

**Philippine Mayors Forum  
on Effective Governance for Sustainable Development to  
Accelerate the 2030 Agenda in the Philippines  
- *Sharing Global and Local Experiences***

**Concept Note and Agenda**

**26-27 April 2023**

Hosted by the Mayor of Mandaluyong City

Venue: (TBD)

*Organized by*

*Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)*

*National Economic Development Authority (NEDA)*

*United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)*

*United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in the Philippines*

*United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Philippines*

## 1. Event Description

The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) of the Philippines, with the support of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) and its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), and in collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and UNDP Philippines, is organizing a *Philippine Mayors Forum on Effective Governance for Sustainable Development to Accelerate the 2030 Agenda in the Philippines- Sharing Global and Local Experiences* on 26-27 April 2023.

The Forum is being organized in response to the expressed need for capacity development on SDG implementation and to bring to the Philippines the knowledge generated at the UN DESA Regional Symposium 2022 held in Korea. The workshop will be attended by Mayors from cities and municipalities across the Philippines, National Government officials, UN representatives, and other invited international and local experts and officials joining as resource speakers.

The Forum is based on the UN DESA's<sup>1</sup> [Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals](#). The Curriculum aims to promote a critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also recognizes the important role of local governments in accelerating development.

The Forum will be conducted in Mandaluyong City for most international attendees through the Zoom platform. The Forum will be conducted in English.

## 2. Context

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs is a global 15-year plan of action that was adopted in 2015 to drive economic prosperity and social well-being while protecting the environment.

The 2030 Agenda makes reference to subnational efforts and local governments. All of the SDGs have targets that relate to the role of local government in terms of their responsibilities in basic service delivery as well as their ability to promote and integrate inclusive and sustainable territorial development. Two SDGs explicitly relate to SDG localization: SDG 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") and SDG 11 ("Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"). Implementing these goals requires effective, accountable, and participatory institutions and places a particular responsibility on local governments. This is especially the case for SDG 11, which, as a standalone goal for sustainable cities and communities, recognizes sustainable urban and local development as a fundamental precondition of sustainable development.

Despite some advances, action to meet the SDGs is not yet advancing at the speed or scale required. The unprecedented and multifaceted impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia and

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<sup>1</sup> UN DESA uses the governance principles as a main reference point and overarching analytical framework to address common governance challenges and advance effective governance for sustainable development in response to country requests.

the Pacific has reinforced pre-existing obstacles to realizing the SDGs<sup>2</sup>. In his 2021 report "Our Common Agenda"<sup>3</sup>, the UN Secretary-General proposed key actions to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs to make a real difference in people's lives by encouraging solidarity, respect for human rights, better management of critical global commons, and global public goods.

The Philippines was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which reversed some development gains and forced the country to re-prioritize its strategies. In addition, the country was hit by external shocks and disasters triggered by natural hazards. In 2022, eighteen tropical cyclones entered the Philippines, and Typhoon Odette/Rai in 2021 brought massive destruction in several regions where a response was needed until 2022.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 and other crises, the Philippines remains committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. In this context, the Philippines is pursuing a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to sustainable development. The [AmBisyon Natin 2040](#) is the country's long-term vision and collective aspiration for every Filipino to enjoy a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life. It lays the foundation for delivering on the country's commitment to 'leave no one behind'.

The SDGs are at the core of the [Philippine Development Plan \(PDP\) 2023-2028](#), which serves as the country's overall economic blueprint in development planning for the next six years and envisions inclusive growth, building an environment that provides equal opportunities to all Filipinos and equipping them with skills to participate fully in an innovative and globally competitive economy. It is based on Marcos Jr. Administration's Eight-Point Socio-Economic Agenda and calls for transformation in all sectors – social, economic, institutional, and environmental to reinvigorate employment and reduce poverty in order to achieve a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient society.

The Third Voluntary National Review 2022, "*Rekindling Commitment and Using Innovation to Accelerate Recovery and Ensure Progress to Achieve the SDGs in 2030*"<sup>5</sup>, presented at the High-Level Political Forum in 2022, shows that the Philippines is now on its way to recovery from COVID-19. It highlighted the country's enhancement of institutional mechanisms to quickly recover from COVID-19 and progress toward the SDGs. According to the [United Nations Philippines 2021 Results and 2022 Prospects](#), the Philippines is turning its national BN 2040 into reality through building resilience and innovative mechanisms for implementation.

