

# **Country Case Study: Philippines**

## Mainstreaming Climate Change into Urban-Related Policies



// Image 1. Makati, Metro Manila (c) UN-Habitat

The Philippines has a population of 101 million as of 2015. It is projected to increase to 148 million by 2050, making it then the 13th most populous country in the world¹. Currently, urban population is at 45 per cent², which is projected to rise to 54 per cent by 2050³. With this steadily growing population, urban areas and cities in the Philippines continue to be centres of economic growth, accounting for 75 to 80 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) since 2000. However, many urban areas and cities are still facing significant challenges and issues associated with to the increasing needs of the urban population, especially the poor. Issues stem from gaps and constraints in the following areas:

- (i) Capacities in urban planning and design;
- (ii) Investments on basic infrastructure and services;
- (iii) Affordable housing;
- (iv) Employment and underemployment;
- (v) Urban policies and legislation;
- (vi) Urban climate and disaster resilience.

Due to its archipelagic nature and geographic location, the Philippines is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It is ranked highest in the world in terms of vulnerability to tropical cyclones. The Global Climate Risk Index of 2015 ranked the Philippines third among countries most affected by weather-related loss events (e.g. storms, floods, heat waves, etc.) in 2013, due to destruction brought about by Typhoon Haiyan. Sea level rise observation also was highest in the Philippines compared to global averages in the last 110 years. The Philippine sea level rise at 60cm. was "three times the global average" of 19cm from 1901 to 2015 brought about by rising sea temperatures<sup>4</sup>. Projected sea level rise will likely affect 70 per cent of the 145 cities and 1489 municipalities located in coastal areas from which, studies revealed that more than 13 million population living in low elevation zones would be directly affected.

The impacts of climate change and risks from other natural hazards are well recognized issues in the Philippines. They





// Image 2. Guiuan in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) © UN-Habitat

are acknowledged as key factors that impede national, local, and community sustainable development. As such, considerations on and integration of climate change and disaster risks in all government policies, plans, and programmes are promoted and pursued.

#### Relevant Policies and Legislative Framework

The Philippine Development Plan sets the medium-term national strategies and priorities of the government. It stands as the anchor for sectoral programmes, plans, and actions towards achieving the country's development vision. Various laws anchored on the 1987 Philippine Constitution are enacted to provide the legal basis for development actions.

In line with the above, the **Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992** (UDHA) is one of the key policies that provides legal basis for urban development actions. It provides the mandate for the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB), under the direction of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), to formulate the National Urban Development Housing Framework (NUDHF) in coordination with all local government units and other concerned public and private sectors<sup>5</sup>. **The NUDHF serves as the national urban policy**, which enjoins all stakeholders to plan and act on achieving sustainable urbanisation.

The 2017-2023 NUDHF envisions a "Better, Greener, Smarter Urban Systems in a More Inclusive Philippines". The strategies and action areas identified are consistent with and seek to contribute to the current Philippine Development Plan. The NUDHF was crafted to be in synergy with the Philippine New Urban Agenda submitted to the Third World Conference on Human Settlements or Habitat III. Moreover, the updated policies and strategies of the Framework were driven by the need to consider emerging urban realities and trends and recent legislations and policies relating to including climate change and disaster risk reduction and management.

The Climate Change Act of 2009 and its amending law seek to build national and local resilience to climate change-related disasters and protect and advance the people's right to a healthful ecology. It compels the government to stabilize greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations at a level that prevents dangerous human interference with the climate system. This is to ensure that food production is not threatened and that economic development proceeds in a sustainable manner<sup>6</sup>. Following the Climate Change Act, the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change (NFSCC) as well as National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) have been developed to define country priorities and targets to address climate change impacts.

