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COVID PULSE PH: A Better Normal for the Poor

Summary Report on Phase 3 of a survey commissioned by the Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030 and the United Nations Development Program Philippines.

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COVID PULSE PH: A Better Normal for the Poor

The socioeconomic impacts of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic have disproportionately affected the poor and vulnerable. How can this “new normal” of insecurity be converted into a “better normal” of sustainable livelihood for them?

The Zero Extreme Poverty Philippines 2030 (ZEP PH 2030)—a coalition of non-government entities (NGEs) and networks—and the United Nations Development Programme Philippines (UNDP PH) commissioned the ZEP-UNDP COVID PULSE PH to take a pulse on how the poor in the Philippines have been affected by COVID-19. The first and second phases (links to [Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2](#) here) were conducted in May and September 2020, respectively, to inquire into how low-income households in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu are coping and assess how they are being supported by government and other sectors.

The third phase continues the study of the impacts of COVID-19 on the well-being of poor families throughout the country. It also inquires into how poor Filipinos can be supported to achieve a better normal of sustainable livelihood. The third phase expands the coverage of COVID PULSE PH to Nueva Ecija, Sorsogon, Bohol, Eastern Visayas, Bukidnon, Sarangani, and General Santos City.

The innovative survey is deployed through a chatbot (m.me/covidpulseph) which enables data collection without face-to-face interviewing. The tool, which can be accessed by poor households through free mobile data, was designed and implemented with innovation start-up [AI4GOV](#). To socialize the tool in communities, ZEP2030 employed community organizing—through its local convergences, member-civil society organizations (CSOs), and with the help of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)—to reach the target population of poor and low-income households.

A policy brief on Metro Manila was released in May 2021 considering the second enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) ([link to report here](#)). This report and the accompanying technical report ([link here](#)) and data dashboard ([link here](#)) present the key survey findings from all the six provinces and three metropolitan areas that the survey covered.

HIGHLIGHTS



BASELINE INCOME. Nearly 90 percent of the more than 18,000 low-income households surveyed earned PHP10,000 or below per month before the pandemic struck. A majority depended on informal sources of livelihood.



MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT. Three-fourths of respondents experienced a decrease in their income in 2020, while another 47 percent lost their job or business. Substantial proportions also experienced food insecurity, difficulty in accessing healthcare services, and stopping their children's schooling.



SLOW RECOVERY IN 2021. More than half of respondents reported that their situation has so far worsened, mainly because it was difficult for them to maintain regular income due to COVID restrictions, broken value chains, and dampened confidence in the economy. This most affected those who earned the least and who depended on informal livelihood.



COPING MECHANISMS. Social security matters. Access to safety nets—both formal (government) and informal (personal connections and savings)—were important to the respondents for recovery and were instrumental for the few who were able to improve their situation in 2021.



ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE. Majority of respondents hope to succeed in entrepreneurship in the new normal, mainly in agriculture and wholesale/retail trade and services. This aspiration is aligned with their current capabilities and skills. Majority reported having basic business skills and intrapersonal skills: the quintessential diskarte.

METHODOLOGY

From March 3 to April 11, 2021, Phase 3 reached 18,872 poor and vulnerable households throughout the country to ask them how COVID-19 has affected them and their outlook for the future.

Research Objectives

COVID Pulse PH Phase 3 aims to support multi-stakeholder efforts for recovery from the pandemic. An immediate objective is to support ZEP local convergences in strengthening local civic coalitions and partnerships with LGUs as instruments for poverty reduction in the new normal. Phase 3 aims to address these questions.

1. Multidimensional impact - how has COVID-19 affected the income and overall welfare of poor households?
2. Capabilities and access - what can we build on in terms of the assets, capabilities, and access to safety nets and services by the poor?
3. Opportunities moving forward - what are the aspirations and interests of individuals for market opportunities?

The Innovation: Chatbot Survey

Phase 1 of COVID Pulse PH proved that deploying surveys through Facebook Messenger chatbots is a viable way to reach poor households. It is best supported by community organizing, where volunteers identify respondents who will answer the survey on their own; or to assist them as needed. Phases 1 and 2 were limited to Metro Manila and Metro Cebu where internet access is ubiquitous. In Phase 3, it was shown that the countryside can also be reached by such tool albeit with limitations.

Respondents' Access to Digital Technology:

- 54 percent used mobile data to answer the survey while 30 percent used free data.
- 46 percent used their own device to answer the survey, 33 percent borrowed from the enumerator, while the rest borrowed their family's or friends' phone.