Cities and LGUs are at the center of implementing the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 and are considered "engines of growth" as most of the population, and economic activities are concentrated in these urban areas, thus the importance of achieving SDG 11. However, rapid urbanization and development pose great risks, such as growing inequality, lack of access to affordable services and facilities, pollution, security threats, climate change, and environmental degradation, among others. SDG 11, the Sendai Framework, and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) place urbanization at the forefront of international development policy.<sup>6</sup> This recognition goes beyond viewing urbanization as simply a demographic phenomenon but a transformative process capable of galvanizing momentum for many aspects of global

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<sup>2</sup> Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2022- Widening disparities amid Covid-19

<sup>3</sup> UN Secretary-General's Report "Our Common Agenda"

<sup>4</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/philippines-2022-significant-events-snapshot-11-january-2023>

<sup>5</sup> <https://hlpf.un.org/countries/philippines/voluntary-national-review-2022>

<sup>6</sup> <https://unhabitat.org/sdg-11-synthesis-report>

development. While the SDGs are global in their ambition, their achievement will depend on local action, leadership, and ownership.

To ensure the achievement of the Philippine National Government's priority thrusts and objectives as well as its international commitments, the public sector must innovate. Innovation can be driven by promoting frontier technologies and digital government coupled with better partnerships with citizens, civil society, and the private sector. UN DESA is committed to ensuring the robust integration of the SDGs into national and local plans, policies, and frameworks; promoting innovative processes of effective governance at the subnational level to deliver quality public services; and working towards the localization of the SDGs as a crucial step to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

### 3. Objectives

The **Philippine Mayors Forum on Effective Governance for Sustainable Development to Accelerate the 2030 Agenda in the Philippines - Sharing Global and Local Experiences** aims to enhance the capacity of LGUs to accelerate the implementation of the PDP 2023-2028, strengthen governance, and strengthen public servants' awareness of the active role they have to play in achieving the country's progress in achieving the SDGs and *AmBisyon Natin 2040*.

During the Forum, Mayors and planners will be able to discuss critical governance issues and gain knowledge of key issues related to national to the local governance, institutional arrangements, future thinking, and smart cities.

### 4. Thematic Focus

The Forum will comprise an opening session, a setting the scene session, and six thematic sessions structured around:

- i. Multi-level Governance for SDG Localization
- ii. PDP 2023-2028
- iii. Future Thinking: Strategic Planning and Foresight
- iv. SDG Innovative Practices in the Philippines
- v. Smart Cities: Smart Governance, Innovation, and Service Delivery

### 5. Structure

The Forum will provide a platform for Mayors to better understand the strategies and approaches to national and local coordination in promoting the progress toward the delivery of SDGs. The Forum will also provide a good opportunity for them to present their difficulties to the national authorities, particularly on the new priorities in the PDP 2023-2028, and develop effective coordination mechanisms. It will also provide an opportunity for them to learn from key elements of Smart Cities, Smart Governance, Innovation and Delivery and international country practices shared by UN DESA.

### 6. Target Audience

The primary audience for the workshop will be Mayors and technical staff (Local Planning and Development Office) from the cities and municipalities in the Philippines. Key national government agencies, LGU Leagues, and development partners will also be invited.

## 7. Expected Outcomes

Forum outcomes may include:

- Uncover common challenges and roadblocks and formulate recommendations for effective national-to-local coordination and monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on the PDP 2023-2028
- Generate greater engagement in the discourse surrounding multi-level governance and place it as a key element for SDG localization
- Raise awareness and understanding of foresight concepts and uses in public institutions
- Provide insights on using the UN DESA toolkit on smart cities

### Thematic Areas

#### Session 1 – Multi-level Governance for SDG Localization

2023 marks the mid-point in the implementation of the SDGs before the 2030 deadline, and efforts to achieve the desired outcomes must be increased. Local and regional governments have been crucial in addressing the impacts of current global challenges such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and prolonged conflicts, focusing on recovery and development that prioritizes care. Experience from the implementation process has shown that the 2030 Agenda must be put into action at the local level. Achieving the SDGs is only possible if healthy and effective multi-level governance systems are in place.

The session's objective is to generate greater engagement in the discourse surrounding multi-level governance, placing it as a key element for SDG localization and defining concrete actions to accelerate the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda.

#### Session 2 – Overview of the PDP 2023-2028

This session will focus on the PDP 2023-2028, reflecting the government's policies, strategies, programs, and legislative priorities for the next six years. NEDA will provide an overview of the goals and targets of the plan as well as key strategies and approaches to its implementation.

#### Session 3 – National Government Practices on SDG Implementation in the Philippines

The Government of the Philippines expanded and enhanced people-centered services to shield the most vulnerable from the worst impacts of the pandemic. The SDGs played an integral part in these efforts and remained at the core of the PDP even as it was updated to refocus on the health and resiliency of the country.

