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# Study on Child Poverty and Public Finances in the Regions of the Philippines



### **About this study**

The Study on Child Poverty and Public Finances in the Regions of the Philippines was conducted by UNICEF in close collaboration with the Department of Budget and Management, Philippines. It examines child poverty trends across the regions of the Philippines and analyzes how these trends align with patterns of public spending and intergovernmental fiscal transfers. By linking multidimensional child poverty data with regional public finance, the study provides an evidence base for assessing equity gaps and strengthening child-responsive public financial management in the context of ongoing fiscal decentralization reforms in the country.

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This study was supported by the European Union and UNICEF under the EU-UNICEF Public Finance Facility for South and Southeast Asia, a regional initiative aimed at contributing to the realization of children’s rights through improved use of public budgets. Through this partnership, the Facility supports governments and partners in advancing reforms that enhance the efficiency, accountability, and child-responsiveness of public finance systems. This includes strengthening budget analysis, generating evidence to inform policy and budgeting decisions, and promoting evidence-based policy dialogue and knowledge sharing across the region.

The implementation of the Public Finance Facility in the Philippines is being led by the Department of the Budget and Management, with support from the European Union and UNICEF Philippines.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### DISCLAIMER

This study was supported by the European Union and UNICEF under the EU-UNICEF Public Finance Facility for South and Southeast Asia, a regional initiative that aims to contribute to the realisation of children's rights by supporting the best possible use of public budgets.

Through this partnership, the Facility supports governments and partners in advancing reforms that enhance the efficiency, accountability, and child-responsiveness of public finance systems, including strengthening budget analysis, generating evidence to inform policy and budgeting decision, and evidence-based policy dialogue and knowledge sharing.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
EPRI	Economic Policy Research Institute
FIES	Food Income and Expenditure Survey
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
LFS	Labor Force Survey
LGU	Local Government Unit
NPL	National Poverty Line
NTA	National Tax Allotment
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PSA	Philippine Statistics Authority
RA	Republic Act
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic allocation of public finances, particularly in social protection, education, health, and nutrition, can significantly improve children's lives and break the cycle of poverty in the Philippines. This study examines how child poverty data can inform public finance decisions, especially within the context of fiscal decentralisation under the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling, which expanded the National Tax Allotment (NTA) to Local Government Units (LGUs) and devolved greater responsibility for delivering basic services.

The analysis combines child poverty trends with regional public finance data from 2018–2023, drawing on merged Food, Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES) and Labour Force Survey (LFS) datasets, along with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and Department of Finance - Bureau of Local Government Finance (DOF-BLGF) records. It examines NTA allocations, operating income, and expenditure patterns to assess whether fiscal transfers align with child poverty needs.

Findings indicate that intergovernmental transfers and spending patterns are not systematically informed by child poverty data. Poverty rates rose sharply between 2018 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic then declining in 2023, with children disproportionately affected. Their vulnerability is closely linked to factors such as the household head's education level, household size, urban-rural location, and sex. Regional disparities remain stark: while the National Capital Region (NCR) and Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) record relatively low child poverty rates, regions such as Region XII - Caraga (Northeastern Mindanao), Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, Region V - Bicol, and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) experience severe and persistent deprivation. Despite these variations, the current NTA formula does not account for poverty incidence, leading to inequitable resource allocation and constraining the delivery of essential services in high-poverty areas.

Utilising child poverty data to guide public finances in the Philippines can greatly enhance the design and delivery of convergent social services, addressing children's multiple needs simultaneously. Disaggregated data by region, province, and LGU enable policymakers to target areas with the highest deprivation, allocate resources strategically, monitor spending, and measure impact. Tracking trends over time allows the government to assess and adjust programs for greater effectiveness. Such data-driven decision-making can optimise public spending, strengthen devolution and fiscal decentralisation, and ensure resources are maximised for the benefit of all children.

This study further recommends updating national poverty lines to reflect current living standards; complementing monetary poverty measures with multi-dimensional child poverty assessments; institutionalising child poverty monitoring at the regional level; using regional data to localise SDGs and tailor interventions; revising NTA formulas to incorporate child poverty rates for fairer transfers; and improving LGU expenditure classification to better track child-focused spending.

# I. Background

Child poverty refers to the state of children living in poverty. Children are more than twice as likely as adults to live in poverty and can be considered among the most vulnerable members of any society. It has a direct and often devastating impact on their physical and intellectual growth because their bodies and minds are still developing. Limited access to nutritious food can lead to stunting and hinder brain development, while a lack of educational resources can stifle their potential and trap them in a cycle of disadvantage. This not only harms the individual child, but also weakens the future of the entire society.<sup>1</sup>

The Philippines also continues to grapple with child poverty. According to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), an estimated 26.3 per cent – or roughly 10.5 million children under the age of 18 years – lived below the national poverty line in 2021.<sup>2</sup> This was an increase in child poverty from 2018 onwards, when 9.3 million children were living in poverty. The situation was largely attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Allocation of public finances and increased investments in key sectors can significantly improve the lives of children and break the cycle of poverty. The allotment of resources towards social protection programmes, for example financial support to poor and low-income families with children, and programmes that provide access to education, nutrition and health services, can ensure that children have the basic foundation for healthy development.

This study is conducted amid the Philippines' ongoing devolution and fiscal decentralisation process, guided by the Local Government (LGU) Code of 1991 and the implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling of the Supreme Court, which became effective in 2019. The ruling stipulates that the determination of the transfers from the national government to LGUs should not be based solely on national internal revenue taxes but on all national taxes.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, LGUs should get 40 per cent of all government tax collections, and not just internal revenue, three years prior. This increase in the National Tax Allotment (NTA) to the LGUs shall go hand-in-hand with a full devolution of the provision of basic services and facilities to the LGUs as embodied in Executive Order No. 138.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF. 2024. *Child Poverty*. UNICEF. 2024. <https://www.unicef.org/social-policy/child-poverty>.

<sup>2</sup> "Child Poverty | Situation of Children Philippines." 2023. Situation of Children Philippines. 2023. <https://situationofchildren.org/child-poverty>.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Budget and Management, *FAQs: Mandanas-Garcia Ruling*, (PDF), November 9, 2021, <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/Mandanas-Garcia-Case/IEC-Materials/FAQs-Mandanas-Garcia-Ruling.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Executive Order No. 138, s. 2021, "Full Devolution of Certain Functions of the Executive Branch to Local Governments, Creation of a Committee on Devolution, and for Other Purposes," signed by President R Duterte on June 1, 2021, LawPhil (Arellano Law Foundation), [https://lawphil.net/executive/execord/eo2021/eo\\_138\\_2021.html](https://lawphil.net/executive/execord/eo2021/eo_138_2021.html).

This study seeks to identify how child poverty data can be used to inform public finances within the regions. Therefore, this study zooms in on child poverty trends in the Philippines' 17 regions from 2018 onwards and compares these to public finances over the same period. The following section provides an overview of the data sources and analysis methods applied in this study. The third section provides an overview of national child poverty trends in the Philippines from 2018 onwards, while the fourth section focuses on child poverty trends across the regions.

Subsequently, the fifth section provides an overview of the trends in public finances at the regional level and the sixth section seeks to understand the relevance of child poverty data in informing public finances, including intergovernmental transfers. The report concludes with policy implications and recommendations.

## II. Methodology

This study on child poverty and public finances in the Philippines draws on the quantitative analysis of available secondary datasets.

### 2.1. Child poverty analysis

The child poverty analysis was conducted at national and subnational levels, specifically across 17 regions of the Philippines, drawing on the merged datasets of the Food, Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the years 2018, 2021 and 2023. The merged datasets were retrieved from the PSA.

The analysis uses various poverty lines to present a comprehensive and nuanced picture of child poverty in the country:

- Monetary poverty: The official national poverty line (NPL) in the Philippines, retrieved from the PSA. In 2018, the national poverty line amounted to ₱ 25,814 per capita/year, in 2021 to ₱ 28,794 per capita/year, and in 2023 to ₱ 33,296 per capita/year.<sup>5</sup> For regional poverty estimates, the regional poverty lines were used.
- Food poverty: The official food poverty line in the Philippines, retrieved from the PSA. In 2018, the food poverty line amounted to ₱ 18,126 per capita/year, in 2021 to ₱ 20,046 per capita/year and in 2023 to ₱ 22,994 per capita/year.<sup>6</sup>
- International poverty line for upper middle income countries: The World Bank's poverty line for upper middle-income countries of US\$ 5.50 per day was used for the years of 2018 and 2021 and the revised international poverty line of US\$ 6.85 was used for 2023.<sup>7</sup> The international poverty line was converted to ₱ using purchasing power parity (PPP).<sup>8</sup> As such, the international poverty line used in this study amounted to ₱ 37,942 per capita/year for 2018 and 2021 and ₱ 48,487 per capita/year for 2023.
- Near-poverty: The Philippines is working on updating its definition of near-poverty. An ongoing study proposes a definition of 1.25 times the national monetary poverty line.<sup>9</sup> This definition was adopted by this study, resulting in a near-poverty line of ₱ 32,268 per capita/year in 2018, ₱ 35,993 per capita/year in 2021, and ₱ 41,620 per capita/year in 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Philippine Statistics Authority, Poverty Statistical Tables (webpage), accessed January 24, 2026, <https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/poverty/stat-tables>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> In 2022, the international poverty lines were updated by the World Bank (World Bank, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> The World Bank, *Philippines Economic Update, June 2021: Navigating a Challenging Recovery* (Washington, DC: World Bank, June 14, 2021), accessed January 24, 2026, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/philippines/publication/navigating-a-challenging-recovery-in-the-philippines-philippines-economic-update-june-2021>.

<sup>9</sup> According to research from the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI), commissioned by UNICEF Philippines, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Australian Embassy.

- Not poor: Children living in households that are not poor according to the national/regional monetary poverty lines were defined as non-poor. The poverty lines used in this study are listed below in ₱ and apply to per capita/year (see *Table 1*).

**Table 1. Different poverty lines in ₱ per capita/year (2018, 2021, 2023)**

Poverty line	2018	2021	2023
Monetary poverty line	₱ 25,814	₱ 28,794	₱ 33,296
Food poverty line	₱ 18,126	₱ 20,046	₱ 22,994
Near-poverty line	₱ 32,268	₱ 35,993	₱ 41,620
International poverty line	₱ 37,942		₱ 48,487

Children were identified as poor if they live in households with per capita income equal to, or lower than, the poverty lines set by each metric listed above. The merged FIES-LFS datasets provide information on the total household income and the number and age of household members. For the sake of the analysis, the income was split equally among all household members to define the per capita income. Persons with a per capita income equal to, or lower than, the poverty lines set above, are considered poor. The analysis summarises the findings into two commonly-used poverty statistics:

- Poverty headcount: The number of poor children at national and regional levels, expressed in absolute numbers.
- Poverty incidence/rate: The share of poor children out of the total population at national and regional levels, expressed as percentage.