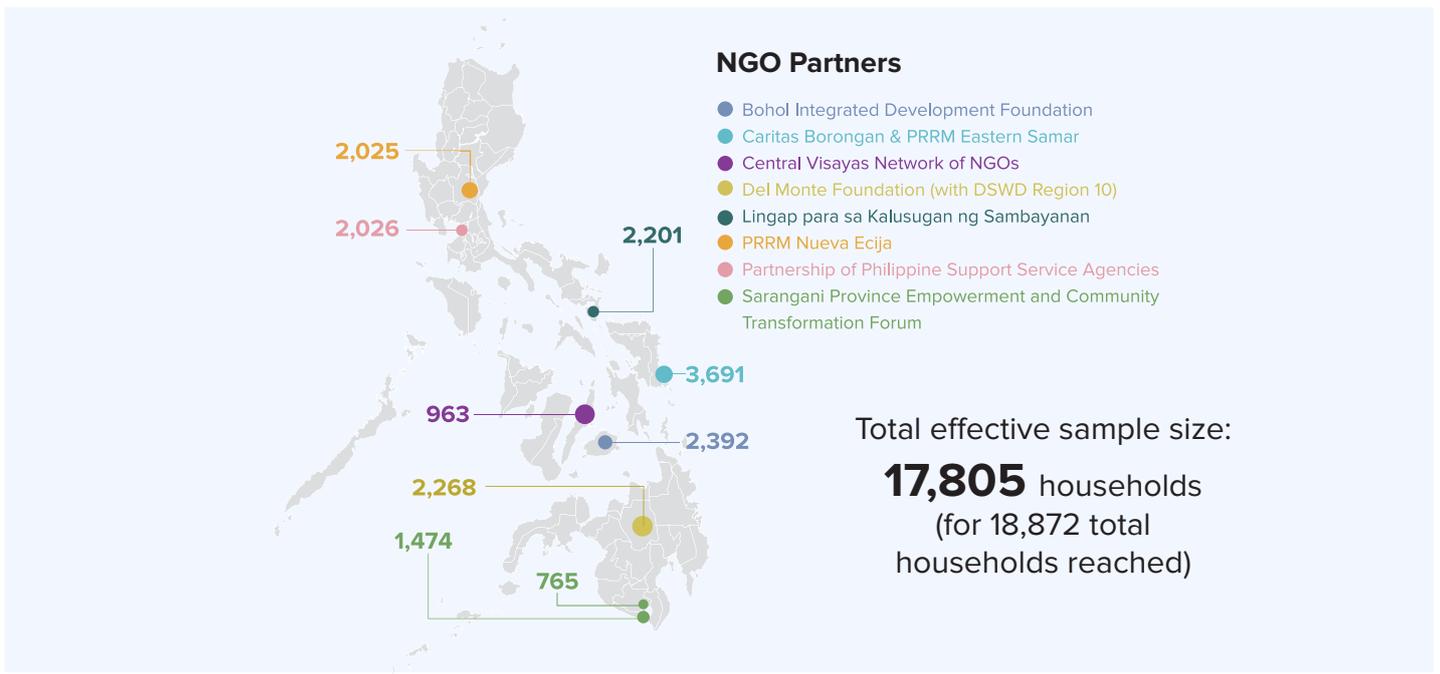
Sampling and Inclusion Strategy

Purposive sampling was employed: that is, poor households were selected in key provinces where ZEP is present. Thus, the results cannot be taken as representative of the Philippine population. The results nevertheless provide an illustrative account of the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 on the poor.

The surveyed households, 96 percent or 18,133 were reached through community volunteers who were deployed in seven (7) provinces and three metropolitan areas (3). UNDP, ZEP, and PRRM worked with ZEP local convenors or key NGO partners to recruit and deploy community volunteers who will identify families to be surveyed based on criteria.

In addition, 739 respondents spread across nine (9) provinces were reached through the network of the International Care Ministries (ICM): an organization which works with the ultra-poor. Schools from the De La Salle Philippines network also participated to check on their school communities. *Figure 1* shows the effective sample sizes achieved through this strategy.

Figure 1. Effective Sample of the COVID Pulse Phase 3



BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

- Across the provinces more than half (56 percent) of households had four to six family members (highest in Bukidnon at 63 percent).
- Most respondents were female at 66 percent (highest: Metro Manila at 81 percent). Nueva Ecija had the highest proportion of male respondents at 45 percent).
- Respondents who were aged 26 to 40 were 43.8 percent (highest: Metro Manila at 44 percent). This is the largest age group except in Bukidnon where those 41-60 years old were 38 percent of respondents.

SECTOR IDENTIFICATION

In addition to the demographic profile of respondents, the survey asked respondents for the basic sector group which they identify with the most. Across the whole sample, “women” was the most reported basic sector at 27 percent (highest: Metro Manila at 48 percent). “Farmer” was the second most reported sector (20 percent) and was most reported in Bukidnon, Nueva Ecija, and Bohol. (Refer to Figure 3.)

Figure 2. Geographic Coverage of COVID Pulse PH

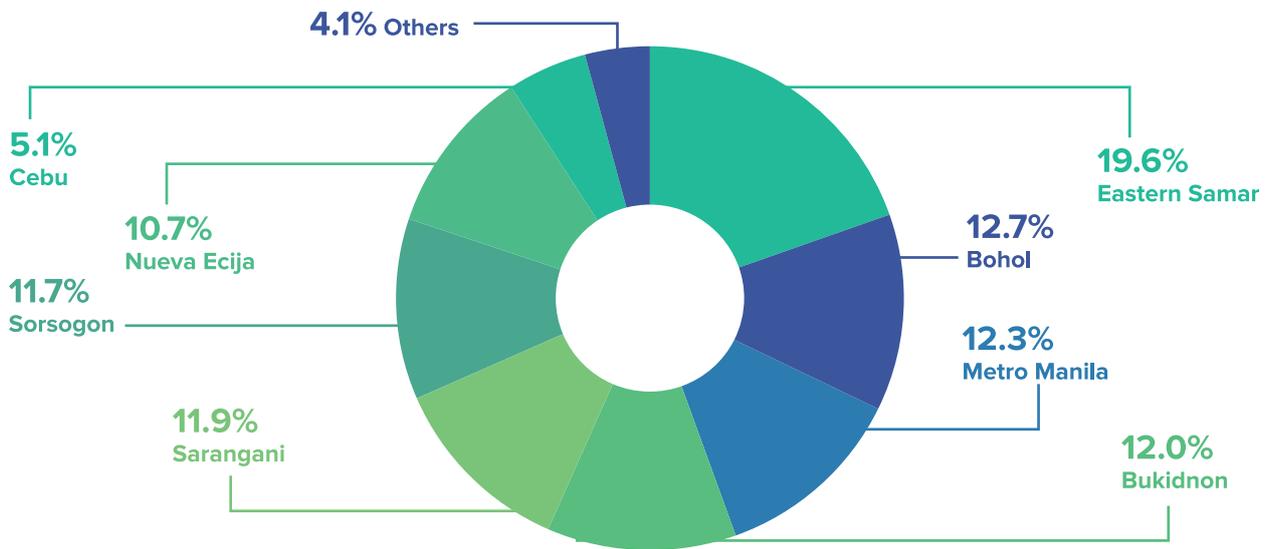
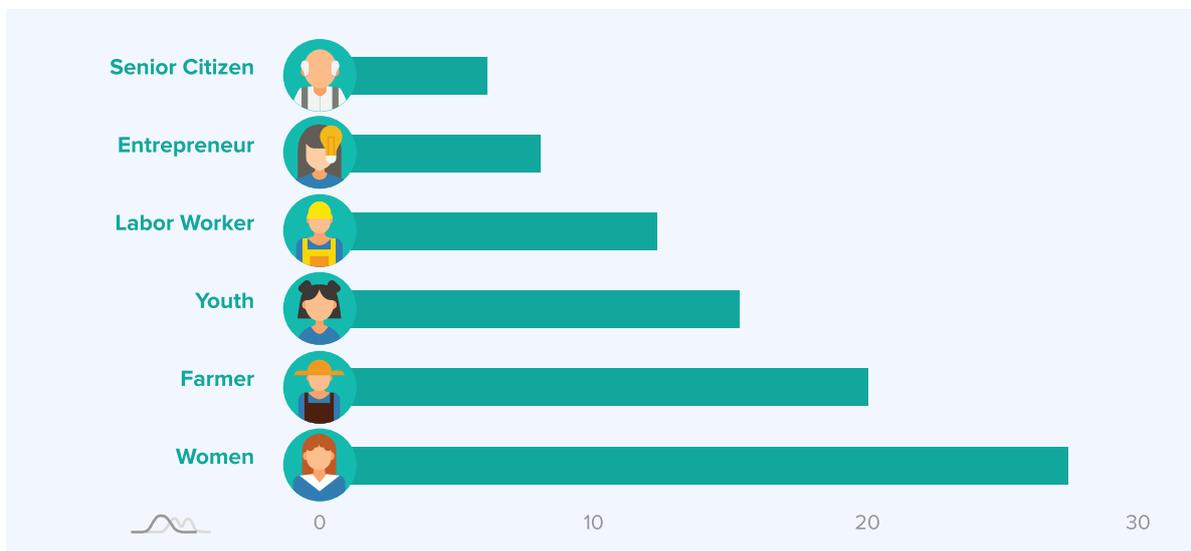


