

CHAPTER 18

Ensuring Security, Public Order, and Safety

Building safe, secure, and orderly communities is one of the bedrock strategies towards the PDP's goal of a healthy and resilient Philippines. While significant progress has been made in addressing all forms of external and internal security threats, the national security sector still faces a number of challenges. Thus, it is important to sustain the government's substantive investments in the previous years to further strengthen the capabilities of the military and law enforcement agencies to respond to disasters and prevent fires, protect public and private individuals from cyber threats, and prevent and counter the rise of radicalization leading to violent extremism. The programs that will be implemented in the remainder of the Plan period will also improve the environment for economic investments to flourish.

ASSESSMENT

Reports from the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) indicate that intensified efforts in law enforcement and the campaign against illegal drugs have significantly improved crime solution efficiency and reduced the crime rate in the country. Furthermore, the enactment of policies and implementation mechanisms have enhanced the capacity of the security sector to ensure public order and safety and respond to disasters, fire incidents, and other crises and emergencies, especially the ongoing pandemic. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has recently concluded phase 1 of the AFP Modernization Program which strengthened its capability to protect the country from internal security threats. The government, however, needs to sustain its efforts to further address the challenges of the security sector to achieve a safe and secure environment within this planning period.

ENSURING PUBLIC SAFETY

Improved public safety through partnerships among law enforcement, local government units (LGU), and communities. To protect and ensure public safety, the government continued to increase police presence by hiring more police personnel and establishing police stations in strategic areas. These were complemented by nationwide orientations on the Community and Service-Oriented Policing System (CSOPS) for LGUs, police, and the community. The Barangay Peacekeeping Action Teams and accredited non-government organizations (NGO) augmented the PNP's crime prevention and public safety efforts. Moreover, reformation and internal cleansing within the PNP was intensified to protect the integrity of its personnel and the PNP as an institution.

Enhanced public awareness on cybersecurity through various engagements with the public and the private sector. With the increasing dependence on digital and online transactions, an annual public cyber security drill is being conducted to assess the public's perspective on cybersecurity and their capacity to protect themselves from such threats and attacks. Cybersecurity Policy and Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Trainings for critical information infrastructure are also conducted to capacitate both the public and private sectors on cybersecurity policies and in setting up CERTs as well as incident response life cycles. However, the increasing dependence on the internet for digital transactions and the more sophisticated and advanced cybersecurity risks and threats must be countered by continuous technical upgrading by the security sector.

Strengthened efforts on disaster resiliency. The country's geography and susceptibility to hazard events require strong disaster mitigation and preparedness and well-coordinated humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) efforts. The Updated National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2020-2030 was approved by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) in October 2020. The NDRRMP ensures coherence with international and national frameworks and agenda on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, sustainable development, and human security that share a common vision of reducing risks and enhancing resilience. Disaster preparedness and resiliency was also strengthened through simulation exercises on various disaster events such as typhoons, volcanic eruption, and earthquakes; improved information dissemination by translating disaster information materials to various languages; and reinforced logistics and warehousing capacity of response agencies and LGUs.

SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING ALL FORMS OF CRIMINALITY AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

Intensified law enforcement significantly reduced incidence of criminality and illegal drugs. The intensified efforts of the police, with the support of other law enforcement agencies, enabled the government to reduce criminality and incidence of crime even amidst the pandemic. The Philippine Anti-Illegal Drugs Strategy (PADS) institutionalized a holistic approach to control the proliferation of illegal drugs and the abuse of dangerous drugs. The PADS guided the neutralization of drug activities and key drug personalities, while ensuring the provision of rehabilitation support for drug users and surrenderees.

The government has gained substantial ground in the fight against radicalization and extremism leading to terrorism. The National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP PCVE) was rolled out to implement its key strategies following a whole-of-nation approach. Parallel to this is the cascading of the action plan, training modules, and information and education materials to the concerned regional and field offices, which capacitated targeted LGUs and communities. This is to ensure that national and local efforts are aligned and complementary.

TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SOVEREIGNTY UPHELD AND PROTECTED

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) remains relentless in pursuing our national interest through diplomatic engagement utilizing alternative platforms amidst the pandemic. However, the pandemic has delayed the negotiations for the ASEAN-China Code of Conduct (COC) for the South China Sea (SCS). The onset of the pandemic in 2020 has delayed the efforts of the Philippines to serve as coordinator for the negotiations for an effective and transparent COC. Indonesia has offered to serve as coordinator for 2021. However, the spikes in COVID-19 cases have again delayed the proposed meetings and negotiations. Despite this, the Philippines remains committed to push for the COC as a mechanism to guide future actions of claimant states in the region. Furthermore, the Philippines shall still endeavor to explore new, and strengthen existing, bilateral and multilateral diplomatic arrangements.

The security sector strongly pursued the AFP Modernization Program, laying down the basic elements for a credible defense posture. The first two phases of implementation were pursued under the Revised AFP Modernization Program. The first phase has concluded and focused on building the capability of the AFP for internal security operations. Meanwhile, the second phase will focus on territorial security. The implementation of the Program was highlighted by the acquisition of a number of critical defense capability equipment and materiel, including close-air support aircraft, helicopters, and missile frigates. Other projects still in the pipeline are expected to further boost the capability of the country in patrolling our exclusive economic zone (EEZ), defending our national territory, and addressing the country's internal security concerns.

IN FOCUS: BUBOY, ASPIRING FISH TRADER AND COMMUNITY LEADER



Fourteen-year-old Buboy is the second son of a fisherman living in Pag-asa Island. Unfortunately, his father was involved in an accident with a foreign fishing vessel in the West Philippine Sea. His older brother, who had been residing in Manila, was also arrested recently during an illegal drug operation. To help his mother provide for the family, Buboy was forced to work in a fishing vessel until his father fully recovers.

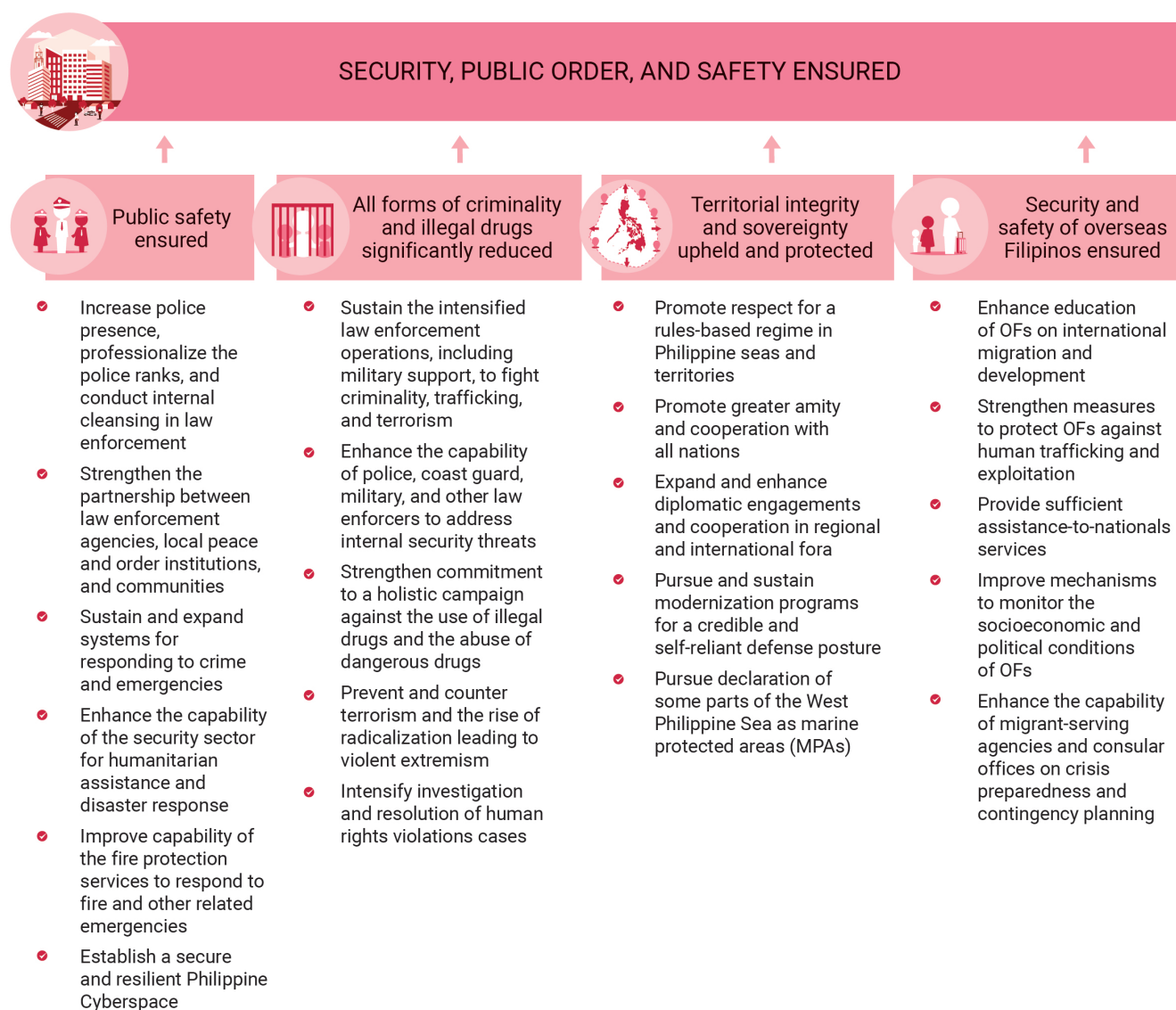
Buboy dreams of finishing high school and obtaining a college diploma. He wants to become a fish trader with his own fishing vessel to be able to support his family. Hardworking and bright, he has the potential to become a community leader. However, his father's injury and his brother's arrest have become obstacles to his dreams. On top of this, the damage to the marine environment due to reclamation activities and illicit fishing in the region has reduced fish catch, affecting the income opportunities of their fishing community. The increasingly aggressive foreign fishers have also made him fear for his and his family's safety.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Persistent challenges confronting the security sector have deprived Buboy and his family of the opportunities to reach their aspirations. Hence, law enforcement, military, government, and the whole of society must work together to pave a safe and secure path for Buboy and every other Filipino to realize a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life. Poor and vulnerable people like Buboy – as well as every Filipino, for that matter – must be provided with a safe environment where they can go about their lives and pursue their aspirations without constantly fearing for their lives and feeling under threat.