#### Session 4 – Leveraging on Strategic Planning and Foresight for Accelerating SDG Action

We are living in an exceptional time in terms of the pace of change and uncertainty around the world. This is particularly linked to the acceleration of technological development and the interaction with megatrends such as demographics, climate change, politics, and geopolitics. There is a need to develop capacities to plan 2030 national and local strategies in uncertain times and consider alternative future scenarios. Strategic planning and foresight are crucial for ensuring governments are prepared to handle future crises. While it is impossible to predict the future, strategic foresight offers the tools for successful policymaking in the face of high levels of uncertainty. This involves exploring and preparing for a diversity of possible developments to future-proof strategies, identifying potential opportunities and challenges, and designing innovative ways of improving well-being under rapidly evolving circumstances. As the world continues to deal with several challenges, including climate change and the COVID-19

pandemic, this session aims to raise awareness about strategic planning and foresight and introduce tools and approaches to support the design of adaptive and future-ready SDG national and local strategies.

### Session 5 – Sharing of LGU Innovative Practices for Sustainable Development

LGUs play a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation and achievement of the SDGs in the Philippines. This session will showcase local initiatives supporting the country's commitment and contribution to achieving the SDGs. Selected LGUs will be invited to share good local practices on SDG implementation, focusing on selected SDGs (SDG 2: Zero Hunger, SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 13: Climate Action).

### Session 6 – Smart Cities: Smart Governance Innovation and Delivery for Sustainable Urban Development

This session explores key elements of the UN DESA Smart Cities Toolkit. It will cover the topic of smart governance for sustainable development, looking at big data and frontier technologies from the perspective of data openness, citizen participation, and social inclusion. It will also discuss smart innovation as a core element of smart cities and services delivery for SDG implementation. Based on the Philippine experience, the session will formulate recommendations for the UN DESA Toolkit.

### Session 7 – Good Practices on Smart Cities Focusing on Smart Governance and Innovation

This session will showcase smart city technology, initiatives, and solutions by local governments in the international and local arenas. Good models and practices on smart city initiatives and breakthroughs to include the lessons learned from the experiences of the cities in the implementation of the smart city projects will be shared.

## 8. Agenda of the Forum

Effective Governance for SDG Implementation	
Time	Agenda Day 1
9:00-16:45	Wednesday, 26 April 2023
	<p>On Day 1, Mayors will gain an understanding of the PDP and discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by LGUs in coordinating multi-level governance for sector cooperation.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness and understanding of the PDP 2023-2028</li> <li>• Learn about SDG localization</li> <li>• Learn about the Principles for Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and UN DESA Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs</li> <li>• Learn about Strategic Planning and Foresight</li> <li>• Discuss how to enhance national to local coordination for the alignment of national and local plans</li> <li>• Identify areas and actions to integrate into the local development plans</li> </ul>

08:30-09:00 (30 mins)	<b>Registration, Coffee</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coffee</b></li> </ul>
09:00-09:25 (25 mins)	<b>Opening Session</b>  <b>Welcoming Remarks (5 min)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr.</i>, Mayor, Mandaluyong City</li> </ul> <b>Opening Remarks (5 min each)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Benjamin C. Abalos Jr.</i>, Secretary, DILG</li> <li>• <i>Mr. Kyu Chang Ko</i>, Head, UNPOG/UN DESA</li> <li>• <i>Mr. Gustavo González</i>, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, UNDP (tbc)</li> </ul> <b>Group Photo (5 min)</b>
09:25-09:55 (30 mins)	<b>Setting the Scene: Global Trends &amp; Major Local Challenges on SDG Implementation</b>  <b>Moderator: Ms. Ana Thorlund</b> , Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the workshop (5 min)</li> <li>• <i>Ms. Adriana Alberti</i>, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, DPIDG/UN DESA (10 mins) (TBC)</li> </ul> <b>Q&amp;A (15 mins)</b>
09:55-10:40 (45 mins)	<b>Session 1 – Multi-level Governance for SDG Localization</b>  <b>Moderator: Mr Alex Brillantes</b> , Secretary-General, Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration Secretary-General (EROPA)  <b>Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and its Importance for SDG Implementation at the Local level (7 mins)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Cristina Rodriguez-Acosta</i>, Inter-Regional Advisor Public Administration DPIDG/UN DESA (tbc)</li> </ul> <b>Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation (10 mins)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Prabin Maharjan</i>, Programme Management Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</li> </ul> <b>Strengthening Urban Governance for SDG Localization (7 mins)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Brian H. Roberts</i>, Emeritus Professor, the University of Canberra, Australia (TBC)</li> </ul> <b>Q&amp;A (20 mins)</b>
10:40-10:55 (15 mins)	<b>Health/Coffee Break (15 mins)</b>