Figure 3. Sector Identification

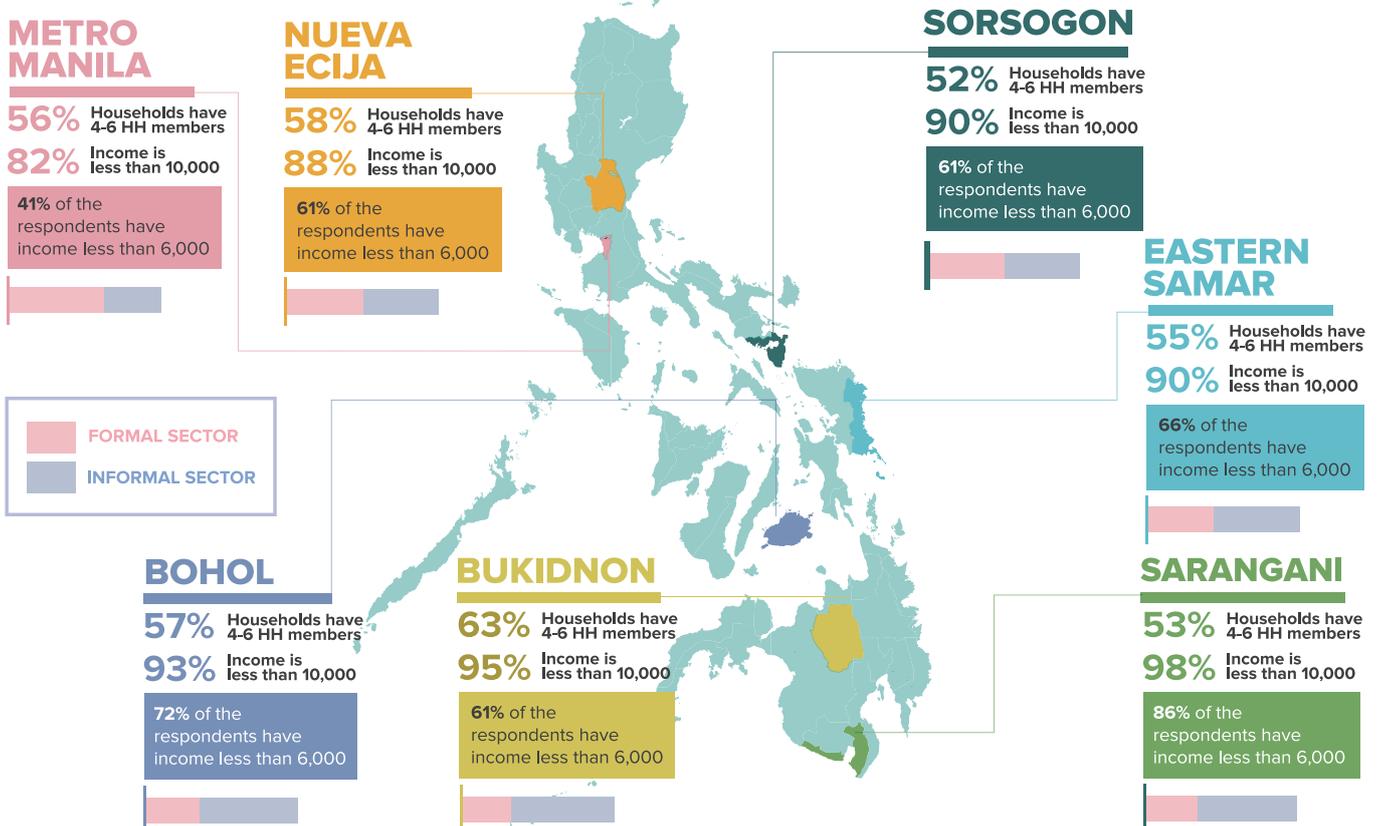


INCOME AND LIVELIHOOD DURING THE PANDEMIC

Livelihood and Income Before the Pandemic

- **Baseline Income.** In 2019, nearly 90 percent of surveyed households earned PHP10,000 or below a month, which is roughly the national poverty line. About 63 percent reported earning less than PHP6,000 a month. Sarangani has the highest proportion of both poor and subsistence poor households (98 percent and 86 percent) (Refer to Figure 4.)
- **Source of Income.**
 - More than half (55 percent) of households reported earning from informal sources of livelihood (highest in Sarangani at 75 percent). These include seasonal or casual workers (27 percent) and ambulant vendors or unregistered businesses (13 percent).
 - In Metro Manila and Metro Cebu, the formal sector is larger at 64 percent and 65 percent, respectively. Metro Manila has the highest proportion of contractual workers at 32 percent while Metro Cebu has more regular workers at 41 percent.
- **Informality, Identity, and Baseline Income.**
 - Those who depended on informal jobs earned less: 74 percent of those who earned from informal jobs earned below PHP6,000 a month (vs. 50 percent formal).
 - Among genders, families with female respondents are slightly worse off than males in their baseline income, with 90 percent earning less than PHP10,000 a month (vs. males, 78 percent) although they have the same proportion of those earning less than PHP6,000 a month (63 percent).
 - Across sectors, the proportions of senior citizens, fisherfolk, persons with disabilities, farmers, and indigenous peoples who earned less than PHP6,000 a month were higher than average, ranging from 73 percent to 77 percent.