Meanwhile, Republic Act 10121 or the **Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act of 2010**, in response to

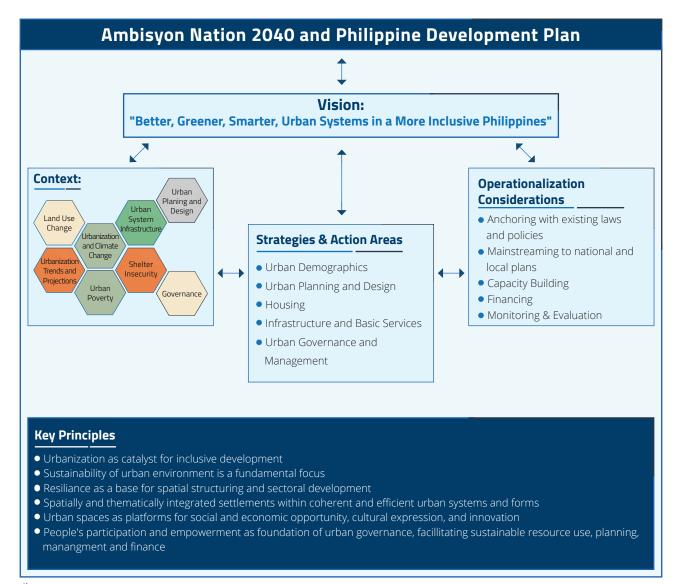
the country's vulnerability to natural disasters as well as climate change impacts, "provides for the development of policies and plans and the implementation of actions and measures pertaining to all aspects of disaster risk reduction and management, including good governance, risk assessment and early warning, knowledge building and awareness raising, reducing underlying risk factors, and preparedness for effective response and early recovery."

With the strong ownership from the stakeholders and having incorporated key issues like climate change and urban development trends, the Philippine government foresees that the NUDHF will positively guide the whole of government in pursuing sustainable urban development in the country.

#### **Project Results**

Acknowledging the need to integrate and mainstream climate change in urban development processes and actions, the NUDHF was updated via participatory multistakeholder and cross-sector processes, to clearly reflect climate change across the Framework elements. As a result, the 2017-2023 NUDHF is now founded on climatesensitive and resilience-focused urban development principles and strategies. With a strong of the nexus of climate change and urbanization, strategies and actions for urban development will be guided by the principle of "climate resilience as the basis of spatial structuring and sectoral development" (see Figure 1 below).

#### **The Mainstreaming Process**



// Figure 1. Flow-chart showing mainstreaming process

The NUDHF was identified as a strategic starting point for mainstreaming climate change in urban development and urban planning. It is a nationally mandated policy framework, with the potential to consolidate and harmonize all urban and climate-related policies, for organized mainstreaming across different levels of government. The updating of the NUDHF document presented an opportunity to enhance collaboration across government agencies and institutions. The Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, given the mandate to formulate the NUDHF, partnered with UN-Habitat to support the updating process, including mainstreaming climate change into the Framework.

To prepare the whole process and ensure the convergence of the typically siloed sectors or themes, the HLURB identified potential members for an inter-agency Technical Working Group responsible for updating the NUDHF. The objective of the updating and mainstreaming process was also agreed at the outset to ensure that the whole process would be effective and efficient.

As a first step of the updating process, the interagency Technical Working Group (IA-TWG) was organized through official communication and assignments from identified key agencies. In this initial stage, a detailed assessment of previous NUDHFs was conducted to identify intended outcomes and long-term goals that have not been achieved, as well as lessons learned. These lessons and unfinished agendas were then used as an entry point for the new NUDHF. The Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners, the national professional organization of licensed environmental planners, was engaged as partner to support this process.

Subsequently, a review of policies and legislations was conducted. It included linking and understanding the global frameworks and recently outlined global commitments and targets, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). The new urban development paradigm outlined in these global frameworks was mainstreamed into the NUDHF where it was found relevant to the Philippines context. Climate change mainstreaming was also covered in this second step. It involved the review of existing national and international climate change related frameworks, policies, legislations as well as the review of previous and current government initiatives on mainstreaming climate and disaster risks assessments in comprehensive land use planning at the local level. This step also involved parallel work to support Tacloban City in conducting climate change vulnerability and action planning workshops. This city-level project initiative supplemented the HLURB with information on the process and practice on mainstreaming



// Image 3. Climate Change and Vulnerability and Risk planning in Ormoc City © UN-Habitat.

climate change into local plans. It provided an additional "reality-check" of the needs and requirements of local governments from the NUP to converge climate resilience thinking with urban development actions, especially in the aftermath of a disaster.

