

Peoples' Agenda for Peace and Development

1. Creation of a national strategy for food sovereignty based on community-level food production



The need to establish a community-level food production system has been emphasized when national and regional level logistical chains were interrupted due to the implementation of restriction of movements to combat the spread of coronavirus19. Food sovereignty focuses on capacitating localities, especially barangays and municipalities, to create self-sustaining value chains that would have the ability to generate socially and culturally accepted sources of carbohydrates, proteins, as well as other vitamins and minerals for the local population. This includes promoting government support for alternative food sources and food processing methods, especially food sources that are easy-to-grow, endemic to localities, and nutritionally competitive. Methods of processing locally sourced food to increase shelf- life shall also be prioritized in technology and knowledge transfer to community members. Further, the cornerstone of policies towards food sovereignty is the enactment of issuances that would transform idle yet arable land, for food production and other accessorial functions.

2. Comprehensive recalibration of programs for the modernization and development of the fisheries sector



Expanding from the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan, the development of the fisheries sector shall be focused on integrating productivity and competitiveness with the capacity to provide income and food source for coastal communities. This shall focus on the review and regulation of Republic Act 8550 which delineates municipal waters to safeguard the fishing rights of small-scale fisher folks. Furthermore, investments towards the fisheries sector shall also focus on acquiring and replicating fishing technologies on coastal communities based on fish-caging and fish pen practices. This is in line with the effort towards fisheries modernization which capacitates small-scale fisheries towards community-level production.

3. Strengthening of state interventions to agro-industrial value chains as cornerstone of the manufacturing and processing sectors



High-value output from the existing agro-industries, such as virgin coconut oil, cocowater, cocosugar, abaca and cotton, shall be provided state assistance through the provision of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, with the goal of making these products competitive not only in international markets but for domestic consumption as well. Value chains for these agro-industrial sectors should be mapped out to enact more efficient extraction, processing, distribution, and exportation models. Private firms shall be incentivized by the state through graduated taxation methods and expansion of agro-industrial economic zones to improve our national output for extractive resources, especially in the mining sector. Support for private enterprises should also be balanced out with efficient state regulation mechanisms to ensure that comprehensive industrial development is anchored on mutual benefit for both investors and the communities that host these sectors.

4. Prioritization of industrial peace and order anchored on the principle of dignified labor



Preliminary policy directions would focus on the review of regional and national wage boards that would be based on quantifying a national household living wage. Conciliation and mediation bodies shall also be institutionalized at the level of industrial zones focused on providing capacity building exercises and institutional support for independent unions and workers. The principle of dignified labor shall focus on the right to the opportunity to obtain decent and productive employment, in conditions of freedom, equity, gender equality, security, and human dignity.

Further, to ensure that national development programs are beneficial to host communities, the state shall also ensure the compliance of private contractors and subcontractors doing national and local public work projects, funded by either the national government or any LGU including foreign-assisted projects, to fill in thirty percent (30%) of the skilled labor requirements by qualified workers who come from the poor sector and who are residents of the LGUs where these projects are undertaken, and, pursuant to R.A. No. 6685, fifty percent (50%) of the unskilled labor requirements from the unemployed bona fide and actual residents in the province, city, and municipality where the projects are to be undertaken, subject to qualifications provided in the law.

5. Implementation of whole-of-nation convergence strategies for the full implementation of Republic Act No. 8371, otherwise known as the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act for indigenous cultural communities and indigenous peoples



Given the effectivity of the whole-of-nation approach in mobilizing arrays of government instrumentalities for the delivery of basic social services and the addressing of policy gaps, the same strategy shall be employed in the full implementation of the IPRA. This is emphasized in issues of indigenous peoples and indigenous cultural communities where mandates of national government agencies such as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples for ancestral domain land, Department of Agrarian Reform for agrarian reform areas, and Department of Environment and Natural Resources for reserves, as well as local government units overlap.

Further, emphasis on the four bundle of rights, especially those that are concerned with the protection and utilization of ancestral domain land and the promotion of indigenous culture shall also be strengthened. Given the gradual devolution of national state functions, local bodies composed of representatives from the indigenous peoples shall be strengthened to further promote their right for self determination, especially on their right to self administration and autonomy – on the case of the Cordilleras – and to decide on how to administer the usage of ancestral domain land.

6. Review of national strategies and implementation of economically inclusive policies for the informal and subsistence economies sector



Albeit having a sizeable contribution to the national output – pegged at 30% – provision of state support for the informal and subsistent economy sectors have seen gaps and challenges especially due to the fact that there is no government agency mandated by the law to oversee the welfare of the informal sector. Taking into consideration the informal nature of the sector and the strengthening of local government units under the Mandanas Ruling, local government units are proposed to be at the forefront of safeguarding the interest of the informal sector. This may be initiated through the creation of a registry and database for informal workers at the municipality and city level. This shall also ensure that their rights are safeguarded and social protection mechanisms for them are assured by local government units.

7. Adoption of a holistic youth development program based on human capital development and values formation



The implementation of Republic Act No. 10931, or the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Law, shall serve as the cornerstone of the human capital development program under the peace and development agenda. With the law in place, strengthening of available mechanisms to guarantee an increase in the number of college graduates shall be focused on providing free education to the poorest of the poor families while ascertaining that collegiate programs are competitive both domestically and internationally to ensure that jobs are available for the college graduates. This shall also be the case for students in alternative learning systems and those enrolled in vocational schools of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. Priority on providing ladderized educational programs for courses that are contributory to national development programs shall also be provided. Furthermore, values formation shall also be mainstreamed in all levels of learning in an effort to strengthen character development of students as part of a more holistic youth development program.