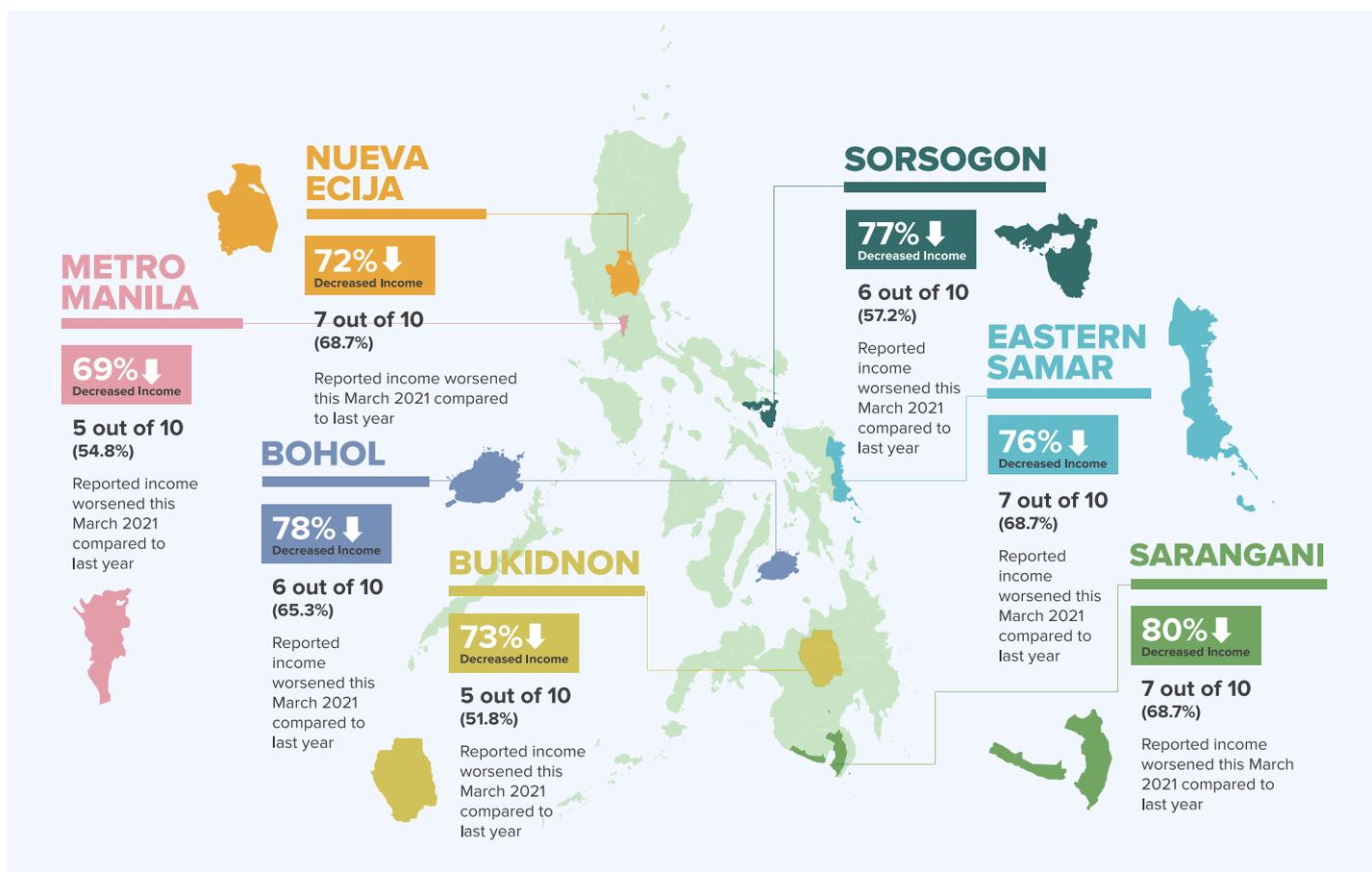
Figure 4. Source of Income Across Regions



The Pandemic's Impact in 2020

- Income and Job Losses.** Of the households surveyed, 75 percent experienced a decrease in their income while another 47 percent lost their job or business during the pandemic. (Refer to Figure 5.)
- Across provinces, Sarangani has the highest share of poor households whose incomes decreased (81 percent) followed by Bohol (78 percent) and Sorsogon (77 percent). Metro Manila—which was placed under a prolonged ECQ in early 2020—reported relatively lower rates of income decreases (70 percent) compared to the rest. Job losses were nevertheless highest in Metro Manila at 58 percent.
- Income decreases were slightly higher among those with informal sources of income (76 percent vs. 74 percent among those with formal work); and were highest among seasonal or casual workers (81 percent), ambulant vendors (80 percent), and contractual workers (76 percent). They were also slightly higher among those who earned between P6,000 and 10,000 per month (about 77 percent).
- Job losses and business closures were more prevalent among ambulant vendors (56 percent) and contractual workers (55 percent). Though least affected, about 39 percent of those with permanent or regular jobs lost their work. Job losses were also slightly more prevalent among those who earned PHP6,000 and below per month (49 percent)

Figure 5. Impact of COVID-19 on Income of Households



Multidimensional COVID impacts



Forty-one percent experienced hunger or other forms of food insecurity (highest in Eastern Samar at 50 percent).



Ten percent had to stop their children from attending formal schooling (highest in Cebu at 15 percent).



Thirty-six percent had difficulty in accessing healthcare services (highest in Eastern Samar at 43 percent).

RECOVERY IN 2021

- **Income Situation Worse for Most.** More than half of respondents (58 percent) reported that their income situation has worsened so far in Q1 2021. In contrast, about 12 percent of respondents reported an improvement in their income, while 30 percent said their income situation remained the same.
- Across the provinces, Sarangani reported the highest proportion of families whose incomes worsened (74 percent) followed by Nueva Ecija (69 percent) and Bohol (65 percent). Bukidnon reported the largest share of families whose incomes improved (18 percent).
- The majority across income brackets reported that their situation worsened, with the highest proportion being from those who earned less than PHP6,000 per month (62 percent).
- A greater proportion of households depending on informal livelihoods reported being worse off so far this year (61 percent, vs 54 percent for formal); in particular, those with no income or are dependents (63 percent), seasonal or casual workers (62 percent), and ambulant vendors or unregistered businesses (60 percent).



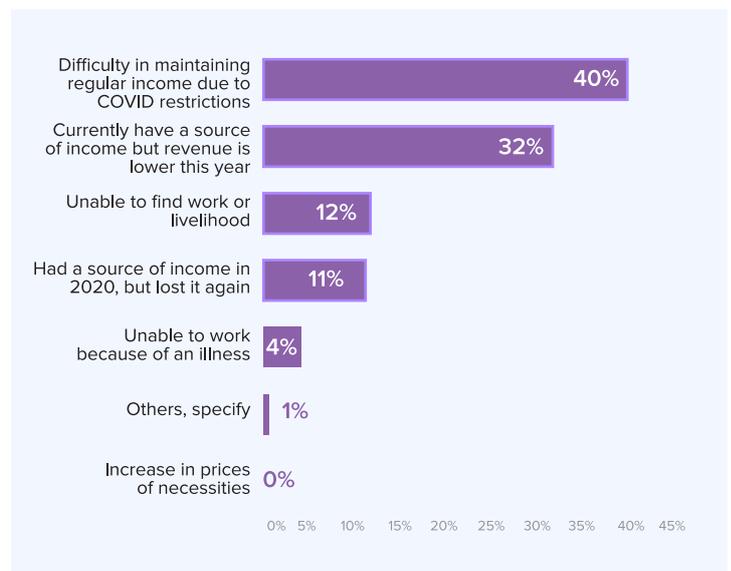
Recovery by Gender and Sector. By gender, slightly more male than female and LGBTQI+ respondents reported that their income situation worsened (60 percent vs. 57 percent and 55 percent). The ranking of reasons for worsening income was largely the same across genders.

Across sectors, larger proportions of respondents who were senior citizens (65 percent), persons with disabilities (65 percent), fisherfolk (64 percent), indigenous peoples (61 percent), and farmers (60 percent) reported that their situation in 2021 was worse than last year.

