



Section 1: Major development or political and economic events that have influenced the work of the UNCT

The Philippine economy is on a high growth trajectory of 6.2 percent in the third quarter of 2019 after two quarters of sluggish growth attributed to delayed passage of the 2019 budget and ban on public works and other spending leading up to the May elections. The country is projected to hit its economic growth lower-end target of 6 to 7 percent for 2019, driven by faster household consumption and easing inflation. Poverty incidence declined from 28 to 21 percent in 2015 and 2018, respectively. The administration targeted to reduce poverty incidence to 17.3 to 19.3 percent in 2018, further down to 14 percent by 2022.

Landmark legislation and policies were passed such as the Universal Health Care Act that automatically enrolls all Filipinos citizens in the National Health Insurance Program and prescribes complementary reforms in the health system; the Implementing Rules and Regulations for the Health and Nutrition of the Mother and Child Act providing a sustainable strategy to address health and nutrition needs in the first 1000 days of life; the Expanded Maternity Leave Act (Republic Act/RA 11210) granting working mothers the extension of paid maternity and generating broader commitment/action towards promoting gender equality and women empowerment. Meanwhile, the passage of the Rice Tarrification Act (RA 11203) aimed to ensure availability of cheaper rice in the market and hasten reforms in the agricultural sector inadvertently led to huge losses to farmers unable to compete with cheaper imported rice.

Policies to consolidate government resources and efforts have been approved such as the signing of Executive Order (EO) 12 enjoining all of government to support implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law; EO 71 reorganizing POPCOM into a Commission on Population and Development and providing for an integrated, holistic and people-centered approach to the implementation of related policies and programs; and creation of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development as the sole and main planning and policy-making, regulatory, program coordination, and performance monitoring entity for all housing, human settlement and urban development concerns facilitating the convergence of urbanization related matters. The government is set to submit its Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC in December 2019 or January 2020 which could serve as the framework for UN joint work/partnership with development partners, along with the updated National Climate Change Action Plan.

The Philippines has struggled with a number of health emergencies, including a dengue epidemic, polio outbreak and measles outbreak that indicate a number of systematic structural challenges in country's health system. The dengue epidemic was the largest in the history of monitoring the disease with Northern Mindanao among the hardest hit regions. After being eradicated in 2000, the Philippines saw the return of polio, with 8 confirmed cases as of November.

The government's campaign against illegal drugs continue to give cause for concern. So do a shrinking democratic space and pressure on constitutional safeguards, political opposition, civil

society and media. Civil society sources report between 25,000 and 30,000 deaths associated with the “war on drugs”, in stark contrast with official figure (5,526 as of July 2019) on deaths in connection with law enforcement operations since mid-2016. The authorities insist that internal investigations on complaints and potential violations are taking place but cannot be confirmed by independent sources. The Police Commissioner who stepped down a few weeks before retirement was under Congressional investigation for alleged involvement in re-selling confiscated drugs. The concern of the international community culminated in the UN Human Rights Council passing a resolution in July 2019 requesting the High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on the human rights situation in the Philippines in June 2020. The resolution resulted in increased sensitivity to work around human rights issues at the country level, triggering the administration to pass a memorandum for all government agencies to suspend negotiations for new loans and grants from the 18 countries that voted in favor of said resolution with notable caveats e.g. except for funds channeled through multilateral facilities. The President recently appointed the Vice President as co-chair of the government’s Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Illegal Drugs but was removed within three weeks amidst criticism from the President and his political allies on her meetings with foreign critics of the President’s anti-drug war including UNODC, and her request for info on the high-value “drug lord” targets.

The administration continues with approaches that undermine the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, democratic institutions and freedom of expression. The national elections consolidated the power of the President and current administration. The President has over the last years increasingly brought in retired military officers to lead civilian functions including the Office of the President on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Individuals with critical voices (e.g. journalists, clerics, teachers, human rights and land rights advocates, trade unions, indigenous peoples/IPs,) and legitimate NGOs, including UN partners, continue to be red-tagged as communist “front organizations” leading to harassment, intimidation and EJK by persons unknown. Since the President signed EO 70 in December 2018 instituting a “whole of nation” approach including a “localized peace framework” in ending the communist insurgency, there has been a significant increase in red-tagging and issuance of search warrants as part of the crackdown on the Communist insurgency led by retired military generals in OPAPRU, DILG, the National Security Council and Department of National Defence. IPs protecting their ancestral domains are also facing increased pressure from priority infrastructure projects under the government’s “Build, Build, Build” program (e.g. Kaliwa Dam project).

The passage of Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2018, approval by plebiscite in existing ARMM and contiguous regions in January 2019, and subsequent establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) government in March 2019 marked historic progress towards peace and stability in Mindanao. However, many challenges lie ahead for both Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) and the national government in terms of implementing the normalization process, defining remaining grey areas in Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, realizing quick peace and development dividends and managing very high expectations of the people.

Intra-Moro dynamics is emerging as a new threat in BARMM in addition to the known terrorist and armed groups with links to the Islamic State/IS (e.g. Abu Sayyaf Group, Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, Maute Group, Ansar al-Khilafa Philippines). The unfulfilled aspirations of the Moros in 6 municipalities in Lanao del Norte province to join BARMM may complicate the decommissioning process and add to the conflict dynamics in the region. Clashes between the armed forces and the New People’s Army (NPA) continue in Eastern Mindanao with some NPA

activity in Central Mindanao including Iligan. Two years since the liberation of Marawi, the frustration of Maranao people remains high over the slow progress on Marawi rehabilitation and is a potent driver of radicalization. 2019 saw an increase in attacks on civilians by IS linked groups. Government forces will continue security operations against violent extremist groups, anticipating further attacks given ongoing IS attention to Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines.

In 2019, the emphasis was on establishing the new BARMM and beginning decommissioning of the MILF in earnest – 7,000 of the envisaged 12,000 combatants in phase 2 have been decommissioned (total of 40,000 combatants). There were delays in other aspects of the normalization process, with OPAPRU (main government agency overseeing the implementation of the peace process, including normalization) undergoing significant staffing changes losing its institutional memory and experienced staff in the process. Implementation of the other aspects of normalization, including decommissioning, camp transformation, transitional justice and amnesties, is expected to start in 2020. While the MILF works on the decommissioning of its combatants, the MNLF appears to be seeking a further role in security and politics, especially in the Sulu Archipelago and non-BARMM area of the Central Mindanao.

Significant political challenges remain as the BTA seeks to quickly build its governance capacities and institutional structures with slow progress in drafting and ratifying seven priority codes (administration, civil service, local government, elections, revenue collection, education, IP rights). On a positive note, the BTA has approved its first expanded budget funded by the block grant for 2020 with education, health and sanitation, food security, environmental protection, and infrastructure as priority programs. With challenges to sustainable peace and development on multiple fronts, UN support is aimed at supporting the BTA in a successful transition to normalization in BARMM.

The country remained to be highly vulnerable to climate change and disasters. In 2019, 18 tropical cyclones affected the Philippines particularly Northern Luzon, Eastern Visayas, and Eastern Mindanao. The resulting heavy rains and flash floods affected an estimated quarter of a million people. A series of high intensity earthquakes occurred in Mindanao towards the end of 2019 impacting heavily on the population, many of whom are expected to be displaced for at least a year

Section 2: Progress on the Reform

2.1 Any change in the Government's response towards the UNCT in response to the reform environment during the year

The Government continues, in most part, to recognize the UNCT in the Philippines as its trusted partner in policy/upstream work, capacity development and source of “good global practices” adaptable to the Philippine context as well as an honest broker towards inter-sectoral and multi-level consensus and partnerships on sensitive issues, in development and humanitarian work, and a more nuanced approach in peacebuilding. Perceived changes stem from changes in government, the political context and are issue-specific rather than in response to the reform environment. On preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism, the UN is a trusted and valued partner, but is seen by some members of the administration in a less positive light on the “war on drugs.” With the new senior management in OPAPRU, dominated by former

generals who are less familiar with international organizations well as peacebuilding, there has been less access and joint planning compared to 2018. However in humanitarian interventions, the UN continues to have good relations with the armed forces on the ground.

The Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (PFSD), as agreed with the Government, underscored the primacy of a strengthened UN Cooperation Framework as the most important instrument for planning and implementation of UN development activities in country. In a conversation with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the UNDAF is found to be an old development paradigm and a poor match in the context of the Philippines as a middle-income country. Therefore, the PFSD highlights the progression of the UN - Philippines nature of engagement from that of a “development assistance” to a collaboration in a “strategic partnership”. It builds on decades of close cooperation between the Philippines and the United Nations for the achievement of national and global development objectives, focusing on areas where the capacities of the UN, when working across mandates, will have the greatest impact. As an initial investment in the longer-term UN support to 2030 Agenda, it recognizes the strengths and capacities of the Philippine government and focuses on historically challenging areas that are foundational to SDGs to complement Philippines-led efforts towards acceleration.

In light of the UN Reform, the government expects the UNCT to continue to support the Philippine Government in achieving the Philippine Development Plan goals and the *Ambisyon Natin* 2040 vision by working as one - more effectively and efficiently - under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator; and applying the ‘new way of working’ - the triple nexus (humanitarian-peacebuilding and development).

Following last year’s approval of the PFSD, a joint GPH-UN management arrangement was institutionalized to enhance efficient joint oversight, increase alignment with Government mechanisms, ensure government ownership of UN support to GPH, and confirm the UN’s commitment to address government priorities. The joint oversight and leadership is reinforced with GPH and UN co-convening of the National Steering Committee (NSC) at strategic level and the Joint Results Groups (JRGs) at operational level.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has confirmed that the Philippines would like a new host country agreement (*beyond applying the UNDP SBAA mutatis mutandis*) for the Resident Coordinator System at country level being now a “separate entity with distinct mandate and functions from UNDP”. While this may open a Pandora’s box, it could also present an opportunity to set the RC system fully in the spirit of the repositioning of the UN development system in its relations with the host country.

2.2 Any change perceived by international development partners/donors towards the UNCT in response to the UN reform during this year

With UN Reform, there is an expectation for the UNCT to work together as one under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. The UNCT plays a leading/convenor role on behalf of development partners/donors in humanitarian and in peacebuilding work.

Recognizing mutual interests as development partners in the Philippines and the important support channeled by donors through members of the UN family, the RC convened a meeting with development partners to brief about UN development system reform and the repositioning of the UN development system with the intentions of better performance in support of the 2030

Agenda, as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/72/279, and linked to it the roll-out of the new PFSD. Reactions amongst those that attended were positive and indicated a willingness to engage further. Together with the UN co-convener and alternate co-convener agencies there is opportunity to follow up the conversation and step into more details of the PFSD pillars and financing strategy.

To further strengthen synergies with IFIs, a meeting with the World Bank (WB) was convened at the request of the Resident Coordinator to find ways to better connect the PFSD with the their preparation of Systematic Country Diagnostics and Country Partnership Framework, and explore areas of shared appreciation and analysis for joint efforts in support of priority SDGs and national priorities. The PFSD conveners and alternate co-conveners will continue to engage with the WB focal points to highlight existing cooperation and opportunities for further collaboration and synergies.

Conversations around financing and financing are taking place both within the UNCT and with key development partners. There is recognition that the realization of the UN reform will entail a change in behavior not only from within the UN system but also by host countries and other partners, donors in particular. More needs to be done on the funding compact and expectations from Member States to see efficiencies from the reform, including on PFSD financing strategies. With only a handful of traditional donors in-country, there is acute risks of UNCT coming across as uncoordinated in its approaches to donors especially since all UN agencies are under pressure from their regions and headquarters to sustain themselves and all are measured on pipeline and delivery. On the other hand, donors are still used to working in bilateral relationships with UN agencies along one grant, one agency, one project. Australia, the biggest bilateral grant aid donor in the Philippines, is a lone positive example so far who have expressed an interest in fewer projects, more programmes and offered support in their funding decisions for better coordination amongst UN organizations.

2.3 Any change in the UNCT's work in response to the new reform environment during this year

Central to all UNCT meetings is a deeper understanding of The Why (origins, motivations behind the form), The What (practical implications: demands, challenges and opportunities) and The How (discussions on way forward) of the UN reform. The discussions underscored that change is not in the powers bestowed upon the RC but on the new ways of working under the UN reform. The UNCT were enjoined to keep eyes on the spirit of the UN development system reform more than the mechanics by focusing on what the team can do to make the change happen, to connect opportunities and respond to the call for greater coherence and efficiency in the mode of UN system engagement in line with the ambition, effectiveness and cohesion required by the 2030 Agenda.

Through the PFSD, the 17 different specialized funds, programmes, and projects that comprise the UNCT in the Philippines – individually and more so collectively - bring a broad range of mandates and comparative advantages to the table, providing stimulus along mutually reinforcing pillars of People, Prosperity and Planet, and Peace. These pillars are co-convened between member of the Country Team, and a representative of a Government Agency, ensuring the Philippines' ownership of the progress we together achieve. Internal PFSD coordination structures have been established to support the implementation of the PFSD in line with the Delivering as One strategy in the Philippines. These are the UN Results Group, the Management Support and Thematic Groups with a Results Coordination Group supporting inter-pillar

coordination, learning and synergies and mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes as well as the preparation of meetings of the PFSD National Steering Committee.

On its first year of implementation, there are some evidences that the PFSD is coming to life. There is increased impetus and more proactive push for joint work as evidenced by the collaboration of various agencies in cross-cutting/thematic areas. These include joint initiatives on youth initiatives (e.g. Integrated Support Platform for the Bangsamoro Youth with UNDP and ILO), development of possible joint programs (e.g., on LNOB and social protection with FAO and UNICEF; adolescent pregnancy with UNICEF and WHO), establishment of thematic inter-agency groups on Gender and LNOB and Human Rights to enable better coordination and integration of core values in programs. There has also been a push towards adopting and implementing a zero budget Business Operations Strategy, to improve efficiency in the long run, by UNCT.

The UNCT convened a mini-retreat to provide an opportunity for a conversation on the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) towards a common understanding of its provisions, and highlight some changes in UNCT actions as a team following some reflection on current practices. The MAF being a definitive guidance to country teams, the UNCT agreed not to have local adaptations such as “codes of conduct” or similar document. The discussions highlighted the need to find the right balance in working together while respecting the unique mandates of individual UN entities. This led to agreement on practical and concrete actions where the UNCT needs attention to demonstrate greater transparency and accountabilities for results. Conversations on the application of MAF will be a continuous exercise and be part of regular meetings of the UNCT. Agencies agreed to share HQ guidance on the implementation of MAF as further input to the dialogue within the UNCT.

2.4 Any new modalities of engagement with the DCO regional team, specifying positive aspects (for ex. ways in which agency has been supported) and challenges

The DCO regional team is supposed to serve as the secretariat for the UNSDG - agencies, funds and programs working on supporting countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda, addressing key challenges that transcend country borders such as health and environment. To date, it is the ASEAN Secretariat and the ESCAP that are working with statistical agencies in the ASEAN member-nations on harmonizing definitions, methodologies and classifying SDG indicators into tiers (i.e., Tiers 1 to 3). It was UN ESCAP that likewise supported the Philippines in its new role as chair of the ESCAP-led regional body that reviews the population and development declaration.

The DCO Regional Team has yet to lead the roll-out of the new UNSDCF guidance notes and its annexes to UNCTs preparing their UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The PFSD is one of the very last UNDAFs to have been developed under the current guidelines, ahead of the next generation of guidelines in the course of UN development system reform. Notwithstanding this, it is very much in line with the expectations of the reform and intent of the new guidelines. Another role that the DCO should play is on transboundary issues in Asia and the Pacific such as refugee issues, statelessness, trafficking especially of women and girls, dangerous drugs and firearms.