The third step was the sustained coordination and synergies between government organizations and agencies, whether part of the IA-TWG or not, in developing, discussing, and agreeing on the evidence-based context, appropriate principles, effective strategies and action that will be embodied in the NUDHF. A key part of this step was providing inputs to the agencies to appreciate and learn about the linkages between urban development and climate change actions.

Dialogues or learning exchanges among the practitioners from the two themes were crucial to ensure common understanding of issues to define key convergence points and required joint actions. High-level workshops and vetting of results were facilitated. Local government units and other civil society representatives were also engaged in the process. International practices were also key references used to keep the process of climate change mainstreaming clear and concise. The UN-Habitat policy note on "Addressing Climate Change in National Urban Policy" was used to guide and inspire the IA-TWG in the country to consider, in particular: (1) Promoting of Low-Carbon Development (Mitigation), (2) Building Climate Resilience (Adaptation), and (3) Addressing Urban Climate Government the key elements of each in the new NUDHF.



### Impacts of the Project

#### **Capacity Development**

The project successfully mainstreamed climate change into the NUDHF. It contributed to the improvement of HLURB's institutional capacity to promote climate change as a key consideration towards achieving sustainable urban development in the country.

More than 30 technical staff at the central and field offices of HLURB gained new knowledge on planning for climate change. 14 Government agencies<sup>7</sup> engaged in the formulation of the NUDHF and in mainstreaming climate change into the whole framework. The representatives from the 14 agencies acquired additional knowledge through the technical inputs and discussions. Private sector and other professional groups also participated in the consultations and technical sessions; namely the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners, Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association, Inc. and private water utility business group representatives.

At the local level, the Tacloban City climate change vulnerability assessment and action plan was developed. More than 25 local technical staff and stakeholders involved in city development planning increased their capacity to mainstream climate change into local urban policies.

#### **Climate Change Considerations in the NUDHF**

As a result of capacity development and technical interventions, the government made a conscious decision to imbue the NUDHF with climate change considerations across the whole framework from its vision, to principles and down to the strategies.

In its vision of a "Better, Greener, Smarter Urban Systems in a More Inclusive Philippines," "greener" is further defined as environmentally sustainable, climate resilient, and safe. Furthermore, one of its six key principles explicitly states "climate change resilience as a base for spatial structuring and sectoral development". This principle emphasizes that climate change should be the foundation in planning and decision-making for spaces (neighbourhoods, settlements, development areas, cities, municipalities, provinces, regions); and for addressing sectoral/cross-sectoral challenges (environmental, social, economic, infrastructure-related, institutional, and inclusivity of cultural practices or expression).

Climate change resilience is consequently embedded in the strategies across all sectors and themes of urban

development and housing, including urban planning and design, infrastructure, shelter and urban services, economy, and urban governance. The influence ranges from express strategies like integrating climate change action planning into spatial and sectoral planning, to applied and implicit strategies such as ensuring that public spaces and housing developments are designed to support climate action, or promoting green industries and jobs, in recognition of the opportunities that climate change presents.

#### Institutionalization and Implementation

The NUDHF has been approved by the HLURB Technical Officers and its Commissioner/s responsible for the project. The final concurrence and approval of the entire Board of Commissioners last 26 November 2017 signalled its official adoption and roll-out. The full Board of Commissioners of HLURB includes four ex-officio Commissioners, namely the Undersecretaries of the Department of Justice, Interior and Local Governments and Public Works and Highways and the Deputy Director-General of the National Economic and Development Authority. With such representation in the Board, it could be expected that ownership and roll-out of the updated NUDHF will involve their respective agencies which are important pillars of government to realize the purpose and impact of the Framework.