The analysis disaggregates according to children, adolescents, and adults. Children are defined as persons aged under 18 years and adults as persons aged 18 years and above. Adolescents are defined as persons aged 10-19 years, a sub-group that overlaps with both children and adults.

The national poverty analysis further disaggregates poverty statistics according to socio-economic characteristics of the households that children live in. This includes the sex of the household head, the education level of the household head, the number of total children living in the household and whether the household lives in an urban or rural area.

## 2.2. Public finance analysis

A public finance analysis was conducted at the regional level. The analysis was based on the regional data from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Department of Finance-Bureau of Local Government Finance (DOF-BLGF), for the years of 2018 to 2023. The utilised data includes the NTA for LGUs; the regional allocation of the expenditure programme; and the Statement of Receipts and Expenditures (SRE). The regional public finance analysis was conducted for the period of 2018 to 2023.

Specifically, the analysis examines closely on the yearly operating income and the allocation of NTA to the regions. This focus on the NTA seeks to provide a nuanced analysis to inform the implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling and to potentially strengthen the equity-lens of NTA computation. It must be stressed that next to the NTA, other allocations/transfers to the LGUs exist, including the Local Government Support Fund, Block Grant, and so on. These were not included in the analysis.

## 2.3. Integrated analysis

In a final step, the findings from the child poverty analysis and the public finance analysis were analysed alongside each other to identify how child poverty data can be used to inform public finances in the regions.

# III. Child poverty in the Philippines: An overview

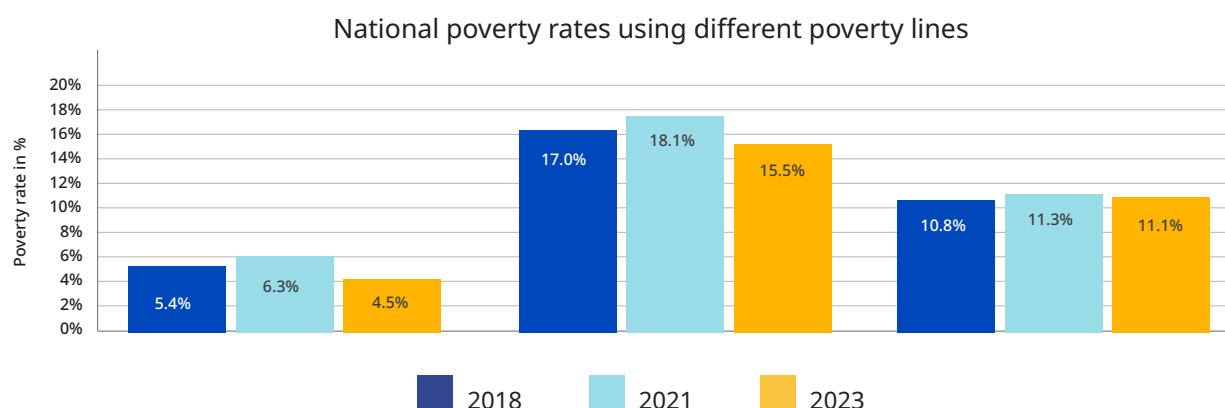
This section provides an overview of child poverty trends in the Philippines, based on the merged FIES-LFS from 2018, 2021, and 2023. The presented statistics are representative for the whole country and use national-level poverty lines.

## 3.1. Overall poverty

Poverty rates in the Philippines increased from 2018 to 2021 and then decreased from 2021 to 2023, according to three different poverty measures (see Figure 1). Measured according to the national poverty line, 17 per cent of the population lived in poverty in 2018, increasing to 18.2 per cent in 2021 and decreasing to 15.5 per cent in 2023. Expressed in absolute numbers, the poverty headcount increased from 18.7 million persons to 20.3 million persons over the same period (see Table 2). The temporary increase in 2021 can be largely attributed to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately impacted low-income families. The pandemic's economic disruptions, particularly job losses and business closures, pushed many below the poverty line.

Likewise, food poverty rates increased from 2018 to 2021 before decreasing in 2023. The food poverty line is lower than the monetary poverty line and thus can be considered a measure of 'extreme poverty'. In 2021, over 7 million Filipinos (6.3 per cent of the population) were living in food poverty, falling to roughly 5 million in 2023. This suggests that COVID-19 also affected the depth of poverty, pushing many Filipinos deeper into poverty.

Figure 1. National poverty rates according to different poverty lines (%) (2018, 2021, 2023)



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018, 2021, and 2023.

Finally, near-poverty was also assessed by this study. The Philippines is currently in the process of updating its definition and threshold for near-poverty and a proposed measure of 1.25 times the national poverty line is proposed.<sup>10</sup> According to this definition of near-poverty, 11 million persons (10.8 per cent) were near-poor in 2018, such as living above the official poverty line, but below the near-poverty line. In 2021, this number increased to 12.6 million persons (11.3 per cent) and decreased slightly to 12.5 million persons (11.1 per cent) in 2023. Hence, while many individuals and families moved out of poverty, not that many moved out of near-poverty. Near-poor persons are highly vulnerable to falling into poverty, as they do not have the resources to cope with economic shocks or unexpected expenses.

**Table 2. Poverty incidence in the Philippines using different poverty lines, 2018, 2021, and 2023**

Year	Food -poor	Poor	Near-poor
2018	5,993,267	18,722,296	11,863,480
2021	7,034,274	20,146,649	12,632,134
2023	5,084,935	17,463,304	12,517,696

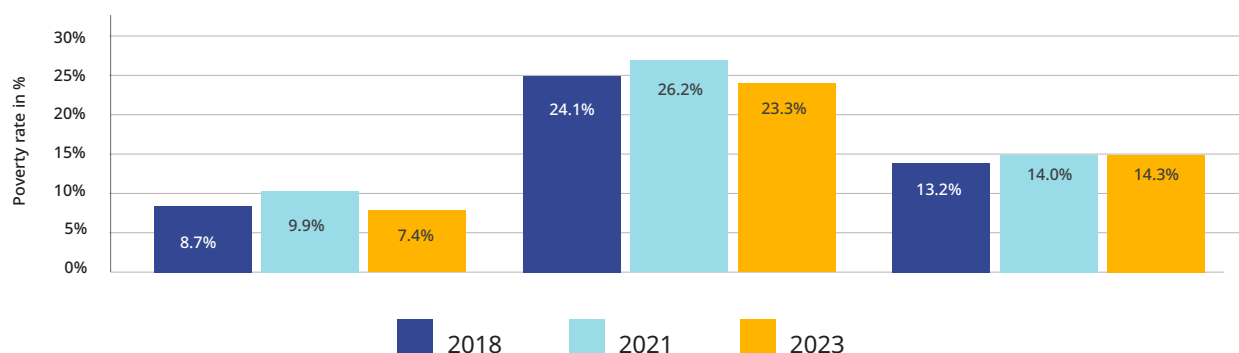
Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018, 2021, and 2023.

### 3.2. Child poverty

In line with overall poverty, child poverty also increased in 2021 and decreased again in 2023 (see Figure 2). In 2021, 10 million children were living in poverty (26.2 per cent) and in 2023, the number reduced to 8.8 million children (23.3 per cent) (see Table 3). Food poverty trends among children evolved in a similar way and dropped in 2023. Near-poverty rates, however, have increased since 2018. In 2018, 13.2 per cent of children were living near-poverty then rose to 14.3 per cent in 2024. This trend is contrary to the number of children living in near-poverty, which has slightly decreased from 5.41 million in 2018 to 5.36 million in 2023. These counter-intuitive figures can be explained by an overall decline in the child population in the Philippines, resulting in a smaller number of children making up a bigger share of the total child population.

<sup>10</sup> According to research from the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI), commissioned by UNICEF Philippines, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Australian Embassy.

**Figure 2. Child poverty rates according to different poverty lines (%) (2018, 2021, 2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018 and 2021

**Table 3. Child poverty incidence using different poverty lines (2018, 2021, 2023)**

Year	Food -poor	Poor	Near-poor
2018	3,410,264	9,850,887	5,413,575
2021	3,817,163	10,038,163	5,366,588
2023	2,770,010	8,755,376	5,361,026

Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018, 2021, and 2023

### Box 1. Applying the international poverty line

*This study also applied the international poverty line for upper middle-income countries to measure poverty and child poverty in the Philippines, since the country is expected to attain upper middle-income status by 2025.<sup>11</sup> In 2021, 36.2 million Filipinos were poor according to the international poverty line (32.5 per cent), increasing to 39.8 million (35.3 per cent) in 2023. Hence, more than twice as many Filipinos are considered poor using the international poverty line compared to the national poverty line. Child poverty figures are also considerably higher using the international poverty line: in 2021, 16.8 million (43.8 per cent) were living in poverty and 17.9 million (47.8 per cent) in 2023.*

<sup>11</sup> National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), "PH Achieves 2023 GNI Per Capita Target, on Track to Reach Upper Middle-Income Status," NEDA, July 4, 2024, <https://neda.gov.ph/ph-achieves-2023-gni-per-capita-target-on-track-to-reach-upper-middle-income-status/>

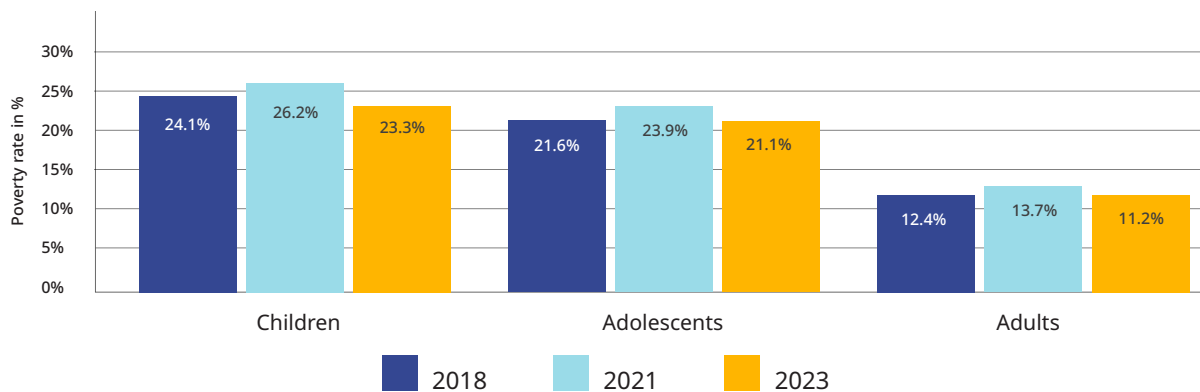
The reason for this discrepancy between national and international poverty lines is that the international line is much higher compared to the national line, and therefore more persons have incomes that fall below the line. The national poverty line amounted to ₱ 33,296 per capita/year in 2023, whereas the international line amounted to ₱ 48,487 per capita/year (46 per cent higher). This comparison also stresses the importance of picking a relevant poverty line that adequately reflects living standards in the country.

