation’s Active Transport Program allotted 69 million PHP to improve active mobility in urban areas, albeit only possible with proper use of funds. Once achieved, cities nationwide may replicate the practices of Balanga City, recognised by the UNESCO for its community literacy development and innovative learning spaces for sustainable urban development. Nevertheless, the country topped the World Risk Index on disaster proneness in 2025. The Philippines continues to face worsening climate risks, compounded by government corruption, dense urban populations, inadequate infrastructure, and poor Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM). Despite the existence of strong legal and regulatory frameworks for DRRM and Sendai Framework (2015), implementation is lax due to more funding spent on reactive response than proactive preparedness.

SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

The Philippines faces ballooning state loans and shrinking fiscal space, heightening dependency on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). As of November 2025, FDIs contracted by 22% year-on-year to \$7.08 billion, reflecting cautious investor sentiment amid inflationary pressures and governance concerns. Inflation also closed at 1.7% – the lowest in nine years – but households still felt the squeeze from food and utility costs. Official Development Assistance (ODA) boasts \$39.6 funding across 426 loans and grants, though delays in 44 projects highlight inefficiencies in delivery and community impact. Trade relations remain uneven, with US tariff impositions raising questions on the Philippines’ influence in global trade regimes. Meanwhile, the private sector dominates civil society in The Department of Economy, Planning, and Development’s Stakeholders Chambers, limiting direct financing and partnerships for IPs and GIDA. While the Philippines’ SDG Index score stands at 68.34 (ranked 87th globally), debt dependence, restricted civic participation, and uneven democratisation of funds constraints progress. Citizen-generated data and community-based monitoring systems remain underutilised, ultimately limiting inclusive evidence for SDG17 implementation.

Recommendations

We urgently call upon the Philippine government, civil



society organisations (CSOs), and other stakeholders to adopt the following recommendations.

SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

- » Enact House Bill No. 3144 to establish a unified national water governance framework and institutionalise Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), strengthening coordination among NWRB, LWUA, DOH, DENR, and LGUs.
- » Scale climate-resilient and decentralised WASH infrastructure, including solar-powered systems, rainwater harvesting with filtration, elevated pumping stations, and flood-proof sanitation facilities to withstand typhoons and sea-level rise.
- » Mandate routine water quality testing and public disclosure mechanisms at barangay level, including regular E. coli, and coliform testing, with community -based monitoring systems integrated into LGU health reporting.
- » Accelerate investments in fecal sludge management, septage treatment, and inclusive sanitation facilities, prioritising informal settlements and underserved communities.
- » Enforce clear and binding regulations for private water concessionaires to ensure affordability, prevent monopolisation of water commodities, and safeguard public interest.
- » Sustain and expand DepEd’s Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools (WinS) Program to guarantee gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, and menstrual hygiene-friendly facilities nationwide.

SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

- » Expand the Green Energy Option Program stipulated in the 2009 RE Act to boost GIDAs’ production and autonomy from centralised grids and power purchase agreements.
- » Localise and implement the ASEAN RE Long-term Roadmap’s fossil fuel import cuts and grid decentralisation for RE during the Philippines’ ASEAN chairmanship term.

- » Adopt supply-side policies that manage fossil fuel extraction, thus countering existing, demand-side ones (e.g, feed-in tariffs, carbon markets, and green bonds) exposing indigenous RE to corporate capture.
- » Conduct transitional risk assessments with scenario analysis and de-risking measures of a fossil fuel phase out scenario in the country’s next updates on the NDCs, PDP, and Philippine Energy Plan.
- » Conduct impact assessments that identify trade-offs of LNG and nuclear fission & fusion as “clean, transitional fuels” and address concerns on plant leakage & waste management.
- » Include due diligence protocols for workers, respect FPIC and carbon rights for IPs, and ‘do no harm’ to GIDA in RE investments, critical mineral extraction, and carbon dioxide removal efforts.
- » Include substantive consultation of third-party, non-fossil fuel stakeholders in auditing energy portfolios and forming JET partnerships as proposed in the JET Bill.
- » Recognise and support IP-led initiatives on RE, including facilitating direct partnership with and direct access to financing for IPs.

SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- » Strengthen implementation and monitoring of the Build Better More program to guarantee equitable regional distribution of infrastructure investments.
- » Increase public investment in R&D and institutionalise support for youth-led and university-based research in climate resilience and digital innovation.
- » Align technical and vocational education and training programs under TESDA and Community Learning Centers with emerging green and digital industries that address skills mismatch, reduce youth employment, and address brain drain.
- » Expand the capacity of public universities

to accommodate more students, reduce the reliance on private institutions, and promote and support alternative pathways for students such as TVET.

- » Provide infrastructure and resources to bridge the technological divide, ensuring equal access to digital learning tools.
- » Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation by incentivising green industries, enforcing decent work standards, and expanding social protections for workers in transitioning sectors.
- » Bridge the digital divide by ensuring accessible ICT infrastructure for girls and women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, low-income households, and marginalised communities.
- » Adopt clear national guidelines on the ethical and equitable integration of AI in education, ensuring that public schools are not disadvantaged and that investments strengthen foundational learning systems.

SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

- » Prioritise climate-resilient infrastructure in GIDAs ensuring that roads, transport systems, ports, and digital infrastructure are built to withstand worsening climate risks.
- » Adopt secure public transport services and active mobility practices to decongest public spaces, such as tactical urbanism, expansion of cycling and walking lanes.
- » Invest on mangrove restoration and other nature-based solutions that curb the urban island heat effect and strengthen cities' resilience against extreme weather events.
- » Improve the quality of education on climate change impacts, DRRM, and the encouragement of the active participation of teachers, students, and communities in climate change education (CCE) activities and promoting environmental protection and natural heritage preservation.
- » Integrate sustainable urban development

frameworks addressing the interlinked global challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, unsustainable resource consumption, and inequality in cities.

- » SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals
- » Mobilise equitable public finance in the Philippines and cancel burdensome, climate-harmful debts. Support the adoption of a UN debt framework anchored in human rights and climate justice for vulnerable countries such as the Philippines.
- » Implement local practices for progressive taxation and wealth taxes to influence a UN Tax Convention that will curb corporate tax avoidance and harmful incentives.
- » Strengthen public financing for infrastructure and SDG monitoring, integrating citizen-generated data and community-based information systems.
- » Uphold civic space through accountability mechanisms, inclusive partnerships, and democratic decision-making free from corporate-driven partnerships
- » Expand the DepDev Stakeholders' Chamber towards a more substantive multistakeholder partnership that includes vulnerable and marginalized sectors.

The APFSD country and sub-regional briefs were developed through collective discussions and engagements between youth advocates at the APFSD Youth Forum in Bangkok, Thailand on 18-20 February, 2026. The Philippines drafting team consisted of Arianne Joy Fabregas and Jimrex Calatan (Country Facilitators), Achilles Losanes, Arianne Joy Fabregas, Carl Joel Tilos, Hyacinth Flores, James Tolosa, Jose Fernando Magno, Lance Balungcas, Mitch Teofilo, Raffiela Lae Santiago, and Sarah Jasmine Cerbo. Overall supervision was provided by the ARROW Call To Action Team.