Section 3: Highlights on Progress on Joined Up Work

3.1. Three most significant achievements in delivering together for the 2030 Agenda

2019 marks the beginning of the new Philippines-UN Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (PFSD). While inequalities and non-discrimination is embedded in the new PFSD and the governance structure, it will require regular monitoring and capacity development activities to ensure its application. In this context the UNCT established the Theme Groups on Leaving No One Behind (LNOB); Gender; and Youth. The establishment of these groups will facilitate the inclusion and coordination of the UN's normative agenda and ensure that the focus on vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups remains at the center of the implementation of the Partnership Framework. The Theme Group on LNOB as a first step has engaged in an exercise to map particular individuals and groups identified in Country Programs and strategies as a preliminary vulnerability study. Led by UNFPA and UN WOMEN, the Gender Theme Group initiated work towards undertaking a gender scorecard exercise and use of gender markers as part of UN programming to further inform the Partnership Framework focus. The UN Youth Theme Group has mapped UN youth interventions across the three PFSD pillars and collected age-disaggregated data from different agencies, government organizations and civil society organizations into one common online library to produce a Philippine Youth Situationer for informed decision making by UN, partners and other stakeholders. A compilation of online courses and training on youth-related issues has also been developed, to strengthen agencies' expertise and capacity.

In 2019, the UNCT continued to make strides in influencing national policy and programs (leading to a passage of a law and roadmap for BARMM) as well as in mainstreaming UN core values in its work. In Food Security and Nutrition, UN efforts informed legislation for the First 1000 Days Law. The UN Network for Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) including UNICEF, WHO, WFP, FAO, worked with the National Nutrition Council (NNC), Department of Health (DOH), Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development and a technical multisectoral working group in the design and passing of Republic Act 11148 or "Health and Nutrition of the Mother and Child Act", within the first 1000 days and its Implementing Rules and Regulations launched in 2019. The Network also provided technical support to the Scaling Up Nutrition secretariat led by the NNC and DOH to enhance the roll out of Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition, including its Common Results Framework, focused on stunting reduction. Extensive technical assistance was provided in the development of sub-national localized Plans of Action for Nutrition.

The medium-term Bangsamoro Roadmap for Health 2019-2022 and the Bangsamoro Transition Youth Priority Agenda 2020-2023 of the BARMM Ministry of Health and the Office of Bangsamoro Youth Affairs, respectively, were developed through the collaborative work of the different UN agencies. For health in particular, the strategic planning process was co-facilitated by WHO and UNFPA, with technical inputs provided by UNICEF, UNAIDS, WFP, FAO, IOM and UNODC. A UN Health Working Group for BARMM, chaired by WHO, together with FAO, IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP was formed to provide support to the region to achieve the health, food and nutrition security. FAO worked closely with WHO on initiatives on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) through the Inter-agency committee on AMR (ICAMR). FAO and WHO collaborated in advocacy for the AMR agenda for human and animal health sectors through the One Health Approach. This included enhancing the National Action Plan (2019-2023) to combat AMR, Antibiotic Awareness Week (annual), and ICAMR meetings. FAO and WHO also fostered partnerships with the national food safety regulatory agencies, to promote consumer awareness on food safety through visibility and capacity building interventions.

3.2 Support to national government in advancing the achievement of the SDGs and activities related on the 2030 agenda

The Philippines, together with 47 other countries, presented its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs to the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Focus has been given to synergies between government and non-government actions that empower people and ensure inclusiveness and equality, particularly on deliberate efforts to reach out to the marginalized sector. The UN, through ILO, UNICEF, and UNDP, supported government agencies (e.g. NEDA, Philippine Institute for Development Studies, Department of Labor and Employment, Council for the Welfare of Children) in the conduct of several consultation workshops to gain feedback from stakeholders and to engage and renew commitments for cooperation towards the achievement of the goals which served as inputs to the report. Among others, these include a separate trade union and workers' organization review leading to the workers VNR report; Support to NEDA and PIDS on SDG target setting and regional consultations of the VNR Report; private sector reporting against the SDGs; and drafting of two pilot local SDG reports.

The Country Team supported advocacy and national government service delivery along various fronts. The UN, through UNICEF, FAO, ILO and WFP, supported the development of the Enhanced Social Protection Operational Framework of the Philippines which was approved by the Social Development Committee - Cabinet level in February 2019. The Framework integrates the Social Protection Floor as one of its strategies in expanding social protection in the country and highlights its link with the SDGs, specifically SDG Target 1.3 (Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable). In addition, FAO, WFP and UNICEF will implement a project funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations on "Scaling up Forecast based Financing/Early Warning Early Action and Shock Responsive Social Protection with innovative use of climate risk information for disaster resilience in ASEAN". This serves as an avenue for leveraging the combined efforts, resources and expertise of FAO, UNICEF and WFP. As a follow-on to this, UNICEF and FAO recently submitted a proposal for the Joint SDG Fund on Social Protection, titled, 'Ensuring inclusive and risk-informed shock responsive social protection resulting in more resilient communities in BARMM. It contributes to the achievement of SDG Goal 1 (End Poverty) and Goal 2 (Zero Hunger) Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

Following support to the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC) in the development of the 2018 Philippine HIV and AIDS Policy Act (Republic Act No. 111661) and its IRR, the Joint Team on AIDS, composed of UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC, UNFPA is supporting the DOH in the development of policies and guidelines that would introduce new innovations in HIV prevention, testing and treatment as well as address barriers to access of services related to health insurance, stigma and discrimination, services in jails and other closed-settings. Priority HIV and AIDS Interventions sites identified by the DOH have been assisted in the development of local investment plans. Organizations of men and women people living with HIV, men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, young people and transgender people have been trained on legal and rights literacy and are being capacitated to engage in advocacy to demand greater access to quality services.

For concerns around non-communicable diseases, UNIDO, in collaboration with WHO and UNICEF, developed the Health and Pollution Action Plan to augment and strengthen the country's National Environment and Health Action Plan by identifying and recommending

priority areas and project concept notes that will help address these priority issues. UNIDO together with WHO developed the IRR for the implementation of EO 489 that institutionalized the Inter-agency Committee on Environmental Health.

The Philippines with the support of the UN has adopted and improved a number of laws to extend social protection coverage or enhance benefit adequacy, which includes the Expanded Maternity Leave Act, Social Security Act of 2018, Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) Act, Universal Health Care Act, among others. UN also continued to advocate for greater inclusivity – for example, UNHCR and WHO jointly submitted a position paper to highlight the protection concerns of asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons as persons of concern who also need to be covered by the Universal Health Care Law, given that these groups are especially vulnerable and are at risk of being further left behind if not included.

UNDP, UNICEF, UNODC, UNWOMEN and the RCO supported the government with technical assistance in developing the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP P/CVE) and provided sustained, coordinated support during the finalization of the NAP which was endorsed by the Anti-Terrorism Council in May 2019. Through the Peace Pillar and the PVE sectoral group, the UNCT aligned its current and future interventions to the NAP addressing gaps that were identified during the development of the NAP e.g. deradicalization and reintegration of violent extremist offenders detainees and PVE programs in the Bangsamoro island provinces where youth are more susceptible to recruitment (UNDP, UNODC, IOM). The UN's coordinated response to P/CVE extends to non-resident agencies, including UNOCT and CTED resulting in the development of a UN program of P/CVE support in collaboration with UNOCT and CTED at the national and Bangsamoro levels including supporting capacity building and training of national govt officials and CSOs. This included capacity-building workshops for national security and intelligence agencies on the use of social media and cybersecurity in P/CVE and with the communications officers of national departments and agencies to build national capacity on the use of strategic communications and creating context-relevant national narratives to counter violent extremist narratives. UNOCT will also develop the government's capacity implement the *Advanced Passenger Information/Passenger Name Record*.