It must also be highlighted that the international poverty line was adjusted and revised upwards in 2022. As a result, poverty incidence and rates increased substantially from 2021 to 2023. This change stresses the effects that a poverty line has on a country's poverty statistics and underlines the relevance of setting an adequate poverty line. Governments must periodically reassess the country's poverty line, ensuring it remains relevant to reflect the current cost of living.

### 3.3. Comparing child, adolescent and adult poverty

A comparison of child, adolescent and adult poverty rates reveals that child and adolescent poverty rates were noticeably higher than adult poverty rates for all three years (see Figure 3). In 2023, 11.2 per cent of all adults were living in poverty based on the national poverty line, compared to 21.1 per cent of all adolescents and 24.1 per cent of all children. Hence, the poverty incidence of children is more than double that of adults. The difference in poverty rates between children and adolescents is less pronounced, with a three-percentage points gap. This is unsurprising given the high degree of age overlap between these two groups. Poverty among all three age groups increased from 2018 to 2021 and decreased again to 2023.

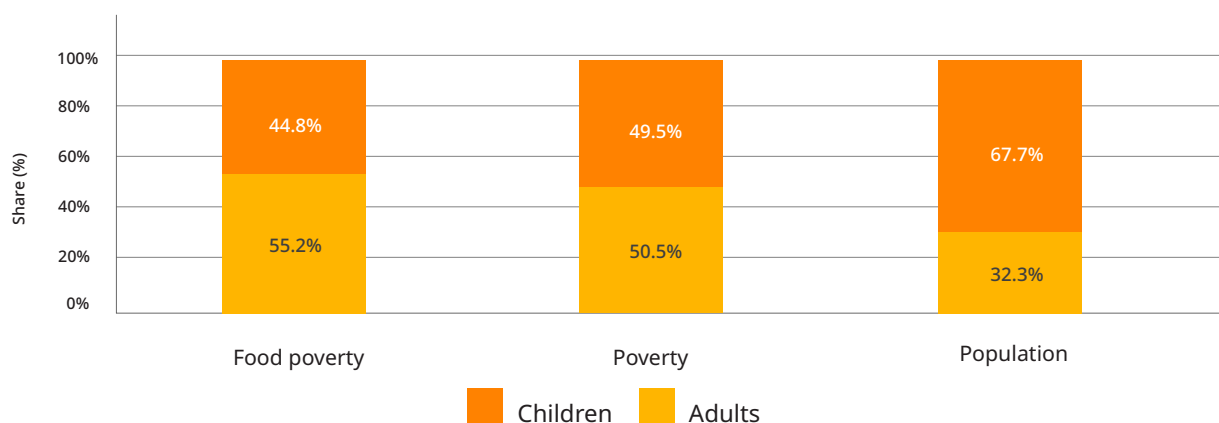
**Figure 3. Comparison of child, adolescent, adult poverty rates (%), 2018, 2021 and 2023**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018, 2021, and 2023

A comparison of population and poverty shares of children and adults shows that children are over-represented among the poor (see Figure 4). In 2023, children accounted for half of the poor population in the Philippines (50.5 per cent) even though they only accounted for a third of the total population (32.3 per cent). Their representation among food poor is even higher, with 55.2 per cent of all food poor in the country being children, marking a significant difference to their population share.

**Figure 4. Poverty and population share of adults and children (%) (2023)**

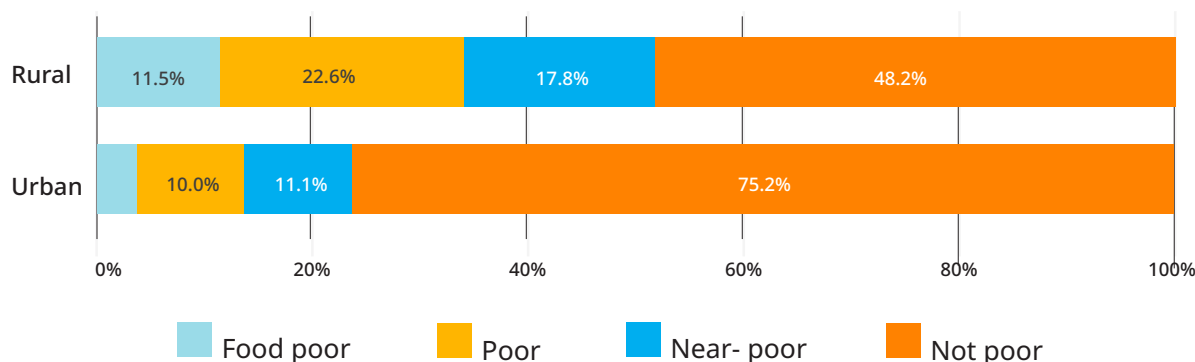


Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

### 3.4. Household characteristics and child poverty

Further focusing on child poverty in 2023, the rural-urban disaggregation shows that children in rural areas have a higher chance of living in poverty compared to their urban peers (see Figure 5). More than half of all the children living in rural households are either food poor (11.5 per cent), poor (22.6 per cent) or near-poor (17.8 per cent). In contrast with urban households, three-quarters of all children (75.2 per cent) are non-poor and only a quarter is either food poor (3.7 per cent), poor (10 per cent) or near-poor (11.1 per cent). Several factors contribute to the pattern such as less job opportunities and lower wages for parents/caregivers in rural areas resulting in lower family incomes and a higher risk of poverty for children, as well as more limited access to basic services in education, health, nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and social protection, putting further strain on families and children.

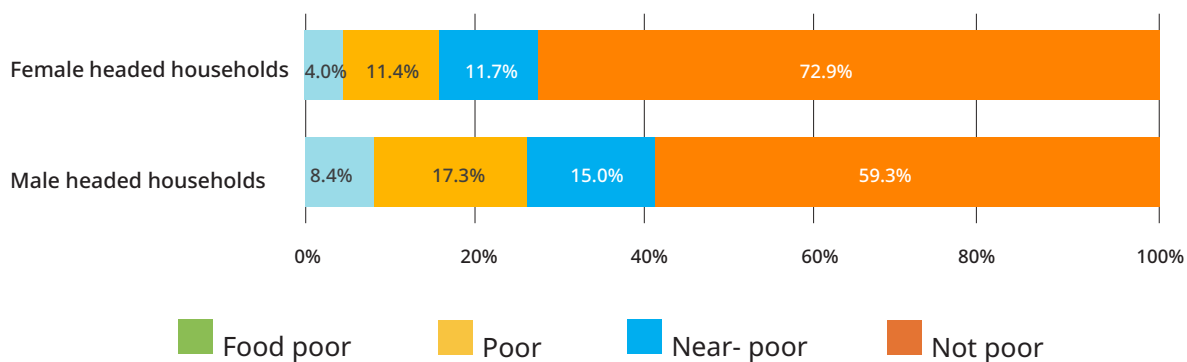
**Figure 5. Poverty status by rural-urban divide (%) (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

Assessing children's poverty status by sex of the household head shows that lower shares of children in female-headed households are food poor (4 per cent), poor (11.4 per cent) or near-poor (11.7 per cent), compared to children in male-headed households (see Figure 6). Almost 40 per cent of children living in male-headed households are either food poor, poor or near-poor. This finding opposes broader research, which shows that children in female-headed households tend to experience higher poverty rates than children in male-headed households. However, it must be stressed that the majority of Filipino children live in male-headed households (77 per cent) and only a minority lives in female-headed households (23 per cent). Hence, this pattern only applies to a small share of households. Moreover, confounding factors might help to explain this pattern: a household might be female-headed because the male household head might have migrated in pursuit of other economic opportunities.

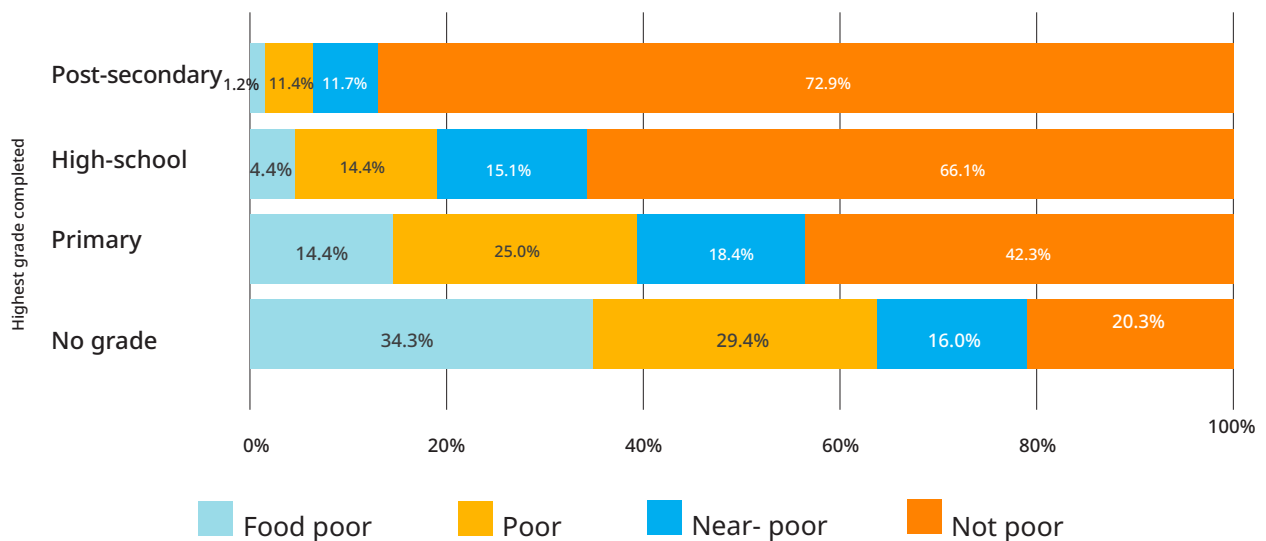
**Figure 6. Poverty status by sex of household head (%) (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

Poverty rates of children in households with lower education levels completed by the household head have significantly higher poverty and food poverty rates than children in households with higher education levels (see Figure 7). In households with heads who have no completed education levels, 34.3 per cent of all children are food poor and 29.4 per cent are poor. Hence, almost two-thirds of all children in these households live in extreme poverty, while only 20.3 per cent are non-poor. In contrast, 87.4 per cent of children in households with heads who have completed post-secondary education are non-poor and only 6.1 per cent are food poor or poor. Thus, there is a clear link between education and child poverty.