<p>10:55-11:20 (25 mins)</p>	<p><b>Session 2 – Overview of the PDP 2023-2028</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Anna Liza F. Bonagua, Director, DILG</i></p> <p><b>The Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Rosemarie G. Edillon, Undersecretary, NEDA (15 mins)</i> (TBC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A (10 mins)</b></p>
<p>11:20-12:30 (70 mins)</p>	<p><b>Session 3 – National Government Initiatives on SDG Implementation in the Philippines</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Anna Liza F. Bonagua, Director, DILG</i></p> <p><b>Status of the Philippines' SDG Implementation (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Rosemarie G. Edillon, Undersecretary, NEDA</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Monitoring Performance on SDG Implementation (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Dennis S. Mapa, National Statistician, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>DILG Initiatives on SDG Localization (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Marlo L. Iringan, Undersecretary for Local Government, DILG</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A (20 mins)</b></p>
<p>12:30-14:00</p>	<p><b>Lunch (90 mins)</b></p>
<p>14:00-15:00 (60 mins)</p>	<p><b>Session 4 – Leveraging on Strategic Planning and Foresight for Accelerating SDG Action</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Prabin Maharjan, Programme Management Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</i></p> <p><b>Principles of Effective Governance to Equip Public Institutions for Strategic Planning and Foresight (7 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Veronique Verbruggen, Inter-Regional Advisor, DPIDG/UN DESA (tbc)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Institutionalization of Strategic Foresight in Local Government for Better Policies (7 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dr. Trish Lavery, Strategic Foresight Analyst, Strategic Foresight Unit, OECD</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Enhancing Capacities of Public Institutions in Planning, Strategy and Policy for Future Unknown Shocks (7 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dr. Marius Oosthuizen, Practice Lead for Learning and Transformation, School of International Futures, UK</i></li> </ul>



	<p><b>Philippine Innovative Practices for Strategic Foresight (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dr. Dixon Yap, Former Mayor and Expert on Governance and Leadership</i> (or Development Academy of the Philippines)</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A (20 mins)</b></p>
15:00-15:20 (20 mins)	<b>Health/Coffee Break (20 min)</b>
15:20-16:20 (40 mins)	<p><b>Session 5 – Sharing of LGU Innovative Practices for Sustainable Development</b></p> <p><b>Moderator: Mr. Bong Antonio, UNDP-Philippines (tbc)</b></p> <p><b>Sharing of Innovative Practices of Local Governments on SDG Implementation in the Philippines (5 mins each)</b></p> <p><b>SDG 2: Zero Hunger</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Province of Davao del Norte (DavNor Kaagapay Project)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Province of Iloilo (Zero Open Defecation)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Pasig City (Resettlement Program)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>SDG 13: Climate Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Naga City (Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of SDGs in Naga City Camarines Sur)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A (20 mins)</b></p>
16:20- 16:35 (15 mins)	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Arsenio M. Balisacan, Secretary, NEDA</i></li> </ul>

Smart Cities: Smart Governance, Innovation and Delivery for Sustainable Urban Development	
Time 9:00-12:30	Day 2: Thursday, 27 April 2023
	<p>On Day 2, key elements of becoming smart and sustainable cities and communities will be discussed.</p> <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the key elements of smart cities: smart governance, innovation, and delivery for SDG implementation</li> <li>• Formulate recommendations for the toolkit based on the Philippine experience</li> </ul>
08:30-09:00 (30 min)	<p><b>Morning Coffee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coffee</b></li> </ul>

09:00-09:10 (10 min)	<p><b>Introduction for the Day</b></p> <p><i>Ms. Ana Thorlund, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (10 mins)</i></p>
09:10-10:30 (80 mins)	<p><b>Session 6 – UN DESA Draft Toolkit on Smart Cities</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Prabin Maharjan, Programme Management Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</i></p> <p><b>Case Studies Presentation, Key Elements of Smart Governance, Innovation and Delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Ana Thorlund, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (80 mins)</i></li> <li>• <i>Presentation of Songdo Smart City, by Incheon Metropolitan City</i></li> </ul>
10:30-10:45 (15 mins)	<p><b>Health/Coffee Break (15 min)</b></p>
10:45-10:11:45 (60 mins)	<p><b>Session 7 – Good Practices of Smart Cities Focusing on Smart Governance and Innovation</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Joel Lasam (DILG)</i></p> <p><b>Presentation from invited cities (International) (30 mins)</b></p> <p><b>Presentation on the Smart City Initiatives in the Philippines (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Lilian A. De Leon, Assistant Secretary for International Relations, DILG</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Presentation of smart city initiatives of Philippines cities (Philippines) (20 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Baguio City</i></li> <li>• <i>Cauayan City</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Plenary Discussion</b></p>
11:45-12:30 (45 mins)	<p><b>Closing of the Forum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Governor Dakila Carlo E. Cua, National President, Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Kyu Chang Ko, Head, UNPOG/UN DESA</i></li> </ul>
12:30	Lunch

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