Reasons for Change in Situation

- **Among the majority who were worse off in 2021:**
 - About 40 percent reported having difficulty in maintaining regular income due to COVID restrictions as the main reason. This is followed by about 32 percent who incurred lower revenues this year despite maintaining a source of income; and by 12 percent who could not find regular work or livelihood. (Refer to Figure 6.)
 - Difficulty in maintaining regular income is the most cited reason by households across provinces, except in Nueva Ecija and General Santos City (lower revenue despite maintaining source of income).
 - Inability to work due to illness affected only about 4 percent of households.

Figure 6. Reasons for Worsened Situation in 2021



- **Recovery of the Few.** Those who were able to improve their income in this year were asked of the top three factors that enabled them to do so:

- In the aggregate, the most cited reasons were that they received government support (64 percent); they were able to secure a sideline job or business (57 percent); and that they were able to return to their previous work (48 percent). (Refer to Figures 7 and 8.)
- Government support was the most cited reason for recovery across provinces, except in Cebu, Eastern Samar, and Sarangani (sideline work or business).
- Another notable reason for recovery which reached the top three in some provinces is having support from family and friends (Cebu, Eastern Samar, Metro Manila, Nueva Ecija, Sorsogon, South Cotabato).

Figure 7. Reasons for Improvement in 2021

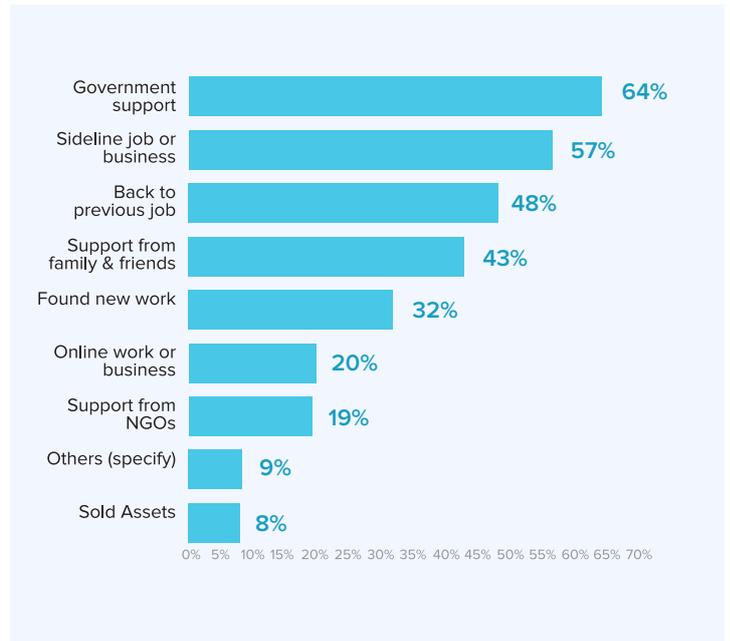
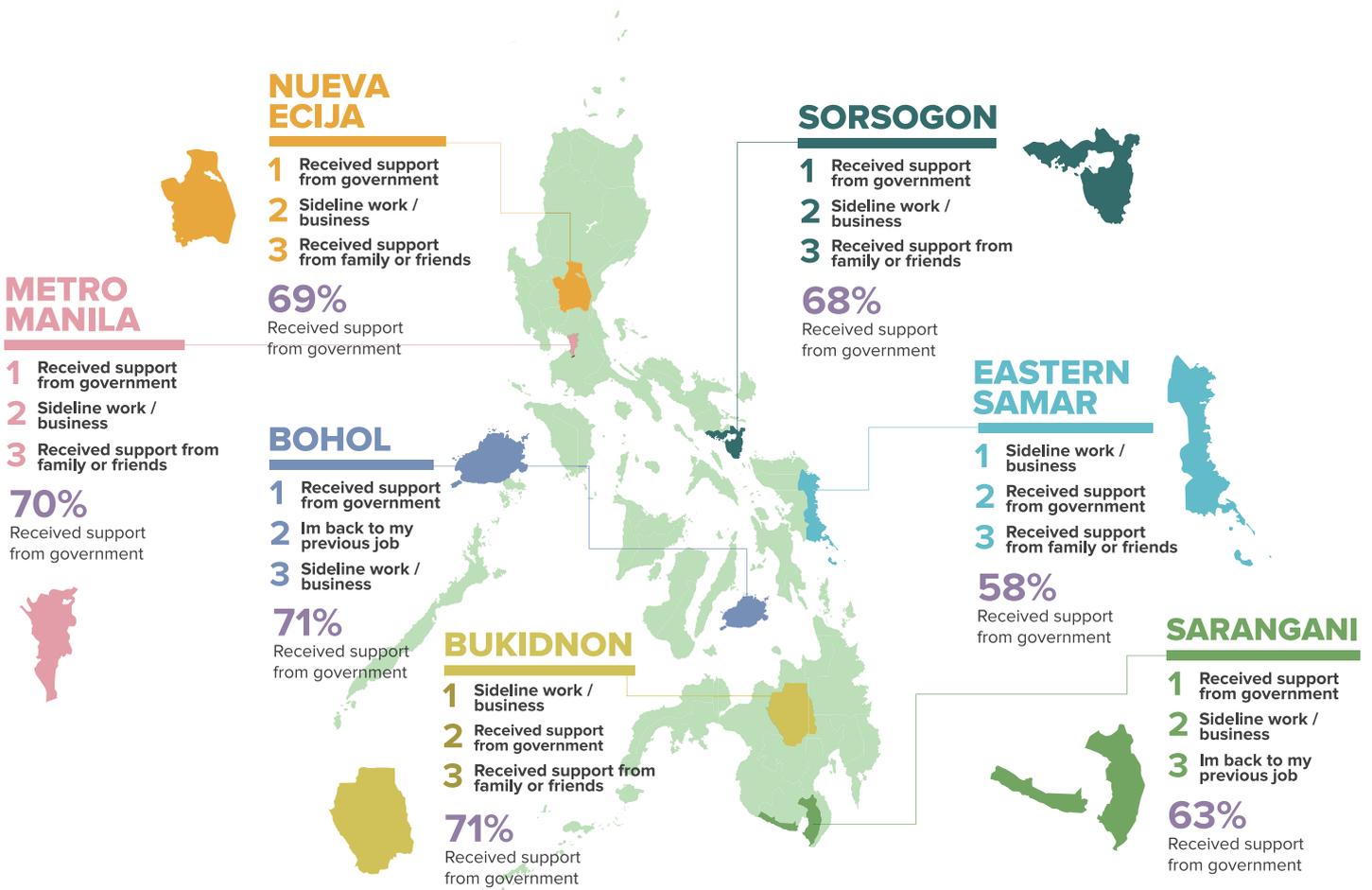