Joint efforts by FAO, ILO, UNDP and UN-HABITAT also supported initiatives for climate action and building resilience, including implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) through the mainstreaming of climate change and disaster risk reduction in the updating of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan; operationalization of the National Urban Development and Housing Framework (NUDHF) and Green Jobs Act; formulation of the NDC implementation plan and its other thematic plans and National Plan of Action on Marine Litter; updating of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan; piloting the Climate and Disaster Exposure Database; capacity building of national agencies and local government units on resilient urban planning and design and in developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Adaptation; and the creation of platforms and mechanisms which includes the Climate Investment Network (CIN) and National Coordinating Mechanism to access the Green Climate Fund (GCF). During the 24th Board meeting of the GCF, the Philippines secured approval for its first GCF Project, with the Land Bank of the Philippines as the Direct Access Entity (DAE), in partnership with WFP. UNDP supported the Land Bank to secure accreditation from GCF.

3.3 Support to government and other stakeholders in building national capacity to implement human rights and other universal UN norms and standards, and progress in advocacy of human rights and other UN system values, standards, standards and principles.

The UNCT continued efforts at integrating a human rights-based approach into development and humanitarian work, and strengthening linkages with state institutions and civil society. The work in 2019 followed mainly the path set out in previous years, i.e. strong focus on concerns in the context of the Government's campaign against illegal drugs. However, attention has also been given to issues around democratic institutions and shrinking civil society space. In the advocacy efforts and technical cooperation in the context of the Government's campaign against illegal drugs, the UNCT is strongly guided by the human rights norms, standards and principles and is using these to influence the Government to move from a "national security" focused approach to a broader "public health" approach. Over the years, some progress on this has been noted in particular among more technical government agencies such as DOH and local government representatives. The appointment of the Vice President as co-Chair of the Government's Anti-illegal Drug Committee in early November 2019 is a positive move and can further influence a move towards stronger public health approaches. Work in this area is led by UNODC and WHO together with various development partners and civil society actors. However, when it comes to the issues of accountability for potential human rights violations committed by law enforcement agents the progress is non-existing, and the political leadership de facto continues to foster an environment of impunity. The authorities have published information in relation to administrative sanctions and internal investigations into complaints and concerns but such information cannot be confirmed by independent sources. The Human Rights Council in July 2019 passed a resolution calling for a comprehensive report by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Philippines. The UNCT has been requested to contribute and is currently preparing an input.

Advocacy efforts and calls for alignment with international human rights standards have also been used in the context of freedom of opinion and expression, arbitrary detention, independence of judiciary etc. General elections in May 2019 consolidated the power of the President and the executive branch and the Administration is now in a position to influence all democratic institutions, including the Senate that previously had a noteworthy opposition. Influence has been seen in various legislative issues, court proceedings, decision and work of the Office of the Ombudsman. On these areas, the UNCT through the HRA liaises with OHCHR and various Special Procedures mechanisms at the international level. These issues have also been raised in the context of the Inter-Agency Task Force under the Human Rights Upfront (HRUF) and in Regional Quarterly Reviews.

The UNCT in February 2019, endorsed the institutionalization of human rights work within the UN Country Team setting up a structure for monitoring, analysis, reporting and potential action related to human rights developments in the country. This structure is being used for preparing a UNCT confidential contribution towards the Human Rights Council report. The UN system, led by UNDP, continues to work towards the establishment of a "human rights facility" or "social contract platform" to support national actors on human rights work. Such a facility would provide a platform for stakeholder consultations, overall agenda setting and resource mobilization. It is planned that the facility be launched before the end 2019.

Good working relations continue to be maintained with the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Presidential Human Rights Committee regardless of highly sensitive political environment, in particular after the Human Rights Council resolution. This relationship remains important in

channeling UN's concerns on human rights development to the respective authorities. The UN is working with the authorities to organize a set of events to support a Human Rights-Based Approach implementation of the 2030 Agenda and follow-up to outcomes from international human rights mechanisms. The first event is planned for latter part of the November 2019. The two following parts are scheduled for January and February 2020.

One of the main external stakeholders for technical support and on-going engagement is the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and cooperation continues on a range of human rights issues. CHR is the only democratic institution that tends to function independently which also results in harassment and intimidations. Engagement provides the CHR with authority and legitimacy in times when human rights work is highly sensitive and the CHR continues to be under political attacks. The UN also supported a National Inquiry on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights with focus on Women with Disabilities, in partnership with the CHR.

With regard to civil society, UN continued to provide support to awareness raising and capacity development on international human rights law, standards and use of the UN human rights mechanisms. Issues such as monitoring and documenting human rights violations, human rights defenders, extra-judicial killings, anti-terrorism and prevention of violent extremisms, review of legislation, SDGs and human rights, land rights and environmental issues and protection of civilians in the context of armed conflict, particularly indigenous peoples (IPs) are among on-going topics and work. The UN, through the HRA, inter alia, i) supported events to follow-up to recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review; ii) engaged in the briefings and activities related to inputs the Human Rights Council report; iii) engaged in the supporting land-rights-, environmental- and climate change activists to link up with human rights actors and mechanisms; iv) facilitated meetings and activities between OHCHR Regional Office and actors in the Philippines; v) engaged in advocacy efforts around the age of criminal responsibility and death penalty; and vi) served as resource persons in events at the margins of the Human Rights Day (December 2019). Engagement with civil society is important and provides them with support and protection in times when human rights work is highly sensitive and the space for civil society engagement is shrinking.

Other thematic groups have also worked in the human rights space. To enable UNYAB members to effectively provide a youth lens in the mainstreaming of youth concerns, the UNYTG provided technical support and orientation on: Human Rights based approach, UN values and principles with a focus on "leaving no one behind", SDGs, the strategic approach and programming priorities under the new Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development, UN Principles and UN Agency Initiatives on Youth under the PFSD's strategic pillars. UN Women has also collaborated with CSOs and members of the judiciary to support a human rights and CEDAW-based approach to strengthening women's access to justice in the context of poverty and drug crime.

3.4 Progress on preparedness, crisis, and Post-crisis transition results achieved in cooperation with UN peacekeeping, peacebuilding, political and humanitarian actors

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), composed of UN agencies, international and national NGOs, donors and the private sector, continued to monitor humanitarian developments in the country and focus on preparedness activities for natural disasters. Through the Humanitarian Needs and Resources Overview for Marawi with revised 2019 funding requirements of \$28 million, the HCT continued to advocate for the residual humanitarian needs of 66,000 people who remain displaced. As of October 2019, key donors contributed \$21 million of assistance,

mainly for response activities in Marawi. As part of preparedness activities, the HCT developed a Minimum Operations Protocol for typhoon emergencies that serves as a guide for humanitarian community in case of mid-scale and higher emergencies. Elements of the protocol were activated when a series of earthquakes struck some of the poorest parts of Mindanao in October 2019 and displaced over 265,000 people. The HCT prepared a Humanitarian Needs and Priorities document reflecting its response strategy in support of the government and with financial requirements of some \$20 million for an initial period of six months.

In Mindanao, different categories of conflict and natural disasters converge, resulting inter alia, in new population displacements due to natural disasters such as the recent earthquakes, recurring cycles of short-term displacement due to ongoing security operations e.g. the SPMS box in Maguindanao or horizontal clan conflicts, and residual/protracted displacement due to intensive, long-duration conflict e.g. IDPs from the Zamboanga siege of 2013 have yet to find durable solutions; Marawi is the latest example. Rebuilding Marawi initiatives which surface multi-dimensional land and property issues indicate the need for humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus interventions. The protection strategy which is being implemented, including identifying durable solutions to Housing, Land and Property (HLP) to address protracted displacement in Marawi is a good example. However integrated nexus/durable solutions are required across sectors and are underway via the PFSD Peace Pillar.