Further, national government has approved the budget to roll-out the communications of the NUDHF to all national and local stakeholders to ensure its use and impact in urban development and resilience actions in the country. A total of PHP4.6 million (approximately USD92,000) for the NUDHF roll-out was approved by the Department of Budget (DBM) for HLURB during the 2018 budget hearing for the succeeding year's budget. PHP1.8 million of the approved budget was allocated for sub-national and local level orientation and mainstreaming workshops. Portions of the remaining funds will be used for printing and other communications materials. This would aid in further empowering the Regional Land Use Committees (RLUC) at the sub-national level to support this national rollout activity. It is viewed that through the roll-out process of the NUDHF, the communication of the Philippine New Urban Agenda (P-NUA), developed and submitted by the Philippine government to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in 2016, will likewise be facilitated.

Following the mainstreaming of climate change into the NUDHF, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) partnered UN-Habitat to gather urban stakeholders for a forum and technical discussions in June 2018 to integrate the urban climate change concerns in the NUDHF into the National Climate Change Action Plan, which is now being updated.



HLURB and CCC are now working together to synergize their policies and actions to ensure and promote urban climate resilience and low emission development in view of government targets and priorities.

#### Key Lessons learned of the project

While climate change and urban development policies and legislations are well established in the Philippines, gaps exist in mainstreaming one to the other. The challenge stems from the still limited technical capacities and appreciation on the importance of understanding the interactions of urban development and climate change. The siloed approach persists when institutions and actors dwell on whether it is climate first or development first. Such thinking and approach hinders implementation of the government accepted principle that climate change is a cross-cutting issue and a key factor in building resilient communities. The project in the Philippines addressed this by providing inputs and facilitating dialogues that climate change actions is compatible with development pathways of the country.

Another lesson learned is that there is still limited climate change data and information that directly or explicitly relates to urbanization and urban development. Most climate change impacts analysis are directed to specific sectors and sub-sectors. This results in sector focused actions that create limits to the opportunities for an integrated approach and systems thinking, where urban climate actions generally fit unless approached spatially. The mainstreaming project in the Philippines ensured that

climate change issues and impacts discussions will lead to improved knowledge on urban systems thinking. Focusing on the NUDHF, which is a comprehensive and integrated policy document, made it easier to convey the systems approach to climate actions.

Mainstreaming climate change into a national-level urban framework policy like the NUDHF requires multi-sector and multi-level participation and engagement. Globally and nationally accepted guiding principles helped ensure that the NUDHF is consistent with overarching principles of climate action in urban development. But also, if not more important, is reflecting sub-national and local realities and concerns on climate change in national urban policies. Climate change impacts are experienced on the ground; hence it is where actions are mostly also done. The needs and realities of local actors to respond to climate change should be a key focus and core concern in addition to highlevel principles. Mainstreaming climate change in an NUP will not be effective and viewed relevant if it does not bring results and impacts where it is needed.

Finally, there is a need for a targeted communications plan and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) scheme. Utilization of the previous NUDHFs were not maximized due to weak promotions and communications from national, subnational and local levels of governance. Adoption of the NUDHF principles and strategies can be further achieved through the promotion of actions and capacity building support around an M&E system for key government agencies that have mandate to direct and regulate urban development and climate resiliency.



// Image 4. Informal Settlements along waterways, as here in Cagayan De Oro are particularly vulnerable to climate change © Bernhard Barth / UN-Habitat.



In the table below, the content of this case study has been applied to the Mainstreaming Framework introduced in the Regional Guide. Red text indicates completed or ongoing actions from the case study that correspond to individual tasks recommended within the Framework. Blue text indicates possible next steps, per the case study content.