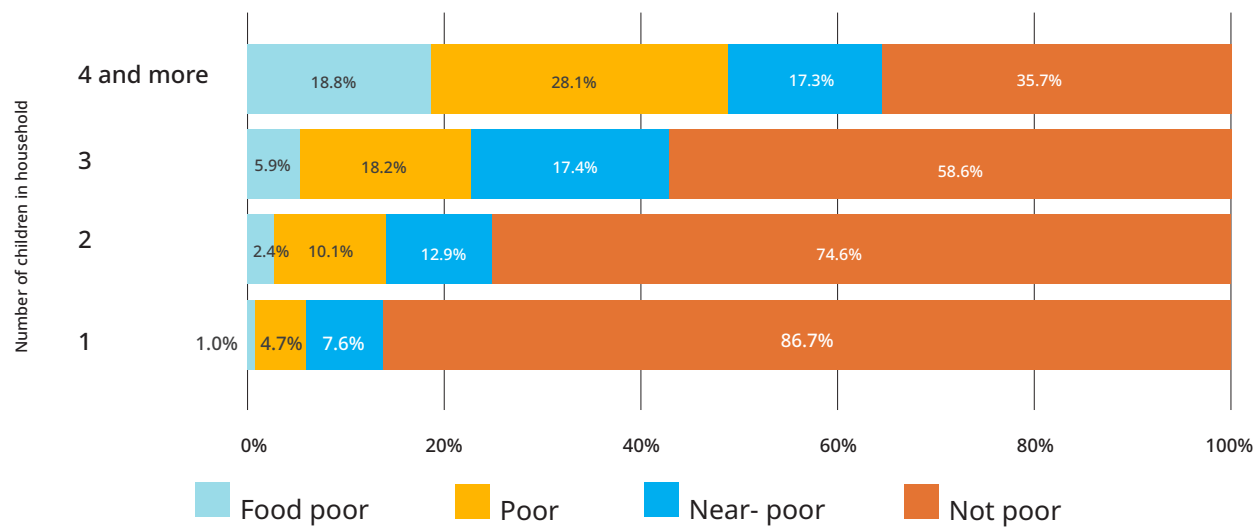
**Figure 7. Poverty status by education level of household head (%) (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

Finally, children living in bigger households with more children have higher poverty rates compared to their peers in smaller households (see Figure 8). Almost half of all children living in households with four or more children live in food poverty while only 5.7 per cent of children in single-child households do. Interestingly, children in households with three children have much lower food poverty rates than children in bigger households, but the near-poverty rates are slightly higher. Therefore, a fair share of children in these households are vulnerable to falling into poverty.

**Figure 8. Poverty status by number of children in household (%) (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

## IV. Child poverty trends in the regions

Using the official regional poverty lines, child poverty rates with regional disaggregation were computed for the Philippines. The child poverty headcount and child poverty rates across the regions in 2018, 2021 and 2023 are shown in Table 4. In 2023, the highest child poverty rates prevailed in Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula (42.8 per cent), BARMM (39.6 per cent) and Region V - Bicol Region (38.6 per cent). The lowest child poverty rates prevailed in the NCR (3.5 per cent), the CAR (11.1 per cent), and Region III - Central Luzon (13.4 per cent).

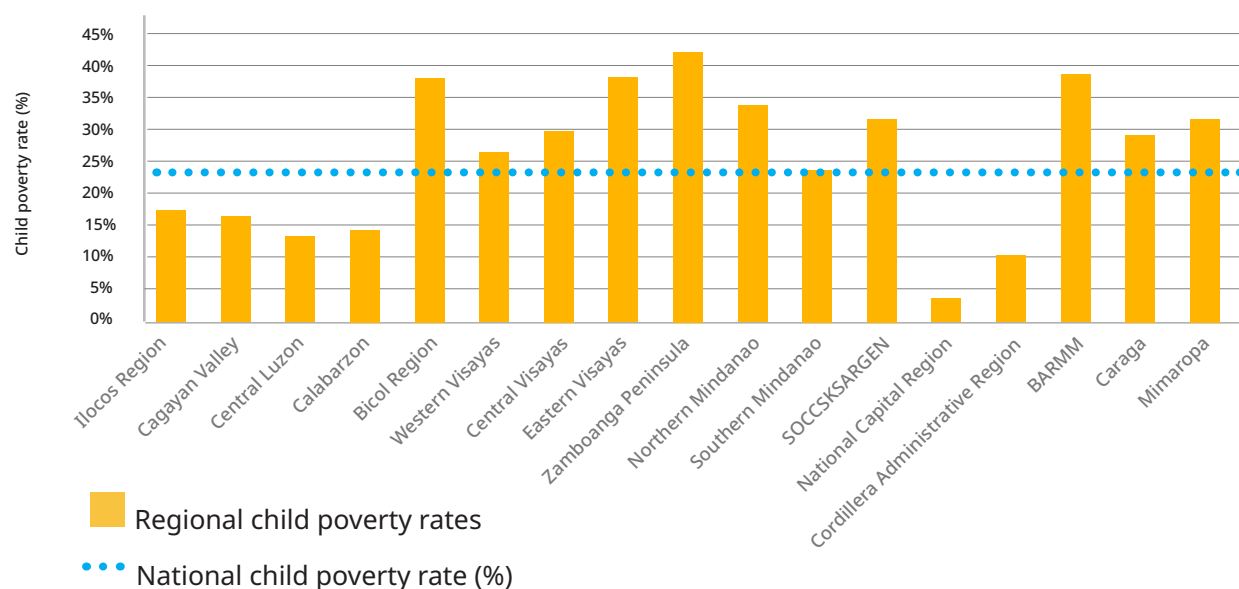
**Table 4. Child poverty statistics for the regions (2018, 2021, 2023)**

Regions	2018		2021		2023	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Region I – Ilocos Region	283,250	15.7%	362,282	21.3%	285,155	18.0%
Region II – Cagayan Valley	296,196	22.8%	275,236	22.1%	203,395	16.8%
Region III – Central Luzon	493,401	11.4%	707,703	17.4%	535,741	13.4%
Region IV-A – CALABARZON	493,401	11.9%	935,571	16.5%	851,657	15.4%
Region IV-B – MIMAROPA	278,686	21.3%	372,874	30.5%	388,361	32.4%
Region VI – Western Visayas	693,122	23.7%	752,760	28.3%	726,784	27.2%
Region VII – Central Visayas	766,035	25.0%	1,154,930	40.5%	805,982	30.0%
Region VIII – Eastern Visayas	798,780	41.8%	706,631	39.3%	688,103	38.7%
Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula	668,355	41.0%	642,414	43.0%	623,960	42.8%
Region X – Northern Mindanao	631,801	31.2%	661,152	35.5%	651,831	34.3%
Region XI – Davao Region	548,036	26.5%	457,123	23.5%	500,253	24.5%
Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN	737,464	36.6%	759,646	38.7%	551,259	32.6%
National Capital Region (NCR)	193,144	4.1%	265,511	6.2%	149,863	3.5%
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	114,041	17.1%	87,963	14.5%	63,020	11.1%
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	1,212,119	71.6%	596,418	39.5%	659,066	39.6%
Region XIII - Caraga	465,720	40.4%	493,949	44.0%	324,803	29.6%

Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018, 2021, and 2023

Comparing the average child poverty rate of the Philippines with the child poverty rates in the regions illustrates which regions have below-average child poverty rates and which ones have above-average rates (see Figure 9). In 2023, the national child poverty rate stood at 23.3 per cent. As illustrated, 11 regions have above-average child poverty rates: Region V - Bicol, Region VI - Western Visayas, Region VII - Central Visayas, Region VIII - Eastern Visayas, Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, Region X - Northern Mindanao, Region XI - Davao Region, Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN, BARMM, Region XIII - Caraga and Region IV-B - MIMAROPA.

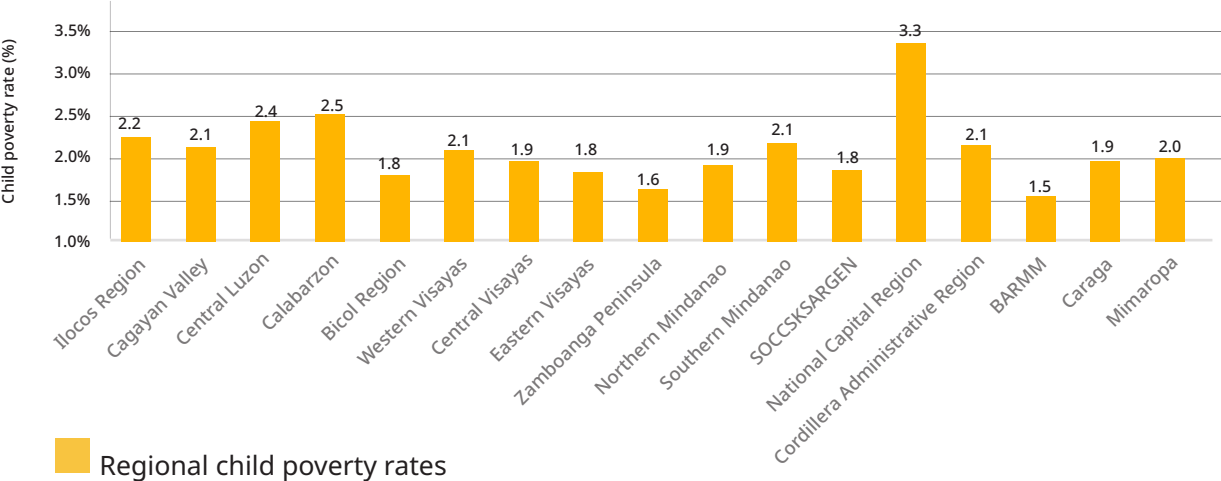
**Figure 9. Comparison of regional and national child poverty rates (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

The same with the national level, the regional level child poverty rates are higher than poverty rates for the total population in the country. On average, child poverty rates are 1.9 times higher than adult poverty rates across the regions (see Figure 10). In 2023, the discrepancy between child poverty and adult poverty rates was biggest in the NCR with a ratio of 3.3, and smallest in BARMM with a ratio of 1.5. Thus, in the NCR, 3.3 children were poor for every poor adult, while 1.4 children for every adult in BARMM.