Figure 8. Reasons for Improvement in 2021 Across Regions



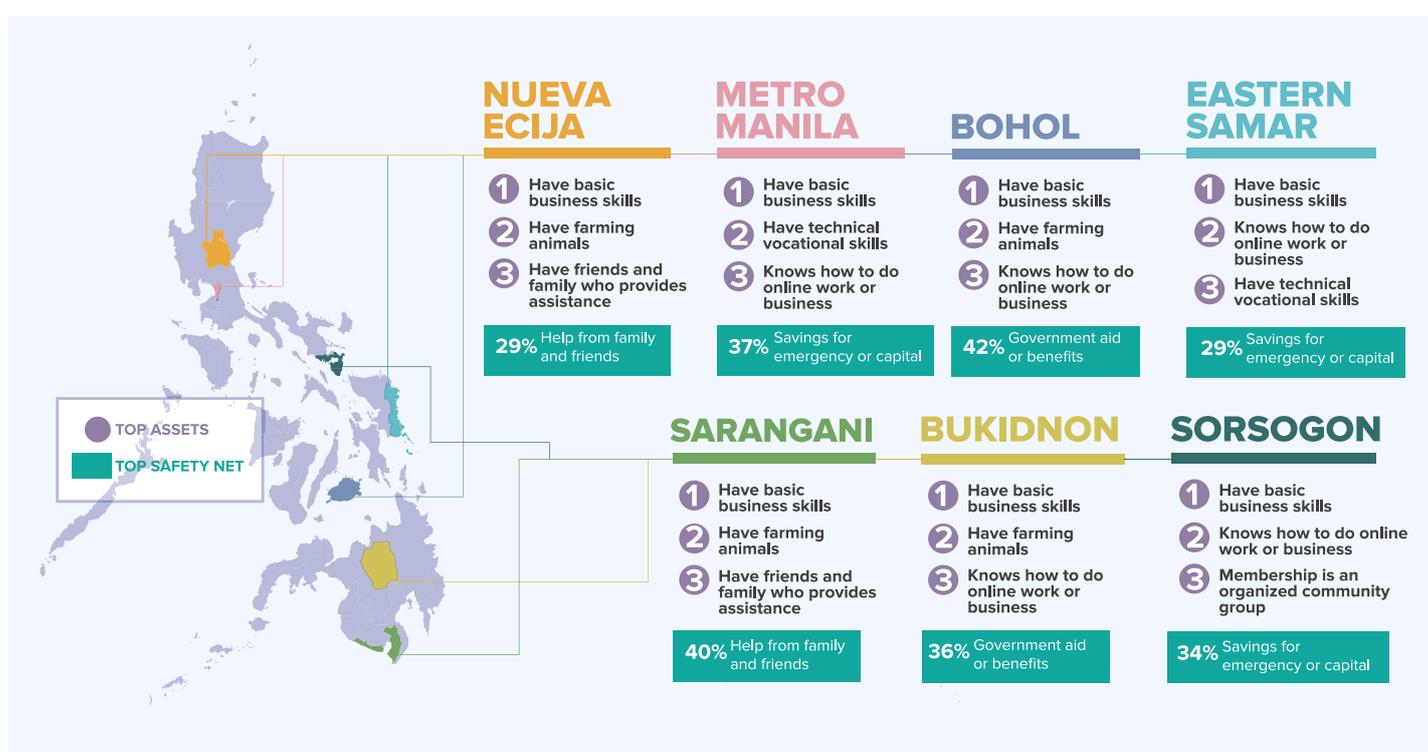
ASSETS, ACCESS & ASPIRATIONS FOR A BETTER NORMAL

Phase 3 of COVID Pulse PH aims not only to assess the present situation of low-income households but also to check on their outlook for the future. What assistance will they need to towards lifting them from poverty? What assets do they have for the new normal?

Assets and Capabilities

- Assets.** When asked to name the top three assets and capabilities that could help them thrive in the new normal, around 56 percent said that they have basic business skills, followed by ability to do online work (40 percent). Tied in third place (~34 percent) are membership in a community organization, technical-vocational training, ownership of livestock, and support from family and friends. The top assets differ across the provinces (Refer to Figure 9).
- Transversal Skills.** COVID Pulse PH also inquired about the respondents’ transversal or “soft” skills that may be helpful for the new normal. Respondents overwhelmingly cited their intrapersonal skills: majority (51 percent) said that they are capable of learning independently, while sizeable proportions are resourceful and enterprising (45 percent) and have initiative and are hardworking (46 percent).

Figure 9. Reported Assets and Safety Nets of Respondents by Region



Access to Services

- Access to Means of Coping.** When asked about the means of coping that will be most important in times of emergencies, about 28 percent said that they have savings for emergencies or capital for business. Another 25 percent said they can rely on their family and friends for help, while 24 percent said they have access to government aid or benefits. These are largely the same top three reasons reported across provinces except in Sarangani and South Cotabato where access to insurance was reported.
- Access to Market Services.** When asked about the market services that could be accessible in their locality, 75 percent respondents said that microfinance, loan, or insurance agents, which was most accessible across all provinces.
- Both with 43 percent, cooperatives and government tech-voc training centers were also reported to be accessible. The accessibility of informal or street lenders were also notable (38 percent), particularly in Bohol, Nueva Ecija, Sarangani, and South Cotabato where this figured into the top three accessible market services.

Opportunity Interests

- **Entrepreneurship or Employment.** Respondents were also asked about their preference for business or employment opportunities, with 51 percent saying they are interested in business opportunities compared to 49 percent who prefer employment opportunities.

This varies significantly per province with more respondents in Bukidnon, Cebu, and Sorsogon interested in employment opportunities, while larger proportions in Metro Manila, South Cotabato, and Sarangani are more interested in entrepreneurship.

- **Industry Interest.** Respondents were most interested in opportunities in wholesale or retail trade or services (43 percent) followed by agriculture (41 percent) and manufacturing (24 percent). Agriculture was the top industry of interest in Bohol, Bukidnon, Nueva Ecija, Sarangani, and South Cotabato. Interest in information technology opportunities was highest in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu (second option to retail trade).

Aspirations for the Future

- When asked about the top three aspirations that they have for themselves and their families, respondents said that having good livelihood (76 percent), enough food and basic needs (69 percent), and quality education for their children (41 percent) are most important to them. These top three aspirations are the same across provinces. (Refer to Figure 10.)

- Other notable insights:

- In Bukidnon, 65 percent of families said that quality education for their children are important to them (highest across the provinces).
- In Metro Cebu, 38 percent cited access to quality healthcare as important for their future (highest across the provinces).
- Peace and order and good governance were, on average, cited by one-fourth of respondents as important to them.
- Access to clean water and a clean environment were the least cited aspirations for the future (only selected by 11 percent of respondents).