At the end of 2018, in response to the fast-evolving peace process on the political, security and normalization tracks, and advent of the BTA, the UNCT decided to develop a unified UN strategy to support the BTA via the Peace Pillar, prioritizing technical assistance with institutional capacity development of the BTA and BARMM, service delivery to communities and building a multi-stakeholder culture of peace as best way to consolidate peace via supporting a successful transition between 2019–2022. The RCO Peacebuilding team which provides technical support to the Peace Pillar, undertook a broad mapping exercise of current and planned UN activities in support of the BTA and BARMM to promote greater coherence and integration of UN initiatives and to serve as baseline for the design of new support projects, including peacebuilding projects facilitated by the PDA. This resulted in transitional justice and reconciliation (TJR) being identified as a priority for UN support where the UN agencies can bring integrated added value e.g. enhancing the protection strategy on HLP with a transitional justice lens in keeping with the HDP nexus. The mapping identified sectors where UN agencies can better coordinate and synergize their interventions including TJR; Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and Rule of Law (ROL); Health; Employment and Agriculture. The mapping further identified eight BTA ministries and agencies (out of total 15 ministries) which several UN agencies work with and identified one UN agency as focal point per ministry which would convene regular meetings with other agencies to promote integration of efforts, avoid duplication and reduce transaction costs for the BTA ministries.

The regional/multisectoral scope of the Peace Pillar (BARMM and BTA) distinguishes it from the other two pillars and lends itself to the HDP nexus way of working. The downsizing of OCHA, including closing its sub-office in Cotabato (Mindanao) by end of 2021 even as development entities, many of which also implement humanitarian programs, are looking to scale up their engagement in Bangsamoro has presented the UNCT with a further opportunity to better integrate the work of the Peace Pillar and the HCT. As a result, the HCT looked is identifying more sustainable solutions, to both man-made conflict, with an initial focus on Marawi, as well as for natural disasters and revising its TOR to be more inclusive of development and peacebuilding actors. In a related move, the RCO Peacebuilding team and OCHA are working on TOR for an Area Coordination Support Office in Cotabato which the current OCHA office will

gradually transition into over the course of 2020. This “rebranding” will expand OCHA sub-Office’s existing mandate/TOR to include coordination related to development and peacebuilding in Bangsamoro (and potentially broader Mindanao) until 2022 with financial and personnel support from the RCO. This will further operationalize the HDP nexus and enable the UN to better play its leading/convenor role of development partners/donors in humanitarian and in peacebuilding work for which there is significant demand. Other sections have already identified examples of UNCT joint approaches in BARMM due to the integrator function of the Peace Pillar in health, food security and nutrition and youth engagement inter alia. Examples of joint humanitarian approaches supported by the Peace Pillar and OCHA include building the technical capacity of the government, including BARMM, to assess humanitarian needs, manage and analyze data and produce information management products.

Whilst the communist insurgency, local conflicts and struggles for greater autonomy also occur in other parts of the Philippines, Mindanao remains the epicenter where the various types of conflict/armed groups co-exist or converge. Even with the Bangsamoro Peace process underway, violent extremism remains a real and potent threat to peace. UNDP, UNICEF, UNODC and UNWOMEN supported the government with technical assistance in developing the National Action Plan on P/CVE including a senior national consultant in the RCO funded by the PBF in 2018. In 2019, the PDA consolidated UN agency support under the Peace Pillar, deepened collaboration with the National Security Council by becoming a member of the NSC’s multi-sectoral Technical Working Group on the NAP and coordinated Peace Pillar technical inputs and presentations during the finalization of the NAP thus ensuring coordinated UN support to National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP P/CVE). The NAP P/CVE was endorsed by the Anti-Terrorism Council in May 2019 with the National Security Advisor publicly acknowledging the importance of the UN’s technical support. Through the Peace Pillar and the PVE sectoral group, the UNCT aligned its current and future interventions to the NAP addressing gaps that were identified during the development of the NAP e.g. deradicalization and reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders Detainees and PVE programs in the Bangsamoro island provinces where youth are more susceptible to recruitment (UNDP, UNODC, IOM). The UN’s coordinated response to P/CVE extends to non-resident agencies, including UNOCT and CTED resulting in the development of a UN program of P/CVE support in collaboration with UNOCT and CTED at the national and Bangsamoro levels including supporting capacity building and training of national govt officials and CSOs. On P/CVE the government and the NSC in particular recognizes the UNCT as a trusted partner in policy work, capacity development and a source of global best practice adaptable to the Philippine context not least because UN support is well-coordinated and the RCO, and by extension, the Peace Pillar, has become “a one-stop shop” for government and UN collaboration on P/CVE-related policy, capacity development and programing.

Mindanao has been under martial law since the 2017 Marawi siege by the pro-IS Maute terror group. Although initially set for 60 days, martial law has been extended twice until the end of 2019, because the security forces argued at the time that martial law was necessary to curb terrorism and threats of violence from communist guerrillas. Recently, the National Defence Advisor advised that if proposed amendments to the Human Security Act(HSA) of 2007 are passed by the Senate and Congress which would help the security forces identify terror suspects and build stronger cases against them, a further extension of martial law in Mindanao would not be necessary. A mission by CTED in October to assess the Philippines’ progress on following through with recommendations to strengthen its counter-terrorism capacity from the previous 2014 CTED assessment mission, with a focus on the HSA amendment, presented an opportunity for the PDA to facilitate a joint HQ (CTED and UNOCT)- UNCT recommendation to the

government which balanced human rights concerns that an amended HSA in the current political context would be used against individuals or groups with critical voices, with the need for a more robust legal framework to counter terrorism by proposing UN technical assistance on global best practice on HSA-related safeguards such as the definition of terrorism.

Part of the joint Prevention strategy included briefing CTED on the endorsement of the NAP P/CVE by the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) and the need to recommend the issuance of an Executive Order in order to ensure a dedicated budget to implement the NAP. This reinforced the positive relationship the UN has developed with the National Security Council, ATC and other security agencies by supporting the development of the NAP P/CVE (regarded as a regional benchmark) resulting in a request from the NSC for technical assistance with the HSA amendment bill.

3.5 Key challenges in your joint work collaborating so countries can achieve the SDGs

The national government's policy on refusing assistance from countries who supported the UN Human Rights Council resolution may likely have an adverse effect on resource mobilization in the short-term on the joint work on the SDGs and PFSD. In a confidential circular memorandum signed by the Executive Secretary, all departments (ministries), government agencies, government controlled corporations and financial institutions were directed to suspend negotiations and signing of loan and grant agreements with countries that voted for or sponsored the recent resolution of the Human Rights Council on the promotion and protection of human rights in the Philippines.

This follows from a recent general tightening of control over foreign assistance, with a circular memorandum to all departments requiring Special Authority from the President (SPA) prior to the negotiation and signing of agreements regardless of source. This is a significant impediment to as this has previously been done at the level of the relevant line department and NEDA. Discussions have been initiated to explore more streamlined approach based on PFSD and its joint workplans to ensure continued agility of the UN system in responding to demand from national counterparts while increasing the transparency of UN contribution to national development objectives.

Section 4: Results of Joint Approaches

4.1 Results of joint approaches by UNCT (to illustrate impact of joint work)

The PFSD pillars (Prosperity and Planet, People, and Peace) has enabled the UNCT to hone in and provide strategic technical assistance on a number of key areas to inform national policy development and implementation.

Under the PFSD People Pillar, the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) partnerships have enabled inroads in policy advocacy, including research to provide the evidence. FAO, UNICEF, WFP and RC office, with support from WHO provided technical guidance to the Cabinet Secretary on addressing Poverty, Hunger, and Food Insecurity and Undernutrition to contribute to SDGs particularly on achieving Zero Hunger, in line with the Expanded Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty Framework (PAHP). FAO, UNICEF, WFP, IFAD, and WHO are also developing a flagship publication, "State of FSN Report for the Philippines" to target a wide audience,

including policy-makers, international organizations, academic institutions and the public. It aims to support government entities, including the Zero Hunger Task Force, to make informed decisions and analytics for planning and programming interventions and enhancing enabling policies to promote FSN. FAO, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO are conducting a study on the status and determinants of FSN in poor urban areas in the Philippines. The cross-sectional household survey - the first of its kind in the Philippines - will be conducted in planned and unplanned poor communities in selected urban slums in Manila and Quezon City beginning next year.