	I) Substantive process	II) Resource & Capacity Assessment & Development	III) Urban & Climate Related Policy Alignment <sup>®</sup>	IV) Institutions & Stakeholders
Phase A: Feasibility & Diagnosis	✓ Identify drivers (WHY) you want to mainstream climate action into urban policy - make your case for mainstreaming	diagnosis, formulation, implementation	✓ Identify relevant national, sectoral & sub - national urban - related documents, including stage of National Urban Policy development, sources of financing & check if climate change mainstreamed	of country's institutional landscape ( <b>government</b> ) &
	Action Taken - Revision of the National Urban Development and Housing Framework (NUDHF) was identified as the strategic starting point for mainstreaming climate change  ✓ Identify urban-related climate change issues, mainstreaming objectives & climate actions (WHAT)		✓ Identify relevant national, sectoral & sub-national <b>climate</b> policies, strategies & frameworks that have relevance in urban context & check if urban-related concerns sufficiently covered  **Action Taken - Review of existing national climate change-related frameworks, policies and legislation**	✓ Map & analyze relevant key stakeholders (outside government) & identify potential mainstreaming champions  ✓ Determine potential means & level of engagement of relevant institutions & key stakeholders based on capacities & interest (HOW, WHAT) & agree on Participation Strategy for mainstreaming process, including forming a Reference
	Action Taken - Tacloban City vulnerability assessment and action plans were developed		initiatives on mainstreaming climate change and disaster risk assessments at the local level	
	Action Taken - Climate change issues were identified through stakeholder consultations for NUDHF revision  ✓ Customize your mainstreaming		✓Identify relevant sections in international frameworks linked to urban development &/or climate change with relevance for urban context ✓Review of existing international urban and climate change related frameworks, policies,	Action Taken - Formulated Inter - Agency Technical Working Group; Participatory multi - stakeholder
	process using this Framework (HOW) – creating process  Timeline  ✓ Analyze good practices for		<ul> <li>✓ Find existing mainstreaming efforts of climate change concerns into national, sectoral or sub-national urban policies from other</li> </ul>	and cross-sector process for NUDHF revision
	Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) & draft Plan, including indicators for mainstreaming goal & interim milestones		countries - diagnose if helpful for your context  ✓ldentify other cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender) that could be mainstreamed in your	
	Next Steps - Develop a monitoring and evaluation scheme for key urban agencies that are mandated to implement the NUDHF		policy formulation or revision alongside climate change & existing mainstreaming processes of your country & other countries to learn from	
	✓ Compile <b>Diagnosis Paper</b> based on outputs of all tasks from your tailored mainstreaming process Phase A		✓In Diagnosis Paper, undertake comparative analysis of above-mentioned set of country documents (& international frameworks) & identify urban policy document(s) to mainstream climate actions into (WHERE), / or propose using mainstreaming process to drive development of new NUP	Consensus has been reached
	The goals, substance & main steps of the mainstreaming process (including M&E) have been clearly articulated in the Diagnosis Paper	resources & institutional	The urban policy document(s) into which to mainstream has/ have been identified & an annotated outline drafted (or a new climate responsive NUP outline drafted) as part of the Diagnosis Paper	with institutional partners & other stakeholders on content & process for mainstreaming policy formulation &

- Goal & objectives of the mainstreaming process
- Summary of urban-related climate issues & diagnosis of urban & climate related policies (SWOT, gaps, priorities)
- Annotated outline of content to be mainstreamed into a certain policy or set of policies
- A preliminary strategy for mainstreaming process is outlined in broad terms, including general roles, resources & M&E