Figure 10. Aspirations and Livelihood Preference by Region

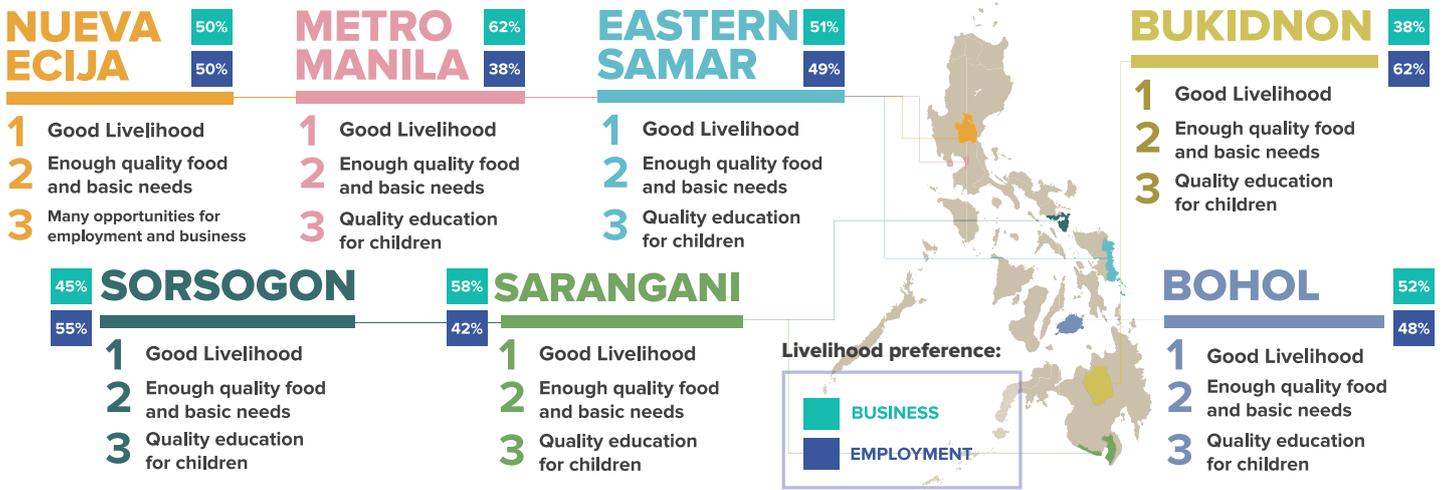
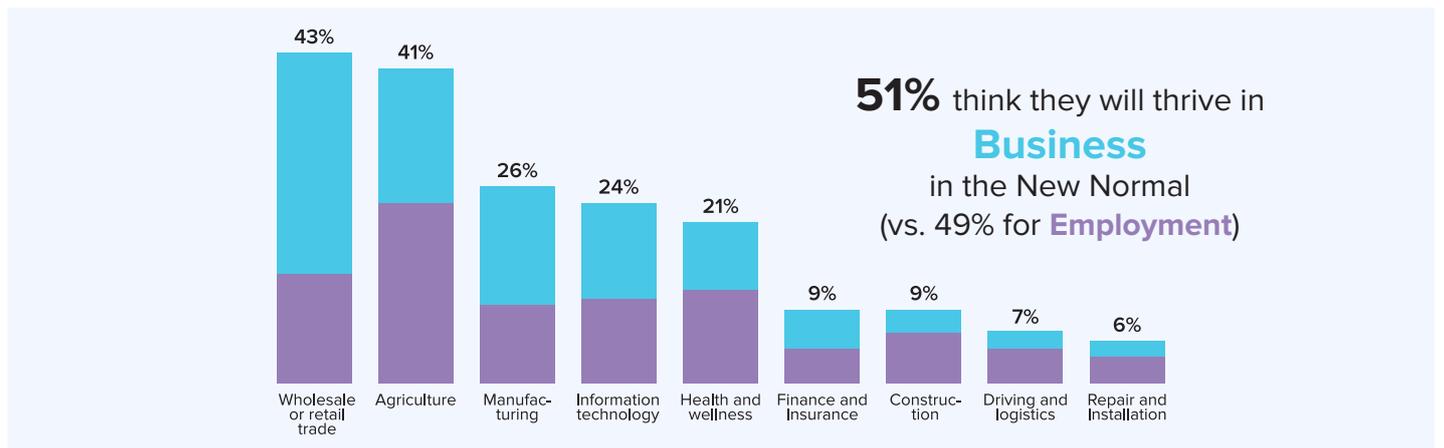


Figure 11. Preferences for Opportunities and Industries



CLUSTER ANALYSIS & EMERGING PERSONAS

The impact of COVID-19 on respondents was broad-based, yet their recovery needs are different. How do we unbundle and address these unique needs for the new normal? Through Latent Class Analysis using Bayesian Information Criterion, the respondents were clustered into segments that have similar characteristics.

This analysis was undertaken according to (i) characteristics of the household and (ii) individual respondents' background and preferences. This, hopefully, helps guide the design and customization of programs to be responsive to each unique segment of the population.

Clustering Among Households

Across all respondents, three segments or “personas” that differ according to their household size, income before COVID, and source of income were developed. Although decreases in income and losses in livelihood were practically the same, these personas have divergent stories of how they were affected by and are trying to cope from the pandemic.

Table 1. Clustering based on household characteristics

	Persona X Poor	Persona Y Very Poor	Persona Z Relatively Better Off
Prior Monthly Income	Poor, earning below PHP10,000 (half earn below PHP6,000)	Extremely poor, earning below PHP6,000	Better-off, with nearly 1/3 earning >PHP10,000.
Source of Income	Slightly higher proportion from informal sources	Higher proportion from informal sources	Higher proportion earned from formal sources
Location	Mostly from Bukidnon, Cebu, Nueva Ecija	Bohol, Bukidnon, E. Samar, Sarangani	Mostly from Cebu, Metro Manila, Sorsogon
COVID-19 Impact	Slightly higher proportion of those who reported decrease in income	Higher proportion of those who experienced food insecurity	Slightly lower vs average reporting COVID-19 impacts except education impact
Safety Nets	Savings	Family, friends, gov't	Savings and insurance
Access to Support Services	Microfinance, street lenders, and rural banks	Microfinance	Banks, public & private tech-voc training
Assets	Human	Social and Physical	Human

Clustering Among Individuals

The cluster analysis using individual characteristics resulted in four “personas” that are strongly driven by their sectoral identity: women, senior citizens, youth, and farmers. How these drive their transversal skills and interests for opportunities in the future are shown below.

Table 2. Clustering based on respondents' characteristics

	Women	Seniors	Youth	Farmers
Education	Mostly high school graduates	Mostly elementary or lower	High school to college	Elementary to high school
Transversal skills	Intrapersonal skills are dominant	Intrapersonal skills are dominant	Highest vs others in information literacy	Intrapersonal skills are dominant
Opportunity Interest	Business	Business	Employment	Employment
Industry Interest	Trade & services Manufacturing Information tech	Agriculture Trade & services Manufacturing	Information tech Trade & services Health & wellness	Agriculture Construction Trade & services

CONCLUSION

Less than a decade remains for the Philippines to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Unfortunately, COVID-19 has eroded recent gains in poverty reduction. According to various estimates, it has potentially pushed about 1.5 millionⁱ to 2.7 million Filipinosⁱⁱ into poverty in 2020, reversing gains since 2015. The country has less than a decade to catch up on its commitments to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce inequities.