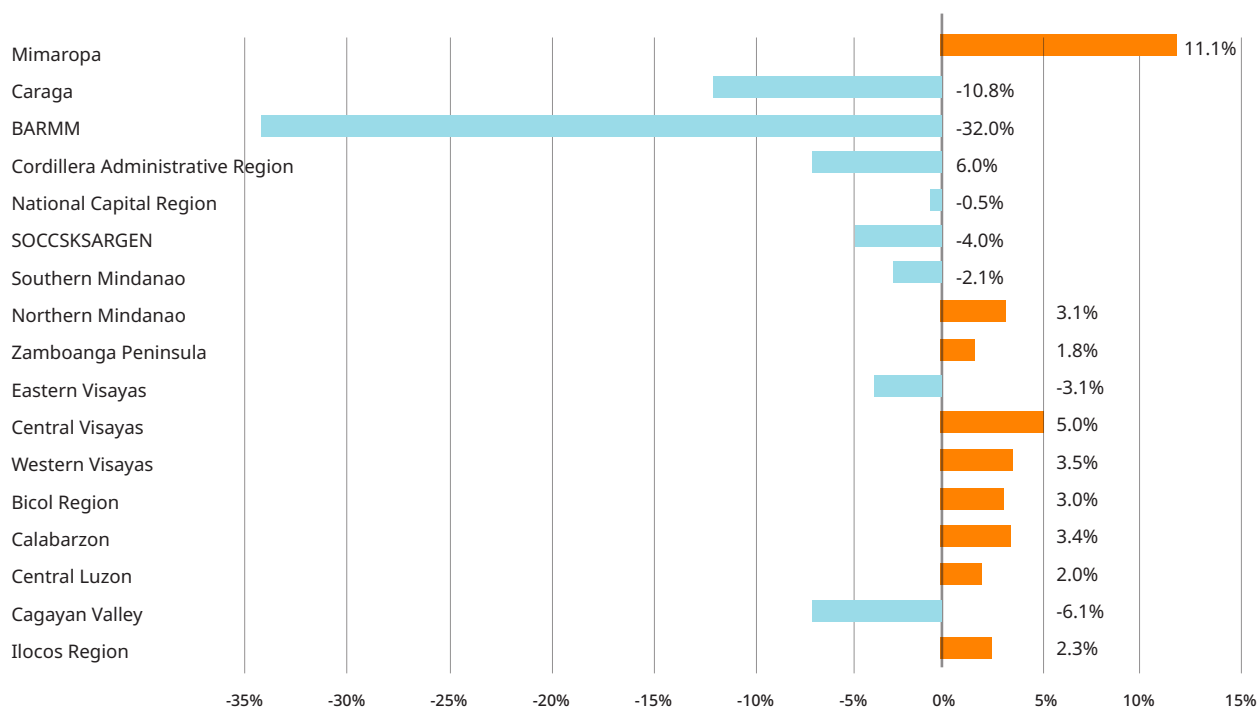
**Figure 10. Ratio of child poverty rates in the regions to population poverty rates (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2023

In nine regions, child poverty rates increased from 2018 to 2023, and in eight regions child poverty rates decreased over the same period (see Figure 11). In Region IV-B - MIMAROPA and the Region VII - Central Visayas, child poverty increased the most, by 11.1 and 5 percentage points, respectively. The regions Caraga (Region XIII), BARMM, CAR, NCR, Davao (Region XI), Eastern Visayas (Region VIII), and Cagayan Valley (Region II) were all able to reduce child poverty rates, mostly by around four to five-percentage points. The regions BARMM and Region XIII - Caraga stand out, as they were able to significantly reduce child poverty over five years: 32 percentage points in BARMM and 10.8 percentage points in Region XIII - Caraga.

**Figure 11. Change in child poverty rates in the regions from 2018 to 2023 (percentage points)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on merged FIES-LFS 2018 and 2023

The analysis shows that the national child poverty reduction in the Philippines from 24.1 per cent in 2018 to 23.3 per cent in 2023 did not occur evenly across all regions. In contrast, the majority of the regions' child poverty rates increased, suggesting that the national reduction in child poverty was largely driven by significant reductions in a few regions. Thus, while national-level statistics can provide a broad overview, they can also mask significant disparities and inequalities at the sub-national level. A focus on national averages can obscure the child poverty developments in the regions, in some of which child poverty has increased. This highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of the specific factors driving child poverty in each region and a more granular approach to child poverty reduction.

# V. Public finances in the regions

This section commences with an overview of public finances allocation and expenditure in the 17 regions over the period of 2018 to 2023. It then zooms in on operating incomes in the regions, particularly from the NTA to LGUs, operating expenditures, particularly expenditures on social services and welfare where the majority of it directly impacts children and their families, and the balance of funds.

## 5.1. Overview of public finances in the regions

The Philippines operates under a national budgeting system, and there are no separate regional government budgets – with the exception of BARMM, which enjoys fiscal autonomy. Under the national budgeting system, the national budget allocates funds to the different regions through the NTA to LGUs; a revenue sharing type of intergovernmental transfers. It is mandated by the Philippine Constitution and further defined by the Local Government Code of 1991 (RA No. 7160)<sup>12</sup> and the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling.<sup>13</sup> The latter stipulates that the LGUs shall receive a 40 per cent share of all national taxes collected in the base year, which is three years before. This means, for example, that the NTA of 2023 was calculated on the basis of actual collections of national taxes in 2020.<sup>14</sup> The amount allocated to LGUs through the NTA varies year by year, but it constitutes a substantial portion of the national budget.

The NTA is distributed to different LGUs based on a formula enshrined in law. The current formula considers the population, such as more populous LGUs receive a larger share, the land area that with larger LGUs in terms of land area might receive a slightly higher allocation to account for geographically dispersed populations, and equalisation, that with a portion is distributed equally among all LGUs to ensure a minimum baseline for basic services. While the NTA is a significant source of funding for LGUs, they can also raise their own revenue through local taxes and fees.

<sup>12</sup> Republic Act No. 7160, “An Act Providing for a Local Government Code of 1991,” *Official Gazette* (Republic of the Philippines), October 10, 1991, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1991/10/10/republic-act-no-7160/>.

<sup>13</sup> Department of Budget and Management, *FAQs: Mandanas-Garcia Ruling*, (PDF), November 9, 2021, <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/Mandanas-Garcia-Case/IEC-Materials/FAQs-Mandanas-Garcia-Ruling.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Department of Budget and Management, “National Tax Allotment (NTA),” *DBM.gov.ph*, accessed 2025, <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/index.php/national-tax-allotment-nta>.

<sup>15</sup> Department of Budget and Management, “Local Budget Memorandum,” *DBM.gov.ph*, accessed January 26, 2026, <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/index.php/local-budget-memorandum>.

While LGUs have the freedom to use the NTA to finance any of their activities, the allocations are subject to some imperatives.<sup>15</sup> First and foremost, the NTA and other local resources shall cover “the cost of providing the basic services and facilities, particularly those devolved by the national government, before applying the same for other purposes”, as mandated by the Local Government Code of 1991.<sup>16,17</sup> Furthermore, LGUs are mandated to appropriate not less than 20 per cent of the NTA for their development funds, which will finance the implementation of priority development projects embodied in their approved local development plans and Annual Investment Programs (AIPs).<sup>18</sup> Additionally, not less than 5 per cent of the LGUs’ budgets – which includes the NTA and other income sources LGUs might have – must be set aside as the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (LDRRMF) and be utilised in accordance with the pertinent provisions of laws and regulations.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, LGUs are mandated to spend their resources on a range of programmes, projects, and activities that can be included in their budget. Consequently, a considerable share of the NTA and other local resources are essentially earmarked for various purposes. Finally, it should be stressed that the NTA allocations to LGUs exclude the funds for programmes implemented under various national government agencies, which are intended for implementation across regions nationwide – for example the Department of Social Welfare and Development’s (DSWD) Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).<sup>20</sup>

For this analysis, the regional aggregates of NTAs to LGUs within each region were retrieved from the DBM.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, regional aggregates of LGUs’ total operating income and expenditures, expenditures on social services and welfare, and balance of funds were retrieved from the DOF-BLGF.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Republic Act No. 7160, “An Act Providing for a Local Government Code of 1991,” *Official Gazette* (Republic of the Philippines), October 10, 1991, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1991/10/10/republic-act-no-7160/>.

<sup>17</sup> According to Section 17 in RA No. 7160 such basic services and facilities include, but are not limited to, the following: maintenance of barangay health centre and day-care centre; services and facilities related to general hygiene and sanitation; programmes and projects on child and youth welfare, family and community welfare, women’s welfare, welfare of the elderly and disabled persons; community-based rehabilitation programmes for vagrants, beggars, street children, scavengers, juvenile delinquents, and victims of drug abuse; livelihood and other pro-poor projects; nutrition services; and family planning services; and programmes and projects on rebel returnees and evacuees; relief operations; and population development services.

<sup>18</sup> Republic Act No. 7160 (Local Government Code of 1991), enacted October 10, 1991, accessed 2025, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1991/10/10/republic-act-no-7160/>; Senate of the Philippines, *AAG: IRA in 2022* (March 21, 2022), PDF, accessed 2025, [https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/publications/SEPO/AAG%20IRA%20in%202022\\_21March2022.pdf](https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/publications/SEPO/AAG%20IRA%20in%202022_21March2022.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> *Republic Act No. 10121 (Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010)*, enacted May 27, 2010, *Official Gazette* (Philippines), accessed 2025, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2010/05/27/republic-act-no-10121/>

<sup>20</sup> Janna Marie Pineda, “DBM Earmarks P871-B National Tax Allotment to LGUs,” *Philippine Information Agency*, September 25, 2023, accessed 2025, <https://pia.gov.ph/news/dbm-earmarks-p871-b-national-tax-allotment-to-lgus/>

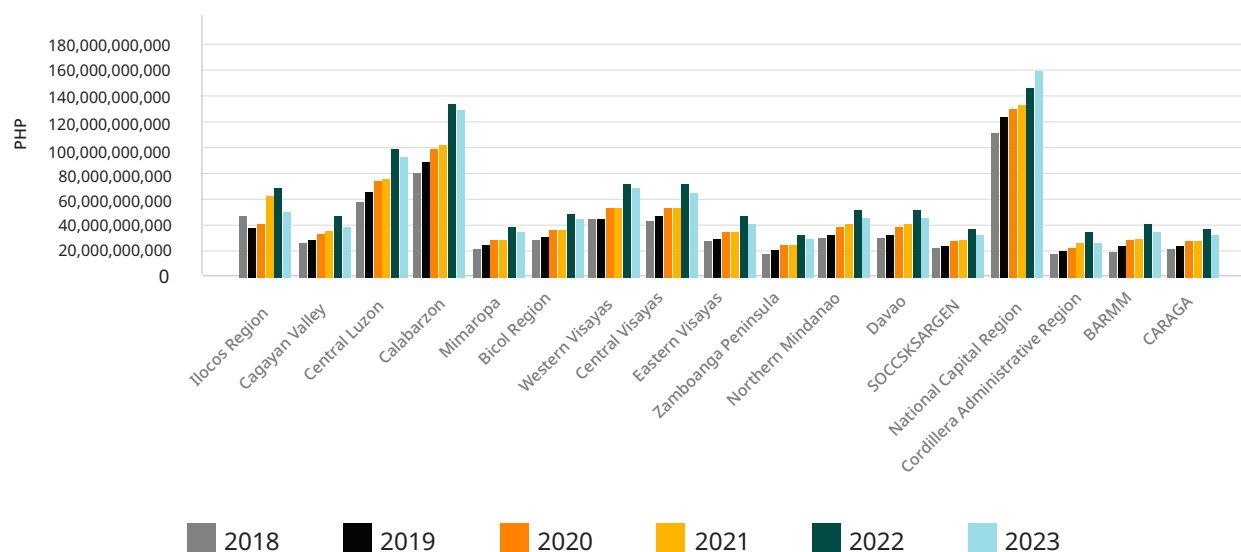
<sup>21</sup> Department of Budget and Management, “National Tax Allotment (NTA),” *dbm.gov.ph*, accessed 2025, <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/index.php/national-tax-allotment-nta>.