FAO and WFP are supporting the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR) in BARMM with planning and development of their FSN roadmap. This collaboration aims to strengthen the capacity of MAFAR and the local government units to mainstream the FSN lens in their planning and programming activities. A series of workshops have been undertaken in the formulation of the Roadmap that integrates FSN in strategic programs and activities to reduce prevalence of malnutrition in the region.

In health, UNICEF and WHO have been working together to support the DOH in improving the quality of care for mothers and newborns both at the primary and referral facility levels. Gaps in the quality of healthcare for mothers and newborns are an important driver for continued maternal and neonatal mortalities. WHO, with substantial technical contributions from UNICEF, developed a quality of care assessment tool for primary health facilities and supported DOH in rolling it out across the country. Meanwhile, UNICEF, in partnership with WHO, has been working with PhilHealth to contract 27 referral facilities on the benefit package for premature babies (supply-side financing).

In the area of disability programming and injury prevention, UNICEF's and WHO's work complement each other to strengthen the health system. UNICEF and a local CSO Physicians for Peace have been working with PhilHealth and the DOH in the development and utilization of financing packages for children with mobility, developmental, hearing, and visual disabilities that cover assessment, assistive technology/devices, and rehabilitation services. Meanwhile, WHO is among the important technical contributors to the development of similar packages for the rehabilitation adults with disabilities. In the area of Child Road Traffic Injury Prevention, WHO and UNICEF have been collaborating as members of a technical working group drafting the IRR of RA11229, the Child Safety in Motor Vehicles Act of 2019.

The design and conduct of the teenage pregnancy summit held in the 3rd quarter of this year was informed by the position paper jointly drafted by UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO in 2018. The summit distilled concrete actions needed to address the alarming issue of teenage pregnancy across three major NGA's, namely, DepEd, DOH, and NEDA. With WHO in the lead, multi-agency support was also given to multisectoral consultation and the development of the investment case for the prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases in the country.

As the country faced outbreaks in measles and polio this year alone, UNICEF and WHO once again worked together in supporting the DOH in the planning and execution of the outbreak response. UNICEF supported the government mainly in the area of vaccine management, cold chain logistics, social mobilization and advocacy, guideline development, and monitoring at different phases of the campaign at national and subnational levels. WHO, on the other hand, supported surveillance and development of guidelines and standards. This collaboration resulted in satisfactory coverage in the initial round of the campaign for the National Capital Region and Mindanao, at 96 percent and 93 percent, respectively.

On cross-sectoral research, UNFPA and UNICEF, together with the Philippine Government and other partners, are conducting the Longitudinal Cohort Study on the Filipino Child. The study is an ongoing 15-year nationwide study that follows a group of 5,000 10-year old Filipinos as they transition from childhood towards adolescence and adulthood. The study which started in 2016, follows the target cohort until 2030, the end year of Agenda 2030 including the SDGs, when they become 24. The 3rd wave of data collection was completed in 2019. Initial analysis of the data has provided key insights on various issues that adolescents face such as bullying, stunting, disability, and teenage pregnancy. Subsequent policy notes were prepared and presented to government partners. The study continues to generate data and information regarding the health, wealth, education level, ethnicity, religion, safety and security, location, and vulnerability to disasters, etc of Filipino adolescents. Quantitative and qualitative data is being collected annually through household and community surveys, focus group discussions and case studies. The results of the study was the PSA National Forum, NEDA Regional Social Development Cluster Meeting, Multi-sectoral Consultation Meeting, and 3 Regional Forums in the Visayas. This study is not just unique in terms of its scope and ambition, but also in the collaborations and partnerships it fosters between the UN (UNFPA, UNICEF), development partners (Australia), and more importantly the Philippine Government (NEDA, DOH, DEPED, NYC, CWC, DSWD and PSA). Beginning in 2020, the Government will be co-funding the study with the UNFPA and its partners. The partnership goes beyond funding, as it also involves shared direction setting through the National Steering Committee for the Cohort Study.

In the area of ensuring economic growth and environmental sustainability (PFSD Prosperity and Planet Pillar), the collaboration of FAO and UNDP for the project on Integrating Agriculture in National Adaptation Plans enhanced government partners' (DA, DAR, DENR, PAGASA) perception and trust in the UN agencies as effective facilitators of systems change. The joint presence of FAO and UNDP improved the level of confidence in the technical advice offered by the UN through its projects, enabling a degree of influence in the improvement of government plans. Operationally, the collaboration also allowed for a more strategic use of project funds so activities, although done by respective agencies, are complementary and involve better representation. This also links to the support provided on enhancing the Philippines' Social Protection Operational Framework.

In the area of peacebuilding (PFSD Peace Pillar), Phase 2 of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project "Building Capacities for Sustaining Peace in Mindanao" was implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, and UN-Women. The joint project successfully supported the Insider Mediators' Group and the Bangsamoro Transition Commission before and during the process of the consideration of the Bangsamoro Organic Law by the Congress to help develop bridging language when needed; propose amendments to narrow gaps; and provide for the restoration of critical language that had been deleted in the initial Senate and House versions. In 2019, the Project supported advocacy work to generate mass base support for the ratification of the OLBARMM. Select civil society groups and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) are being assisted in their information dissemination and educational campaigns to increase awareness and understanding of the voting population on the salient features of the Organic Law. The Project also supported the development of a National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, anchored with the National Security Council as the technical lead and the Anti-Terrorism Council as the coordinating body. All relevant government agencies have participated, alongside representatives of faith-based and civic coalitions.

4.2 New partnerships formed in 2019

The reinvigorated relationship between the Global Compact Network Philippines (GCNP) – the local entity of UN Global Compact – and the UNCT in the conduct of the CEO SDG Circle Forum segment of “Sustainability Summit 2019: Empowering Corporate Actions through the SDGs” provided a trailblazing opportunity to better mobilize local business communities around the PFSD and acceleration of the 2030 Agenda/SDGs. Around 270 participants attended the Summit, with 90 of these being CEOs from top corporations – ranging from conglomerates to SMEs. The CEO Circle, in particular, provided the participants an exceptional space to build a set of “business talking points” for investing in the biggest market opportunities that support country-specific SDGs, all anchored on the three pillars of the PFSD: People (health and food security), Planet and Prosperity (climate action, decent work), and Peace (human rights, post-conflict development).

Building on the Peace Pillar mapping of UN interventions in BARMM and sector groups formed, several new partnerships were formed in FSN and social protection and health, these include: i) support to the Zero Hunger Task Force; ii) conducting study on food security and nutrition in urban slums; iii) overview on the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the Philippines; iv) support on FSN planning in BARMM Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR) and v) UN Health Working Group for BARMM, chaired by WHO, together with FAO, IOM, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP was formed to provide support to the new intuitions established in the health sector at the start of the year: vi) inclusive Risk-Informed and Shock Responsive Social Protection (RISRSP) resulting in more resilient communities in BARMM.