For this reason, peace and order has been the primary focus of the Duterte administration and is the “zero” in the administration’s zero-to-ten-point socioeconomic agenda. A secure, orderly, and safe Philippines remains to be the foundation for the success of both the Updated PDP, and its successor Plan. The dreams and aspirations of Buboy and many other Filipinos will be easier to reach if they feel secure. Thus, it is to be accorded high priority through the end of the Plan period and beyond to ensure that the gains in the security sector are sustained. Achieving this goal relies on the government’s ability to effectively implement the following strategies under the new normal, as shown in the Figure below.

Figure 18.1 Strategic Framework to Ensure Security, Public Order, and Safety



Note: Refer to Migration on Chapter 21 for strategies relating to overseas Filipinos (OFs)

STRATEGIES

TO ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY

Increase police presence, professionalize the police ranks, and conduct internal cleansing law enforcement

Prioritize the professionalization and internal cleansing of police ranks. In its efforts to expand and intensify police presence, the PNP shall ensure that newly-hired and active duty police personnel exhibit professionalism and incorruptible integrity. Towards this end, it shall intensify its internal cleansing through restorative approaches such as focused reformation and reorientation as well as moral enrichment of police officers. Weekly squad interactive meetings will also be conducted to ensure that police personnel who remain in active duty are morally and mentally fit. The PNP shall also develop mandatory trainings for their personnel on pandemic containment including isolation, reduction, and prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Strengthen the partnership between law enforcement agencies, local peace and order institutions, and communities

Place Community and Service-Oriented Policing (CSOPS) at the core of all efforts of the police, local governments, and communities in ensuring public safety. The Department of the Interior and Local Government and the National Police Commission shall strive to institutionalize CSOPS by including it in the PNP scorecards, awarding best practices and CSOP champions in the PNP, and incorporating it as one of the criteria for the LGU “Seal of Good Local Governance” award.