<sup>22</sup> Bureau of Local Government Finance, “Local Finance Time Series Data,” *blgf.gov.ph*, accessed 2025, <https://blgf.gov.ph/lgu-timeseries-data/>.

## 5.2. Operating income in the regions

The total operating income across the 17 regions of the Philippines differs considerably (see Figure 12). While the NCR had an operating income of almost ₱ 170 billion in 2023, the CAR had an income of ₱ 26 billion. In all regions, operating income increased from 2018 onwards, peaking in 2022 for most regions and slightly decreasing again in 2023. Only in the NCR the operating income continued to grow from 2022 to 2023.

**Figure 12. Total operating income per region (2018-2023)**



Source: Authors' illustration based on statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

This pattern in operating incomes can be largely explained by the NTA allocations, which are an important pillar of the total operating incomes in regions (see Figure 13). Across all regions, NTA increased from 2018 onwards, peaking in 2022 in most regions and decreasing in 2023. The increase in allocations in 2022 can be explained by the implementation of the Mandanas ruling in the same year.<sup>23</sup>

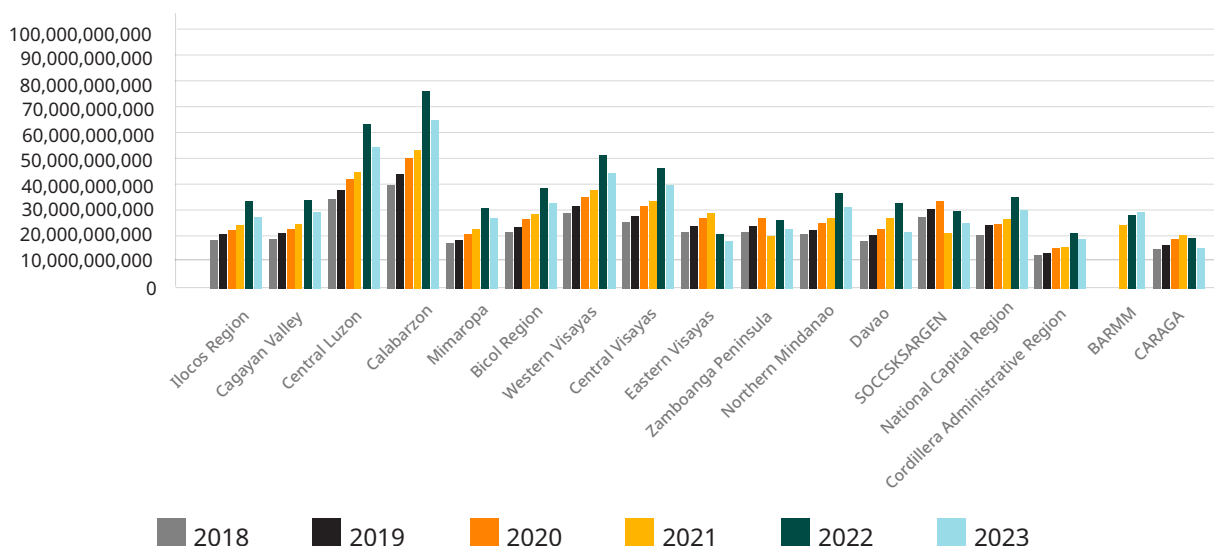
When assessing the NTA allocations of a given year, it must be considered that they are based on the national tax revenue three years prior. Hence, NTA allocations in 2023 were calculated on the tax base of 2020. This also explains why allocations decreased in 2023 compared to the previous year: the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns severely affected the economic performance in 2020, in turn also lowering tax revenues in the same year. These effects are evident in the lower NTA allocations in 2023.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD), BB2021-06: Analysis of the Regional Allocation of the FY 2022 National Budget, budget brief (House of Representatives, Republic of the Philippines), accessed 2025, <https://cpbrd.congress.gov.ph/bb2021-06-analysis-of-the-regional-allocation-of-the-fy-2022-national-budget/>.

<sup>24</sup> Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), "Tax Allotment for LGUs Cut Due to COVID Scars-DBM," PIDS (Philippine Institute for Development Studies), accessed 2025, <https://www.pids.gov.ph/details/news/in-the-news/tax-allotment-for-lgus-cut-due-to-covid-scars-dbm>.

Throughout the years, the NTA allocation was highest in Region IV-A - CALABARZON and Region III - Central Luzon, receiving an average of 12 per cent and 10.1 per cent of total NTA allocations, respectively. The NTA was lowest in CAR and Region XIII - Caraga, receiving an average 3.4 per cent and 3.9 per cent of total NTA allocations, respectively. As elaborated above, the regions with higher NTAs are more populous and larger in terms of land area compared to the regions with lower allocations.

**Figure 13. National tax allotments per region (2018-2023, 2025)<sup>25</sup>**



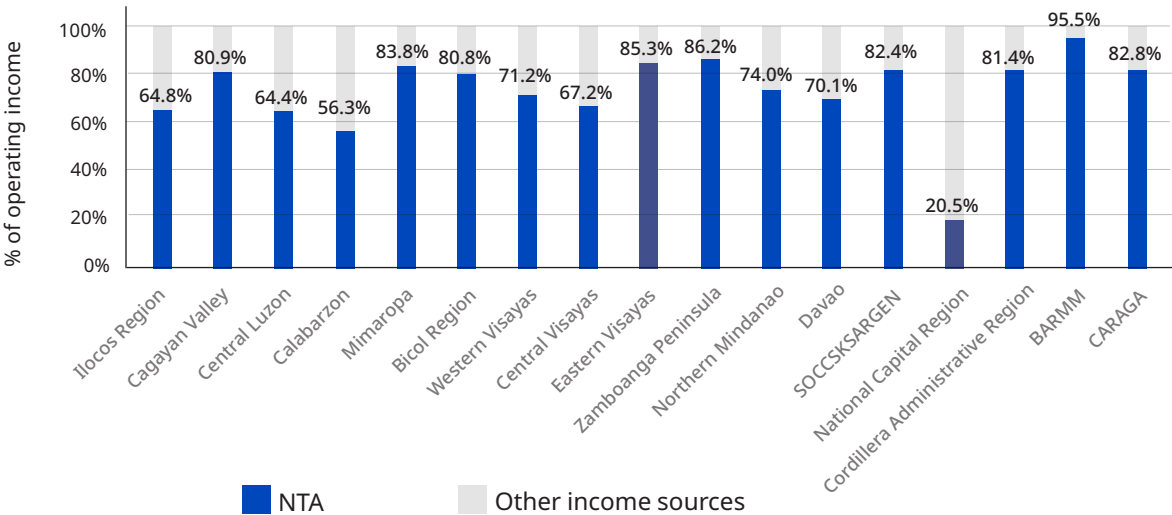
Source: Authors' illustration based on NTA data from DBM

The NTA makes up a considerable share of total operating income in most regions (see Figure 14). However, the NCR is an exception, where NTA makes up merely 20.5 per cent of total operating income in 2023, the lowest share across all regions. This suggests that NCR generates substantial income from other sources, such as local tax and non-tax revenue, as well as revenue from external sources. This stands in stark contrast to BARMM, where NTA makes up 95.5 per cent of total operating income in 2023. This suggests that BARMM has limited income from local or other external sources, making the region highly dependent on allocations from national level.<sup>26</sup> Across all regions, NTA makes up on average 73.4 per cent of total operating income in 2023, showcasing an overall high reliance on allocations from national level to finance operations within the regions.

<sup>25</sup> The data for NTA in BARMM is only available from 2021 onwards.

<sup>26</sup> It must be noted that BARMM received an additional block grant on top of the NTA.

**Figure 14. National Tax Allotments as share of total operating income (%) (2023)**

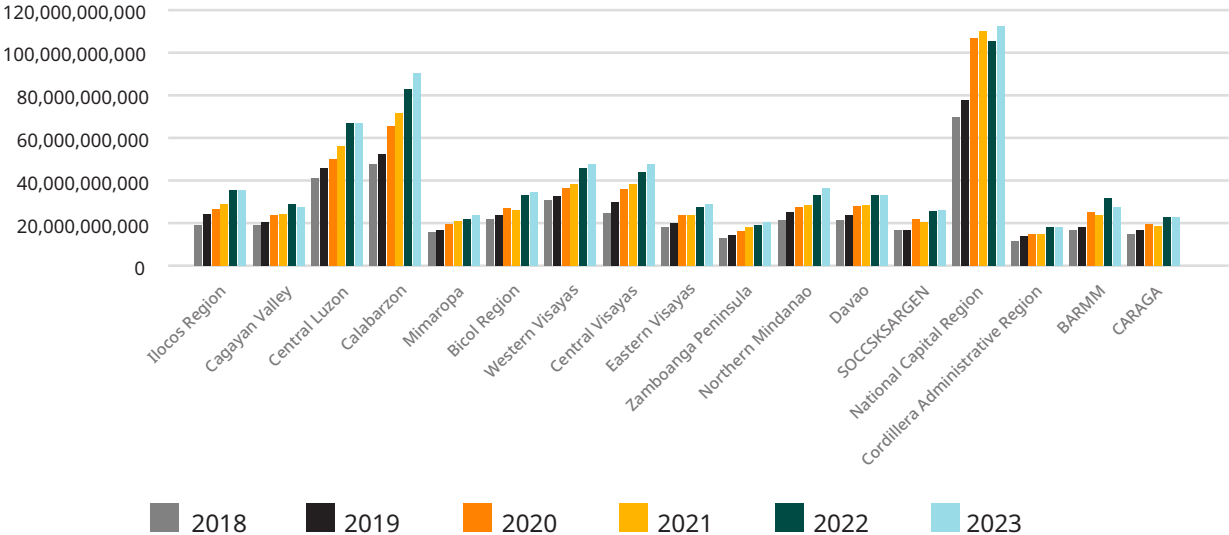


Source: Authors’ calculations based on statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

### 5.3. Operating expenditure in the regions

The total operating expenditure also increased over the period of 2018 to 2023 in most regions (see Figure 15). The highest expenditure was recorded in NCR over the years, followed by Region IV-A - CALABARZON and Region III - Central Luzon. The lowest operating expenditures were recorded in CAR and Region XIII - Caraga. Hence, patterns in operating expenditures are largely in line with patterns of operating incomes and NTA allocations.