Also under the Peace Pillar, new collaborations were forged with HQ-based UNOCT and CTED on preventing and countering violent extremism(P/CVE). Facilitated by the PDA, a UNOCT mission participated in the multi-stakeholder consultations on the development of the National Action Plan P/CVE and met with national agencies on P/CVE capacity needs in December 2018 leading to 3 UNOCT-funded capacity-building workshops for national security and intelligence agencies on the use of social media and cybersecurity in P/CVE conducted in the Philippines and Japan in 2019. UNOCT also conducted a series of workshops with the communications officers of national departments and agencies to build national capacity on the use of strategic communications in the implementation of the National Action Plan on P/CVE and creating context-relevant national narratives to counter violent extremist narratives. PVE Stratcom champions were identified in the main national departments and agencies and UNOCT experts conducted ToT workshops to cascade the development of agency-relevant Stratcom on PVE. On the occasion of the CTED mission to the Philippines in October to assess the government’s counter-terrorism commitments and capacities, the PDA facilitated pre-and post-mission meetings which enabled the UNCT to brief the CTED on recent political and security-related developments, concerns that the amendment of the 2007 Human Security Act (HSA) required for prosecuting counter-terrorism activity could also lead to weaponizing the law and criminalizing dissent in the current political context and the need for an Executive Order to be issued for the effective implementation of the NAP P/CVE including an allocated budget. The briefing led to informed and constructive engagement with the government and recommendations from CTED re UNCT technical assistance on counter terrorism which the government has availed. Based on the success of joint activities on PVE in the Philippines, UNOCT is in the process of funding a senior consultant position in the RCO to work with the PDA in developing a joint UN program of P/CVE support in collaboration with UNOCT and CTED at the national and Bangsamoro levels. The Peace Pillar, via the PDA, will continue to provide political analysis and mapping of CT interventions to CTED for the formulation of CTED recommendations to the government.

Under the People Pillar working group, existing partnerships were strengthened; for non-communicable diseases (NCD), Universal Health Care (UHC), Sexual and Reproductive Health, and outbreak response for vaccine-preventable diseases. In addition, UNICEF and UNFPA renewed the partnership to support the third wave of data collection for the Longitudinal Cohort Study on the Filipino Child 2016-2023.

UN Women and UNODC forged a new collaboration on a number of initiatives including the implementation of the program Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Trafficking, Transnational Crime and Terrorism through Women's Empowerment in South East Asia. A mirror thematic group on youth was established in Cotabato, Mindanao. The group is in the process of establishing terms of reference and work plan, following the example of the Manila's group, and it will closely work with OBYA on the development of the Bangsamoro Transition Youth Priority Agenda 2020-2023.

4.3 Results of joint resource mobilization

In line with the UN Development System reform, the PFSD provides a center point for joint resource mobilization efforts towards shared results in support of national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda.

Under the PFSD People Pillar, the Joint SDG Fund proposal developed by FAO and UNICEF on "Ensuring inclusive and risk-informed shock-responsive social protection resulting in more resilient communities in BARMM" intends to serve as a catalyst for transformative change by strengthening the enabling environment that will support the institutionalization of RISRSP system for BARMM. The aim is to enable the poorest, most vulnerable population and marginalized in the region to mitigate risks, better prepare, and appropriately respond to various shocks and stress through a robust social protection system. This initiative is expected to accelerate results for SDGs 1, 2, 10, and 11, and support the key principle of LNOB.

The joint program is among the 36 approved concept notes out of the 114 submissions received by the Joint SDG-Fund Secretariat. If successful, the Joint SDG Fund for the Philippines, will boost resources available for BARMM as it undergoes the transition. The transition period (2019-2021) presents an important opportunity for the new government and the people of BARMM to define a development agenda, create institutional structures and provide the fiscal space which will respond to its unique context.

A proposal for a Joint Program on Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy has also been developed collaboratively by UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO. This builds on the successful demonstration of collaboration by the three UN agencies during the time of the Joint Programme on Maternal and Neonatal Health (JPMNH) from 2009-2016.

Under the PFSD Prosperity and Planet Pillar, two joint proposals for International Climate Initiative/Internationale Klimaschutzinitiative Country Call 2018 were submitted on the following: Delivering Transformative Change towards a Low Carbon, Biodiverse and Climate-Resilient Philippines (FAO, UNDP and ILO); and Transformative Actions for Climate and Ecological Protection and Development (TRANSCEND) with GIZ as the joint program coordinator and UN-Habitat and UNIDO as consortium partners. These initiatives are expected to support national stakeholders in achieving environmental targets for sustainable development.

A proposal (UNDP, ILO, and FAO) to enable the Philippines to achieve climate change and environment sustainability goals was also developed. The program seeks to use risk-based and integrated approaches to address the causes of environmental and natural resource degradation that exacerbate the impacts of climate change and disproportionately affect the vulnerable and natural resource-dependent communities. A systemic partnership with key public and private sector actors in two highly vulnerable landscape areas with linkage to growth centers will ensure development gains can be sustained and scaled up.

Under the PFSD Peace Pillar, a concept note supporting the MILF and national government implement the Bangsamoro Normalization process by integrating camp transformation and transitional justice with outputs on land, local reconciliation and community-driven development has been developed into a concept note for a joint program to be implemented by IOM, UNDP and UN WOMEN. OPAPRU also requested in October that Phase 3 of the PBF be utilized to support the development of camp transformation development plans in the more remote MILF base commands. FAO, IOM, UNDP and UNICEF with support from the PDA are developing the concept note but will need to consult with the BTA and MILF to ensure that both Peace Panels are in agreement on OPAPRU's request and how to proceed before ascertaining the availability of PBF funds in 2020.

4.4 Innovations in program and operations to address key development challenges

Youth empowerment and engagement are a common agenda of all UN agencies. Through the UN Youth Thematic Group (UNYTG), the UN agencies have joined efforts to engage young leaders, youth network and organizations in the achievements of the transformative goals of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development in the Philippines. The UN Youth Advisory Board (UNYAB) members were connected to national agencies (e.g. Department of Education with regard to the issue of teenage pregnancy, and the Office of the Bangsamoro Youth Affairs (OBYA) which provided a youth lens to the development of national youth-related policy, to directly advocate for their rights and to influence decision-making processes. Dialogues between the UNYAB and UNCT were undertaken to identify key national policy gaps across the PFSD Pillars with big impact to young people and corresponding identify action points to address the issues. The key policy issues were: Teenage Pregnancy Bill, Zero Hunger Bill, Climate Change Act and Transitional Justice and Reconciliation for the Bangsamoro Act. UNYAB members have been tapped by different UN agencies as resource persons or participants for different events, including World Population Day, Teen Pregnancy Summit, and the Nairobi Summit on the 25th anniversary of the landmark International Conference on Population and Development. As a knowledge hub on youth empowerment, the UNYTG facilitated consolidation, mapping, dissemination and promotion of relevant knowledge and evidence generated by the UN and other partners in the Philippines. UN Women and ILO have implemented the joint program Safe and Fair to advance the right of women migrant workers. Results of this joint work include the conduct of nationwide stakeholders consultations on the development of the new Department of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), especially the possible impacts on women OFWs and key elements to advocate for; mapping of services available to women migrant workers from Philippines; and delivering trainings as part of multi-year capacity building effort to build the ability of frontline service providers and policy makers to deliver coordinated quality services for survivors of violence and trafficking.

One of the proposed outputs of the Joint SDG-Fund project is to improve the poverty registry to include risk and hazard vulnerability assessments and predictive analytics for inclusive targeting and effective monitoring. In partnership with the BARMM Ministry of Social Services

and Development, and the national government agency Department of Social Welfare and Development, a review will be undertaken on existing registries such as, but not limited to, the National Housing Targeting System (NHTS – Listahanan) that is being used by the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) the country’s largest nationwide social assistance program and the Modified Conditional Cash Transfer. The review will provide recommendations to include hazards and vulnerability assessment and improve targeting to marginalized groups who have been excluded using disaggregated data and analysis.

The UNCT responded to the Member States demand for a better harmonized UN country presence and a re-calibration of how the UN system can effectively and efficiently support the PFSD by optimizing the collective strengths and varied capacities of UN agencies through integrated, coherent and efficient country operations. Streamlining of business operations continued in 2019 through the Operations Management Team (OMT). The UNCT approved the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) 2019-2023 following a consultative process where priorities and challenges for common operations were identified, and opportunities were catalogued. The approval of the BOS is at opportune time since 2019 marks the beginning of the PFSD and many agencies have now well settled in the new UN House common premises and other agencies are in the process of joining.

