

We take note of “improvements” in SDGs implementation and welcome government efforts at consultations. However, these involved too few non-government stakeholders. An institutionalized mechanism for broader and deeper multi-stakeholder participation is lacking. The report thus fails to capture realities of millions of Filipinos. There’s no mention of actual unemployment including discouraged workers, low wages amid increasing corporate profits, and disregard for people’s fundamental rights. Adjustments in poverty methodologies resulted to under reporting of actual poverty incidence. Data and indicators on specific situation of girls, women, children, youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and LGBTI persons are lacking. Abuse and exploitation of children remain unaccounted for because many child-related indicators are not being monitored. Quality education remains inaccessible while communities’ and indigenous peoples efforts for learning are vilified and shut down.

The Philippine Development Plan strategy for achieving SDGs is inappropriate and worsens structural inequalities as it’s overly market-driven and profit-biased. The 4Ps poverty alleviation program is palliative and sows disunity especially among indigenous peoples communities. Asset reforms are insufficient, especially land redistribution and recognition of Ancestral Domains. Government projects are implemented without real consultation. The human rights situation is bleak. Since July 2016, 27,000 mostly poor were killed in anti-drug operations. There have been 250 victims of politically-motivated extrajudicial killings. Civil society space is increasingly restricted. The structural causes of underdevelopment must be addressed for sustainable, equitable, and broadly felt development. There must be more reporting of the extent to which government meets its human rights obligations.

- 1) How will government address issues on decent work, access to basic social services, social protection and human rights when it rejects UN investigations, has withdrawn from ICC, openly attacked human rights defenders, and just recently denounced the UNHRC resolution for a report on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Philippines?
- 2) How will government ensure inclusive and meaningful participation of marginalized sectors in implementation, review and monitoring of SDGs, when the current development paradigm violates the right to development of the people?
- 3) How will the government show commitment to putting into action CSOs’ inputs and recommendations, when in the past 4 years it has failed to do this, nor put in place a mechanism inclusive of CSOs at the least?

Statement #2

A rights-based approach to development hinged on Filipinos’ aspirations for genuine national development should guide policies in achieving SDGs. Education orientation is crucial. Government considers K-12 a major achievement, but the curriculum shift gives undue emphasis to employability by corporations and abroad over producing well-rounded, socially-aware and responsible Filipinos. Subjects that help in molding the youth’s sense of nationalism such as Filipino and *Kasaysayan* are being removed. Meanwhile, teacher trade union leaders are being threatened and the right to association is under attack.

Discrimination is still widely felt among marginalized sectors especially Indigenous peoples (IPs), which impacts on IP children's and youth's ability to achieve their full potential and become future leaders of their communities. Persons with disabilities (PWDs) and LGBTI community are also discriminated. Abuse and exploitation of children remain unaccounted for. Many child-related indicators are not being monitored and there seems to be no clarity nor plans if these indicators will be monitored. This is true also for PWDs and LGBTI. We are way behind our target of removing 1M children from child labor with only 80,000 child laborers profiled. Lowering the age of criminal liability endangers children.

On the issue of Chinese ships entering Philippines' EEZ and destroying marine resources, we need to take decisive action. We must assert our sovereignty over Philippine resources. On the policies relating to our natural resource, increasing private sector control and exploitation for profit of our land, energy, mineral, water and marine resources is taking its toll on the environment and poor communities, i.e., Oceana Gold mining operation in Nueva Vizcaya.

1. How will government address IP issues particularly to their land, territories and resources and combat IP discrimination?
2. How will government ensure the children's and the youth's rights as well as PWDs and LGBTI rights are recognized and upheld?
3. Will government commit to reversing laws detrimental to the economy, environment and people's welfare like the Mining Act of 1995?