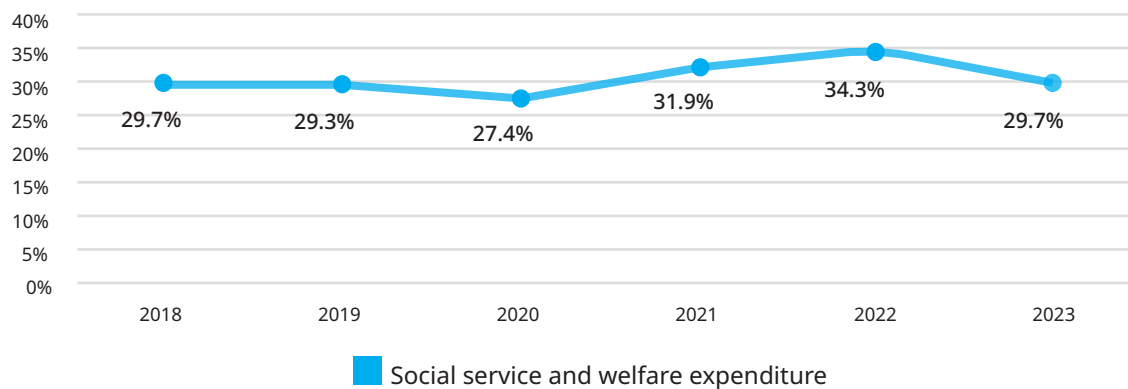
**Figure 15. Total operating expenditure per region (2018-2023)**



Source: Authors’ illustration based on statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

On average, regions spent 30.4 per cent of their total operating expenditure on social services and welfare from 2018 to 2023. As illustrated (see Figure 16), the average allocations to social services and welfare decreased slightly from 29.7 per cent in 2018 to 27.4 per cent in 2020. Subsequently, allocations increased to 31.9 per cent in 2021 and 34.3 per cent in 2022. This increase in expenditure allocations to social services and welfare can be explained by the COVID-19 response that was implemented by the Philippine government, resulting in budgetary increments across all regions. In 2023, average expenditure allocations to social services and welfare decreased relative to overall expenditures, even though in absolute terms, allocations remained relatively stable in most regions, and even increased slightly in some.

**Figure 16. Average expenditure allocations to social services and welfare (%) (2018-2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

In Table 5, an overview of social services and welfare expenditures by region per inhabitant is shown. The table shows that throughout the years, several regions persistently spent more on social services and welfare/per capita than others. The regions of Caraga (Region XIII), NCR and BARMM were among the highest-spending regions throughout the years. By contrast, Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, Region XI - Davao Region, Region VII - Central Visayas and Region VI - Western Visayas persistently recorded the lowest per capita expenditures on social services and welfare.

All regions increased their per capita spending on social services and welfare from 2018 to 2023 but there were fluctuations. The grey-shaded columns indicate the changes in the per capita spending from 2018 to 2021 and from 2021 to 2023. Meanwhile, from 2018 to 2021 all regions increased their per capita spending – some even doubled their

<sup>27</sup> Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD), *BB2021-06: Analysis of the Regional Allocation of the FY 2022 National Budget*, budget brief (House of Representatives, Republic of the Philippines), accessed 2025, <https://cpbrd.congress.gov.ph/bb2021-06-analysis-of-the-regional-allocation-of-the-fy-2022-national-budget/>.

expenditure (Region VII - Central Visayas, Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, NCR, and BARMM). As highlighted above, these changes largely were caused by the COVID-19 response that was implemented. From 2021 to 2023, most regions continued to increase their social services and welfare expenditure, although at lower growth rates. In some regions, per capita expenditure reduced slightly.

**Table 5. Per capita social services and welfare expenditure per region (2018, 2021,2023)**

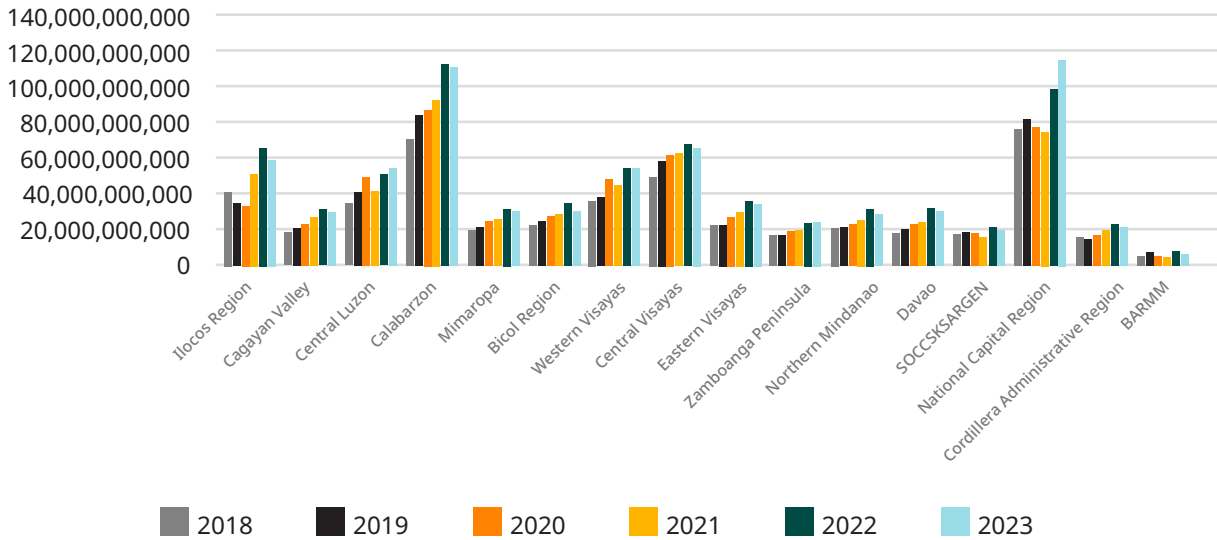
Regions	2018	2021	Change	2023	Change
Region I - Ilocos Region	372	671	80.4%	612	-8.8%
Region II - Cagayan Valley	289	372	28.7%	556	49.4%
Region III - Central Luzon	242	348	43.8%	480	37.9%
Region IV-A - CALABARZON	219	364	66.2%	495	36.1%
Region IV-B - MIMAROPA	285	372	30.5%	605	62.8%
Region V - Bicol Region	201	324	61.2%	462	42.3%
Region VI - Western Visayas	247	303	22.7%	441	45.5%
Region VII - Central Visayas	167	367	119.8%	479	30.4%
Region VIII - Eastern Visayas	220	371	68.6%	424	14.2%
Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula	163	341	109.2%	336	-1.4%
Region X - Northern Mindanao	330	434	31.5%	604	39.2%
Region XI - Davao Region	170	293	72.4%	339	15.7%
Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN	238	308	29.4%	591	92.0%
National Capital Region (NCR)	440	906	105.9%	844	-6.8%
Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	347	604	74.1%	676	11.8%
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	398	807	102.8%	835	3.5%
Region XIII - Caraga	496	662	33.5%	677	2.2%

Source: Authors' calculations based on FIES and statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

## 5.4. Balance of funds in the regions

All regions recorded increasing balances of funds over the years, peaking in 2022 and slightly decreasing afterwards (see Figure 17). This suggests that increasing operating income within regions does not fully translate into increased operating expenditures for policy and programme implementation, but partially also contributes to increasing balances of funds. The absolute balances of funds are highest in the regions with the highest operating income, most notably in the NCR and Region IV-A - CALABARZON, followed by Region I - Ilocos Region and Region VII - Central Visayas.

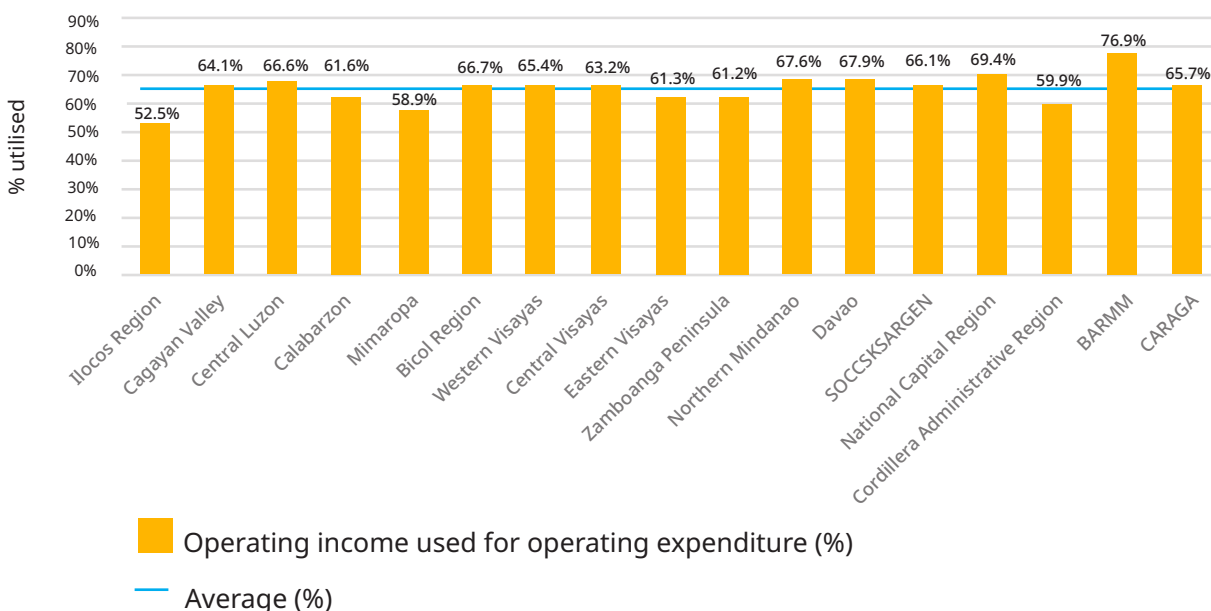
**Figure 17. Balance of funds across regions (2018-2023)**



Source: Authors' illustration based on statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

On average, regions utilised 64.4 per cent of their operating income for operating expenditure from 2018 to 2023 (see Figure 18). BARMM had the highest average utilisation rate of operating income for expenditure, at 76.9 per cent on average. Next to BARMM, the NCR, Region XI - Davao Region, Region X - Northern Mindanao, Region V - Bicol Region, Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN and Region XIII - Caraga had above-average utilisation rates. The lowest utilization rates were recorded in Region I - Ilocos Region with 52.5 per cent, followed by Region IV-B - MIMAROPA (58.9 per cent) and CAR (59.9 per cent).