#### II) Resource & Capacity III) Urban & Climate Related IV) Institutions I) Substantive process Assessment & Development **Policy Alignment** & Stakeholders ✓ Formulate Policy Proposal, including clear indication of what other documents ✓Prepare detailed Formulation **√**Undertake capacity development √Involve relevant institutions & key activities of Core Team or reference Work Plan for Policy Proposal stakeholders in formulation process group if needed need to be aligned & estimation for budget & Implementation Analysis needs & other resources to implement the √Conduct periodic M&E as per mainstreaming objectives plan developed in Phase A: Action Taken - Assessment of the needs Action Taken - Multi-stakeholder and requirements of local governments and multi-level participation were Action Taken -NUDHF revision is currently in emphasized in the NUDHF revision **√**Undertake **Implementation** final draft stage Analysis to understand legislative Institutional & administrative ✓Align national policy targets with international framework targets & landscape indicators as well as review and reporting requirements as far as possible Action Taken - SDGs, New Urban Agenda was mainstreamed into NUDHF where it was found relevant to the Philippines circumstance Text of policy proposal has been either newly formulated or adapted to include: a) climate responsive language, b) evidence The Core Team & the Reference The drafting process has been well Group has clear assignments & on climate change status quo & trends & Participating institutions impact of planned climate actions, & c) stakeholders support formulation concrete mainstreaming objectives & planned and executed & an capacity to complete them in time & of changes & are ready to support Implementation Analysis has been with high quality, including periodic climate actions - by sectors & at national & included in the Policy Proposal implementation sub-national levels Outputs Phase B: Formulation: POLICY PROPOSAL (i.e. mainstreamed national urban policy/ies document), whose content has been agreed by key institutions & stakeholders; and if appropriate, draft recommendations for operationalization in follow-on legislation & planning. ✓ Create detailed implementation work **√**Oversee, encourage or assist sectoral √Facilitate the process of having √Facilitate delegation of roles & the Policy Proposal sanctioned/ on support/ coordination/ ministries or government agencies to align responsibilities to sectoral & adopted or agreed by the respecoversight by Core Team & Reference existing policies & plans, or develop new sub-national implementation tive oversight / decision-making in line with implementation objectives of the newly mainstreamed bodies in line with country-specific requirement ✓ Support resource mobilization for national level urban policy/ies ✓ Define roles & responsibilities implementation of mainstreamed for stakeholders & facilitate Action Taken - The NUDHF vision, climate actions, considering domestic & institutionalization of coordination ✓Mandate, encourage or assist local principles, and strategies and governments to align existing policies & processes (e.g. development of standards & procedures for stakeholders) if possible international, private & public financing actions have been approved by the sources & mechanisms & support plans, or develop new ones in line with HLURB Technical Officers and its implementation objectives of the newly measures to channel financial resourc-Commissioner/s responsible for the es to sectoral & sub-national mainstreamed national level urban project, signaling official roll-out of implementing bodies, Sustained coordination and policy/ies synergies between government organizations and agencies; ✓ Develop capacities of sectoral & **√**Continuously monitor process sub-national implementing bodies if Dialogues and Action Taken & outcomes of implementation, & mandated & needed (including on how exchanges learning practitioners create feedback mechanisms to to access climate financing) & support inform future policy cycles institutionalization of capacity building (responsibilities defined, clear Next Steps - Develop a targeted communications plan for key urban agencies towards adoption of NUDHF principles and strategies processes where possible Capacity development of local technical staff and stakeholders to progress indicators, analysis of downstream policy documents, mainstream climate change into local-level urban policies; regular meetings with reference group & key stakeholders) All relevant government bodies & All linked ("downstream") documents have other stakeholders actively & All necessary resources & capacity been aligned with new climate responsive inclusively contributed to policy The process of adopting and operationalizing the policy has development for successful national urban policy, enabling actors to adoption & operationalization; implementation have been provided start implementation of urban-related their roles were clarified & if to all key implementers climate actions appropriate institutionalized been completed Output Phase C: Implementation: POLICY ADOPTION & OPERATIONALISATION Implementation plan with clear timelines, tasks & roles, confirmed resources & covering capacity development needs; Mainstreamed National Urban Policy/ies Document has been ratified (if legally binding according to country's legislative process), its directives & recommendations have been transcribed into respective laws & regulations, & operationalized in sectoral and sub-national policy documents, & plans & budgets have been aligned according √Evaluate if mainstreaming process √Evaluate if mainstreaming process √Evaluate if capacity building had ✓ Evaluate if institutional has been effective & inclusive of national urban policy/ies fully responsibilities, coordination clear & desired impact & reached the right considering existing sectoral & people process is functioning √Evaluate if policy proposal sanctioned/ adopted or agreed by sub-national policies & legislation √Evaluate if climate responsive ✓Evaluate if all key stakeholders were

- the respective oversight decision-making bodies
- √Evaluate if climate-responsive national urban policy has been operationalized with follow-on policies, legislation, plans etc.
- **√**Plan or encourage evaluation of whether the mainstreamed/ new national urban policy has enabled implementation of urban-related climate actions
- national level urban policy aligned with local, national & global financing opportunities
- ✓Evaluate if mainstreamed urban policy/ies aligned with targets, indicators, monitoring & review of international frameworks
- meaningfully involved throughout, their resources were effectively incorporated & their needs met

Evaluation process has been implemented & institutionalized including all relevant government bodies & stakeholders