8. Full implementation of the Universal Healthcare Program under the context of the pandemic and post-pandemic situation



Given the crippling effect of the COVID19 pandemic to our national healthcare system, national and local state investments geared towards the strengthening of absorptive capacities for regional and provincial hospitals shall be strengthened. This shall include a gradual increase towards local investments for regional and provincial hospitals through expansionary fiscal policies, while at the same time, strengthening the guarantees provided by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, especially for indigent patients. Building upon the strengths of the implementation of Malasakit Centers, convergence efforts of government instrumentalities based on healthcare shall also be streamlined. A fixed percentage of returns from Government Owned and Controlled Corporations shall be streamlined towards the strengthening of investments and payouts for the healthcare sector. Furthermore, barangay-based healthcare interventions shall also be strengthened through upskilling and other capacity building activities.

9. Establishment of an urban planning and sustainable development framework based on the fundamental right to decent housing



Building upon the gains of the increase in gross domestic product share and investment towards the construction sector under Build, Build, Build, sustainable urban planning and development shall also be included with the objective of providing the fundamental right to decent housing while implementing necessary policies for metropolitan decongestion. Prioritizing the enactment of a national land use plan, this shall also include enactment of policies geared towards the strengthening and promoting state and private sector investment towards community mortgage programs for midrise housing and in-city relocations, and the implementation of the township model in peri-urban relocation. In existing relocation sites, strengthening of convergence between national government agencies and sending and receiving local government units shall also be mainstreamed in local and developmental planning. These mainstreaming shall focus on the provision of basic social services such as electricity, water, educational, and livelihood facilities for relocation sites. Further, ministerial governance structures in relocation sites in the form of homeowners' association and other community organizations shall also be integrated in receiving barangay local government unit's barangay development councils.

10. Expansion of existing mechanisms for sectoral participation to local governance bodies in line with gradual decentralization and the Mandanas Doctrine in line with the principle of good governance



Given the full implementation of Mandanas Ruling in 2022 and the enactment of Executive Order No. 138, mandating the full devolution of certain functions of the executive branch to local government units, the strengthening of sectoral participation mechanisms in local governance platforms shall also be strengthened. The importance of sectoral participation as a building block of good governance is based on the institutional partnership between the government sector and their community counterparts in effecting inclusive development in localities. This shall include incorporating the sectors in government planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation as partners and not limited to being sectoral clientele. Although there are already laws guaranteeing the participation of the sectors in governance processes – such as in Republic Act No. 8425 and in the Local Government Code – gaps and challenges in its implementation shall be addressed through the review of these existing policies.

11. Localization of approaches to climate change adaptation, disaster risk resiliency, and community recovery



Local climate action is focused on increasing the attention to local adaptation, linking of adaptation and mitigation efforts together and with other local ecological concerns, and greater engagement with active community members and grassroots community-initiated climate change actions. These three key aspects provides climate change adaptation with a local saliency and tangibility, spur more effective action, build community resilience and reduce vulnerability. Furthermore, climate action and disaster risk management shall also incorporate existing indigenous and local knowledges and practices in order to strengthen the communities' acceptance towards the implementation of these mechanisms.

12. Adoption of a multi-dimensional approach to development and poverty reduction as basis for developmental programs, projects, and activities



Pursuant to the implementation of Republic Act No. 11055 (Philippine Identification System), Republic Act No. 11291 (Magna Carta of the Poor), and Republic Act No. 11315 (Community Based Monitoring System) mechanisms on identifying and targeting the poorest of the poor households are provided with quantifiable matrices. With the help of the data generated from these sources, local government units are provided with the basis needed to target government interventions at the household level as well as to provide concrete plans and actions for developmental interventions and poverty alleviation programs. Basing these interventions on the adoption of a multi-dimensional approach to poverty provides the key to harmonizing general efforts towards poverty alleviation efforts as integrated with our national development plans.

13. Creation of a comprehensive social protection system for the disadvantaged sectors



Institutionalization of mechanisms through policy reform along with providing an outline for a long-term national action plan for social protection greatly increases the guarantees of social protection for all, especially for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. This would also help ensure that social protection measures are guarded from political manipulation and that they receive lasting commitment from state authorities, regardless of change in political climate and government leaders. Institutionalizing a social protection program should be focused on providing local government units with the capability of access mechanisms for social protection for the disadvantaged sectors in their locality. Given the different line agencies have their own programs geared at providing social protection for their sectoral constituency, it is only proper that these programs converge at the LGU level to ensure comprehensive access and blanketed protection for all.

14. National review of microfinance policies to strengthen the peoples' access to credit and capital



The Philippines is considered as belonging to countries where it is more difficult for people to access capital through credit. Documentary and technical requirements have served as gatekeepers in disallowing the poor and marginalized access to financial assistance while providing those that are already better off a steady stream of capital through microfinancing. With this widely observed gap, local government units should be responsible in providing assistance to poor families and community organizations in guaranteeing access to credit for business and enterprise development. Reviewing our national microfinance policies while providing immediate interventions in the local level would ensure that inclusive development targeted for the poor and marginalized is prioritized by the state. Mechanisms to continuously capacitate community organizations in financial literacy and proposal writing shall also be employed all year round to ensure blanket access to microfinance.

15. Mainstreaming of nationally orchestrated, centrally directed, and locally supervised and implemented peace processes



Multi-stakeholder solution seeking and peace tables at the local level shall be mainstreamed in the processes of local government units in an effort to implement local peace and order. With this direction, it must be noted that sectoral and community issues remain as the most potent avenue utilized by communist terrorist groups in their agitation and propaganda practices. Through the mainstreaming of a nationally orchestrated, centrally directed, and locally supervised and implemented peace processes, local peace tables are empowered under the direction of the national government in implementing local reforms as well as in streamlining delivery of basic social services for those who need it the most.