Enhance the capability of the security sector for humanitarian assistance and disaster response

Prioritize programs to enhance capacity for HADR. National government and LGUs will collaborate to build the capacities of LGUs and communities in HADR. This must be supported by the use of science-based methods in hazard assessment and its incorporation in planning.

Update the National Action Plan on Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (NAP CBRN). The NAP CBRN seeks to mitigate risks of CBRN threats by building the capacities and preparedness of communities, LGUs, and other frontliners. The national government is in the process of developing a response framework and disaster response plan to be implemented nationwide and localized to ensure interoperability of relevant stakeholders in such events.

TO SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE ALL FORMS OF CRIMINALITY AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

Sustain the intensified law enforcement operations, including military support to fight criminality, trafficking, and terrorism and enhance the capability of police, coast guard, military and other law enforces to address internal security threats

Sustain intensified law enforcement operations against all forms of criminality and illegal drugs by building

the critical skills and competencies of law enforcement agencies. The fight against criminality shall remain a top priority of the administration which will be sustained through the end of the Plan period and beyond with a revitalized and strengthened PNP. The Core Competency-Based Training Program shall capacitate police officers in case recording and tracking, case filing and arrest, and operational readiness to ensure that cases are solved efficiently and with finality. Data sharing and coordination within the criminal justice system shall be pursued to ensure harmony across its pillars. The adoption of secured, mobile, artificial intelligence-driven and real-time policing will enable the PNP to adjust to the new normal, including the increasing practice of online transactions.

Strengthen commitment to a holistic campaign against the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of dangerous drugs

Continue to implement the Philippine Anti-illegal Drugs Strategy (PADS) together with other government agencies and stakeholders. The Drug-Free Workplace Policy and Programs under PADS will be implemented in all relevant agencies and by stakeholders, to include their external clients. Likewise, PADS Communication Plan will focus on youth, families, and other stakeholders as principal actors in keeping communities safe, peaceful, healthy, and drug-free.

The Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) will ensure accessibility and availability of treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration services with emphasis on strengthening policies and implementing community-based interventions. The DDB will continue to implement the Client Flow for Wellness and Recovery from Substance-Related Issues to guide drug users seeking treatment and rehabilitation as well as assist duty bearers in providing services and care. Furthermore, the national government will provide financial support for the construction of LGU-owned and community-based treatment and rehabilitation facilities.

Prevent and counter terrorism and the rise of radicalization leading to violent extremism

Implement a whole-of-nation approach to preventing and countering violent extremism. The enhancement of the NAP PCVE implementation aims to establish a common results framework between government and non-government stakeholders. It will focus on localized implementation in priority areas nationwide. One critical objective is to capacitate LGUs to identify vulnerabilities that cause violent extremism and the corresponding programs to address these vulnerabilities, while, in the process becoming ready to receive assistance from the national government and partner civil society organizations (CSOs). The successor plan will be pivotal in institutionalizing NAP and strengthening local PCVE teams and mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of interventions.

Likewise, the PNP, in partnership with Muslim communities, is establishing the Salaam Police Centers to build the latter's capability against violent extremism. It will monitor and liaise with Muslim communities to address terrorism and violence in their areas and thwart discrimination and oppression against Muslims. In support of this, various activities are also being conducted such as community dialogues with religious leaders, engagement with Muslim scholars and elders, and Masjid and Madrasah visitations centering on PCVE and peacebuilding in communities.

TO UPHOLD AND PROTECT TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

Pursue and sustain modernization programs for a credible and self-reliant defense posture

External defense shall be the focus of the Department of National Defense's (DND) efforts in establishing a credible and self-reliant defense posture. In the remaining Plan period, the DND shall push for the continued modernization and improvement of personnel management of the armed forces. With the conclusion of the AFP Modernization Program Phase 1, the AFP shall transition to Phase 2 particularly on the acquisition of defense material to build its capacity to address external threats. The DND shall also strengthen defense cooperation with allies and partners, and improve inter-agency collaboration on maritime security and territorial defense.