The results of COVID Pulse PH confirm that the poor have barely recovered from the onslaught of the pandemic and the restrictions that had to be imposed to control it. Poor households' income and well-being have been affected significantly, whether they are from urban or rural communities. But more than elaborating on the established situation—that poverty has worsened under the pandemic—COVID Pulse PH aims to help chart the way forward by taking stock of the needs, capabilities, and aspirations of the poor.

Under the [Updated Philippine Development Plan \(PDP\) 2017-2022](#), the government has fine-tuned its strategies to achieve a healthy and resilient Philippines while pushing for a rapid economic turnaround. It identified the following key programs for recovery and resilience: 1) health system improvement; 2) food security and resiliency; 3) learning continuity; 4) digital transformation; and 5) regional development.

Based on this study's findings, we highlight the following key policy implications that could be relevant to putting the Updated PDP to action:

1. Broad-Based Impact, Varied Response

While the pandemic has been concentrated in densely populated metropolitan areas, its effects on incomes and livelihoods were felt nationwide. More than half of the respondents reported being worse-off this year than last year. The ripple effects of the pandemic are felt nationwide: the inability to work due to restrictions in urban areas on one hand, and the broken supply chains and reduced revenue faced by rural areas on the other.

COVID-19 impacts also go beyond income. The food insecurity experienced by families, especially in the poorest segments, are an effect of the precarity in the livelihood of the poor. This could have lasting effects on their nutrition, health, and education. Difficulties in accessing healthcare services (strained by COVID-19) and in sustaining education (due to remote learning arrangements) could have future implications on the productivity of the youth.

The Updated PDP's emphasis on the urgency of regional development to promote recovery and resiliency is thus welcome. However, the decongestion of urban areas through the Balik Probinsya Bagong Pag-Asa Program should be coupled with investments in agriculture, trade and services, and other key sectors that create opportunities that can tap the capabilities of households.

2. Health Strengthening & Social Protection as Critical Investment

There can be no sustained recovery if health response is not strengthened and if adequate social protection is not provided. The focus of the Updated PDP on health system improvement must be acknowledged as this is a necessary foundation for resiliency and recovery. While the universal healthcare system is being strengthened, the response to the current pandemic must continue to be bolstered through, among others, acceleration of vaccination and more granular containment measures.

Social protection is crucial: it not only addresses the immediate needs of households who continue to be displaced from their source of income but could also serve as an instrument to spur consumer demand and a tool for containment of the pandemic.

[A UNDP study using data on the sale of fast-moving consumer goodsⁱⁱⁱ](#) shows that lower-income household's spending spiked after the distribution of SAP, but was dampened below pre-pandemic levels thereafter. This indicates the need for more regular social protection for a wider base until the momentum for recovery has picked up.

3. Informality and Livelihood.

Socioeconomic recovery efforts need to account for the informality and precarity experienced by most of the poor. More than 55 percent of COVID Pulse 3's respondents earn their living from informal sources, while another 22 percent have contractual work.

Informality has been associated with having lower baseline income than average; and greater incidence of income losses, food insecurity, and difficulty in accessing healthcare under the pandemic. They tended to depend more on government aid and help from family and friends as safety nets.

These only emphasize the need to boost social protection as well as access to quality healthcare and affordable food, which the Updated PDP emphasize.

Livelihood support programmes under the new normal should build on the capabilities and skills of the poor. They bank more on their social capital and their intrapersonal skills; and are disadvantaged when it comes to knowledge of and access to technology. While the Updated PDP's focus on digitalization to accelerate recovery is laudable, care should be taken to not further exclude disadvantaged sectors.

Apart from strengthening existing support programmes for micro, small and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs), their accessibility to a broader base^{iv} should be improved, with the informal sector not left behind.

4. Locally-Driven Recovery.

The preceding point to the need to respond to the different needs of communities and sectors in a granular yet cohesive manner. The pandemic has placed a greater onus on delivering socioeconomic recovery upon local government units (LGUs). Success, therefore, requires increased support to LGUs to proactively contain the pandemic, provide social protection and assistance to livelihood, and build confidence in their local economies.

In 2022, the decision on *Mandanas v. Ochoa* to correct the distribution of fiscal resources takes effect. LGUs' additional resources must be used in the most accountable and effective manner. Local development actors—civil society, non-government organizations, private sector, academe, and others—should strengthen their collaboration to assist their LGUs in crafting and rolling out responsive recovery plans while keeping a close tab on how resources are used.

At least in theory, LGUs in the best position to respond to the peculiar needs of their communities. Local development actors—civil society and non-government organizations, private sector, academe, and other sectors—should converge to assist their LGUs in crafting and rolling out responsive recovery plans, keep a close tab on how these resources are allocated and used, and collaborate to build confidence among both consumers and businesses in their local economies. Collective action at the local level is necessary for sustained and effective recovery.

Poor families continue to struggle from the disproportionate effects of the pandemic. But they are not completely helpless: they have capabilities and assets to build on, and preferences and aspirations to uphold. Society—including government, business, civil society, and other sectors—must come together in shaping a better normal. Only through collective action can they bring about a *matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay* (strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life) for the poor.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Albert, JR, MR Abrigo, FM Quimba, and JF Vizmanos (August 2020). Poverty, the Middle Class, and Income Distribution amid COVID-19. Accessed from: <https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps2022.pdf>

ⁱⁱ de Vera, B. (December 2020). World Bank: Pandemic to Sink 2.7M more Filipinos in poverty. Accessed from: <https://business.inquirer.net/313528/world-bank-pandemic-to-sink-2-7m-more-filipinos-in-poverty>

ⁱⁱⁱ Reyes, R., et al. (June 2021). Leveraging Non-Traditional Datasets for Assessing Socioeconomic Impact of COVID-19 Across Philippine Households. UNDP Global Policy Network Development Futures Series. Accessed from: <https://www.undp.org/publications/leveraging-non-traditional-datasets-assessing-socioeconomic-impact-covid-19-across>

^{iv} In a previous UNDP report in 2020, about 64% of MSMEs surveyed did not receive any form of assistance. There was also low level of awareness among MSMEs on these programs as well as on how government quarantine restrictions apply to their business. UNDP (August 2020). MSME Value Chain Rapid Response Survey (Wave 2). Accessed from: <https://www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/library/msme-value-chain-rapid-response-survey.html>

The COVID PULSE PH survey was commissioned by ZEP PH 2030 and UNDP. This working paper is being published to solicit feedback and discussion. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of ZEP PH 2030, its individual members, and the UNDP.

ZEP PH 2030 is a movement that has a radical aim: to reduce a million Filipinos living in extreme poverty by the year 2030. The movement is dedicated to bringing about transformational change towards the realization of a Philippines where Filipino families enjoy the fullness of life in sustainable communities. It is composed of 140 non-government entities that are present in 430 cities and municipalities nationwide.

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