Section 5: Upcoming Opportunities in the Next Year

5.1 Upcoming opportunities for 2020: Potential opportunities for the UN Country Team to support national partners in integrated development policy and program development

The mid-term update of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) provides an opportunity for the UNCT to have a consultation with Government and a broader set of stakeholders to inform any suggested updates to the intermediate outcomes and indicators of the PFSD to ensure its continued relevance. This also facilitates a discussion on evolving country context and emerging/new multi-dimensional risks that could impact the development trajectory of the country and theory of change (i.e. real-time CCA) as well as catalytic interventions/proof of concept/innovations across the PFSD pillars/sectors.

The Philippines plans to periodically participate in the VNR to lend urgency to the development agenda of the SDGs. This provides an opportunity for the UNCT to build on the linkages between the VNR and PFSD, not only highlighting progress but using it as a platform to give due attention to challenged SDGs which is the focus of the PFSD.

The UN stands ready to support the proposed Sub-Committee on SDGs and relevant institutional mechanisms both at the executive and legislative. The UNCT aims to provide more substantive, coherent and coordinated support to SDG to NEDA as the lead agency in monitoring and coordination of SDG implementation primarily through the Philippine Development Plan as well as to the Philippines Statistical Authority (PSA) which leads in monitoring of the SDG indicators. There were also initial discussions on how the UNCT can come together in shared interest and mobilize legislative support on UN work and the SDGs. Entry points are in the upper and lower house of the Philippine Congress are the Senate Committee on SDGs, Innovation and Futures Thinking and House of Representative Special Committee on SDGs, respectively.

There are several opportunities for further strengthening partnerships, e.g. advocacy and capacity-building with government and other national stakeholders, building on the work done in 2019. Thematic areas of joint work include food security and nutrition, social protection and health, including sexual and reproductive health. Priority areas in the sphere of urbanization, economic growth, and climate change include the formulation of an operational framework for the convergence of urbanization, economic growth and climate actions towards resilient and equitable sustainable development; support to the Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework and National Action Plan; and support to the implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan and Nationally Determined Contribution. Apart from these areas, BARMM also represents a geographic nexus for joint work. There is scope for the UN to support inclusive, community-driven, and multi-dimensional assistance for the transformation of the base commands. In addition, Peace Pillar gaps analysis as well as stakeholder consultation indicate that CSOs who were so prominent in advocating for the passage of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) and a positive BOL plebiscite outcome are now missing in action during the transition. There is a strategic opportunity for the UN to support a BARMM CSO platform that can play critical roles in peacebuilding and fostering a participatory democratic governance, including: third party monitor of the normalization process and implementation of key BARMM development programs; representing grassroots constituencies in the drafting of key legislation and advocacy; mediating grassroots dialogue, reconciliation and peacebuilding initiatives and laying the ground for peaceful, free, fair and inclusive polls for the critical 2022 elections.

The UNCT intends to seize the momentum generated at the 2019 CEO SDG Circle Forum and continue to engage with the UN Global Compact in the design and actual conduct of the business working group consultation rounds around the PFSD pillars and SDG hotspots to shift the business agenda from “talking points” to “actionable points.” To pursue this, the UNCT agreed to establish an inter-agency group on partnerships/private sector engagement.

In line with the “UN@75 and Beyond” campaign, the UNCT intends to support and organize dialogues around the future people aspire to (“What kind of a world do we want to create?”), threats to that future (“Where is the world heading?”), and the tools needed for global cooperation to overcome these threats (“What action is needed to close the gap?”). Feedback from partners will feed into global discussions and inform work at the country level.

UNYTG Manila will work on leveraging partnership with government counterparts, starting from the National Youth Commission. The UNYTG will continue to reflect on how to maximize the collaboration with UNYAB, to identify plans for future effective utilization, and to leverage the opportunity of having youth engaged and be advocates of the PFSD and UN work, ensuring no one is left behind.

UN Women and the Philippines Commission on Women co-chair the ODA-GAD coordination group, bringing together UN agencies, Government representatives, and ODA partners to strengthen gender in policy and programming. In 2019, UN Women collaborated with NEDA to share its Gender Programming M&E handbook in this forum. From this, ODA-GAD members agreed in 2020 to build stronger gender M&E mechanisms in development programming with national partners. If the UNCT were to conduct a gender marker exercise in 2020 with a view to a gender scorecard exercise to follow, this would support gender mainstreaming and strengthened indicators throughout all development and humanitarian programs delivered in collaboration with national partners across the UNCT.

5.2. Areas of potential challenges for UNCT work in 2020

The ongoing midterm update of the Philippine Development Plan may result in changes in national government's development outcomes and performance measures which are used as basis for the PFSD results framework. There are indications that OPAPRU, the government co-convenor of the Peace Pillar may revise the results framework to include outcomes and indicators related to addressing the CPP-NPA conflict which the UNCT would find challenging given concerns over the sustainability of the government's "localized peace framework", the absence of a negotiated peace process, risk to UN neutrality and attendant risks to staff and partners as well as risks due to the prevalence of "red-tagging" in addition to related human rights concerns. On a related note, the tagging of legitimate NGOs, including UN partners, as communist "front organizations" and admonitions to donors not to fund these NGOs that work primarily to support IP communities may also impact UN access, partnerships and the LNOB-related interventions.

On the Bangsamoro peace process, the decommissioned combatants have received initial 100,000 Php peso cash payments out of the 1 million Php peso decommission package which includes housing, health and education assistance. The government's capacity to speedily deliver the full package to the decommissioned combatants will play a critical role in the success of subsequent phase of decommissioning in 2020. Slow or no progress on dismantling the Private Armed Groups (PAGs) or on the establishment of the Bangsamoro Police – both are in the CAB and Normalization annexes – could be potential decommissioning setbacks which could destabilize the region and affect UNCT work on the ground. A further concern is that OPAPRU and the national government may be focusing too narrowly on the decommissioning of the MILF and socio-economic aspects of camp transformation focused on MILF communities, at the expense of broader normalization that also requires action, including dismantling of the PAGs, meaningful self-determination for the BARMM within the unitary state of the Philippines so that the Bangsamoro political experiment can succeed and transitional justice so that peacebuilding between, and healing of all communities in the Bangsamoro who have been scarred by decades of conflict, can finally take place. Divergent interests and priorities could result in differences between both Peace Implementing Panels impacting decision-making, which in turn could paralyse UNCT support to the peace process.

In 2019, the UNCT faced an intersection of two of the above challenges when OPAPRU requested that the third tranche of PBF IRF funds (US\$3 M) that the UNCT had identified for catalytic support to TJR in Bangsamoro, based on the UNCT's mapping of gaps in support to the Bangsamoro peace process as well consultations with OPAPRU and MILF, be re-directed instead to support OPAPRU's efforts against the communist insurgency because the Bangsamoro peace process already had sufficient funds. The UNCT explained that it was unable to accede to OPAPRU's request in 2019 in the absence of a negotiated peace process and insufficient time to do the required assessments in an area where the UNCT has no significant presence (eastern Mindanao) in order to develop an engagement strategy and proposal, but that it remained open to supporting sustainable peace interventions with sufficient time to conduct adequate assessments. As a result, the UNCT was not able to go forward with its TJR proposal for PBF funding in 2019. Given that President Duterte has vowed to end the communist insurgency by the end of his term, the UNCT may be subject to further requests from OPAPRU to re-direct its resources to ending the communist insurgency in 2020.

Though there is progress, there is still a slow shift in UN staff mindset and way of working from working in silos to working as one, which is particularly evident in the competition for resource mobilization.

There is inadequate staff complement for the UNRCO vis-a-vis the leadership, coordination, and technical support functions it needed to fulfill under UN Reform. Add to this is the possible delay in the designation of a successor RC and transition within key members of the UNCT.