**Figure 18. Average utilisation of operating income for expenditure (%) (2018-2023)**



Source: Authors' calculation and illustration based on statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

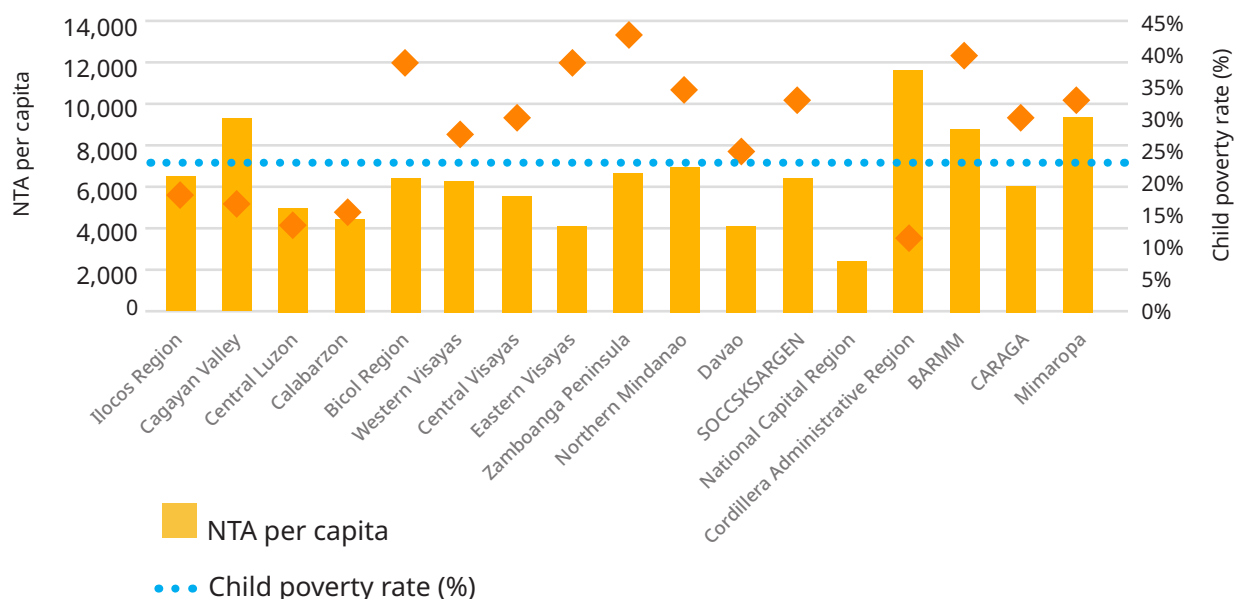
Thus, all regions exhibit underspending of their resources. Studies have attributed underspending and low utilisation rates to various reasons, such as 1) limited implementation capacity within the LGUs, 2) inadequate planning and programme prioritisation, 3) weak competencies in public financial management, and 4) process bottlenecks, for example in procurement. A significant increase in the local budgets due to the ruling might contribute to even higher underspending rates before the implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia ruling, unless these issues were addressed.

## VI. Relevance of child poverty data to inform public finances

The utilisation of child poverty data to inform public finances in the Philippines holds immense potential. By disaggregating data by region, policymakers can accurately identify areas with the most pressing child poverty challenges. This granular information can then be used to allocate resources strategically, focusing on regions with the highest rates of poverty and deprivation. Moreover, the government can evaluate the effectiveness of existing poverty alleviation programs and make necessary adjustments by tracking trends over time. Such data-driven decision-making can optimise public spending, ensuring that resources are directed towards programs with the greatest impact on improving the lives of Filipino children. This section analyses child poverty data and public finance data from the regions alongside each other and seeks to identify how child poverty data can be used to inform public finances in the regions, including intergovernmental transfers.

A comparison of child poverty rates (blue dots) across the regions and per capita NTA allocations to the regions (green bars) reveals that many regions with above-average child poverty rates have below-average NTA allocations in 2023 (*see Figure 19*). Region V – Bicol Region, Region VI - Western Visayas, Region VII - Central Visayas, Region VIII - Eastern Visayas, Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, Region XI – Davao Region, Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN, and Region XIII - Caraga have below-average per capita NTA allocations and above-average child poverty rates. On the contrary, the majority of regions with below-average child poverty rates have above-average per capita NTA allocations. Exceptions to these trends are the NCR, which has the lowest NTA allocations per capita and BARMM and Region IV-B - MIMAROPA, which have the highest NTA allocations per capita and relatively high child poverty rates.

**Figure 19. National tax allotment/per capita and child poverty rates (%) in regions (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on FIES and statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

This suggests that having sufficient resources from the NTA, which is the case for all regions except NCR, it certainly helps regions to invest in policies and programmes that can support children’s well-being and ultimately poverty reduction. However, having the necessary resources is not a panacea. Firstly, available resources must be used efficiently. For example, data suggest that available resources in Region IV-B - MIMAROPA are not being spent effectively so that the desired changes can be achieved.

Furthermore, these figures underline that child poverty rates, or general poverty rates, have not informed NTA allocations. Even before the Mandanas-Garcia ruling took effect in 2022, the Internal Revenue Allocations (IRAs) have not factored in poverty rates.<sup>29</sup> Still, to render intergovernmental transfers more equity-focused, a case for the inclusion of child poverty rates can be made. By considering the severity of child poverty in different regions, the national government can prioritise support to areas with the greatest need. This approach would ensure that resources are directed towards regions facing the most significant challenges in addressing child poverty, thereby, promoting equity and reducing disparities across the country.

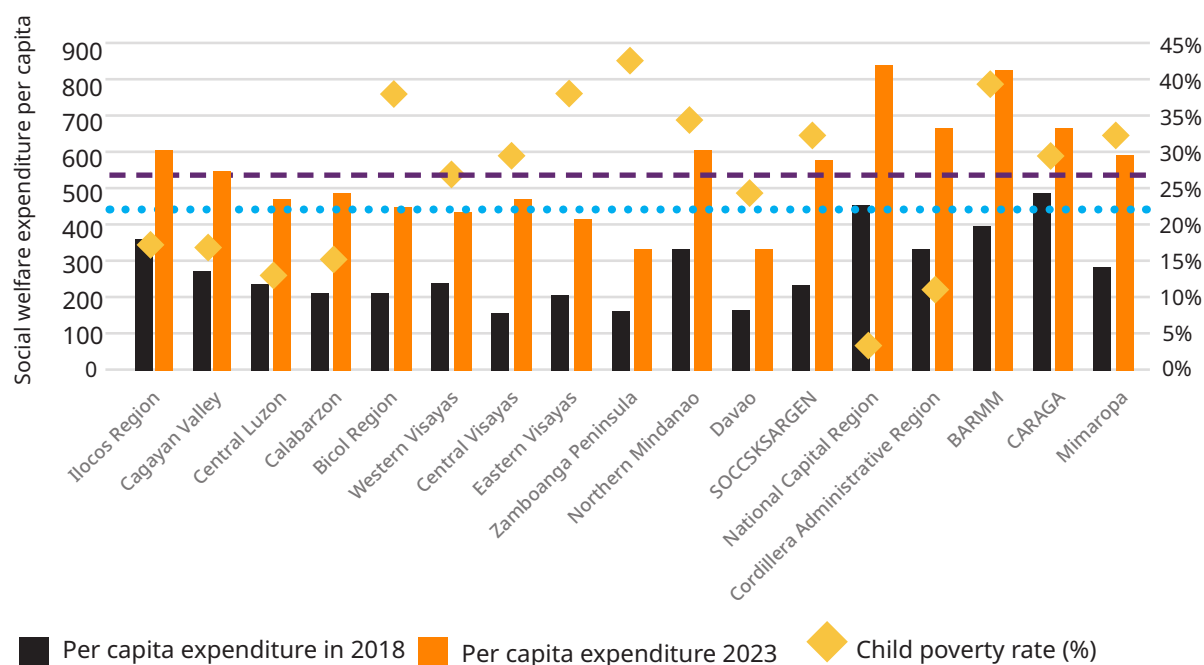
It must be stressed that an increase in NTA allocations is not a panacea for child poverty reductions, as regions still need to commit to spending these funds on policies and programmes that can translate into child poverty reductions. However, including the formulae for the calculation of NTAs related to child poverty could be an important step in closing the gap between the regions. Here, the importance of having reliable and updated poverty statistics which cover the current child poverty rates in the different regions of the country must be stressed.

## 6.1. Child poverty rates and expenditure on social services and welfare

In the next step, child poverty rates and per capita expenditure on social services and welfare across the regions were analysed alongside each other (*see Figure 20*). Seven out of 11 regions with above-average child poverty rates had below-average social welfare expenditure in 2018 and 2023. On the contrary, four out of six regions with below-average child poverty rates had above-average social welfare expenditure over the last five years. Consequently, a relationship appears to exist between social welfare spending and child poverty rates across the regions. While there are exceptions, regions with higher social welfare expenditures tend to have lower child poverty rates, while those with lower spending often experience higher rates of child poverty. This suggests that investments in social services and welfare programmes play a role in mitigating child poverty. Policies and programmes that provide essential support to children and their families, including income support, access to healthcare and childcare services, education, and disaster relief and protection services, among others. By mitigating financial hardships, these services can help children and their families to move out of poverty, or at least alleviate its impact.

<sup>29</sup> The Local Government Code (1991) stipulates the calculation of the IRA on the basis of the following formula: a) population (50 per cent); b) land areas (25 per cent); and c) equal sharing (25 per cent).

**Figure 20. Social welfare expenditure/per capita and child poverty rates (%) in regions (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on FIES and statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

However, it must be highlighted that the relationship between expenditure on social services and welfare and child poverty is complex. While increased expenditure can lead to reductions in child poverty rates, the effectiveness of these policies and programmes also depends on various factors related to the programme design and implementation. The examples of BARMM and Region IV-B - MIMAROPA, with both of which witnessed massive increases to their social welfare spending over the last five years, show that high expenditure does not necessarily imply effective poverty reduction.

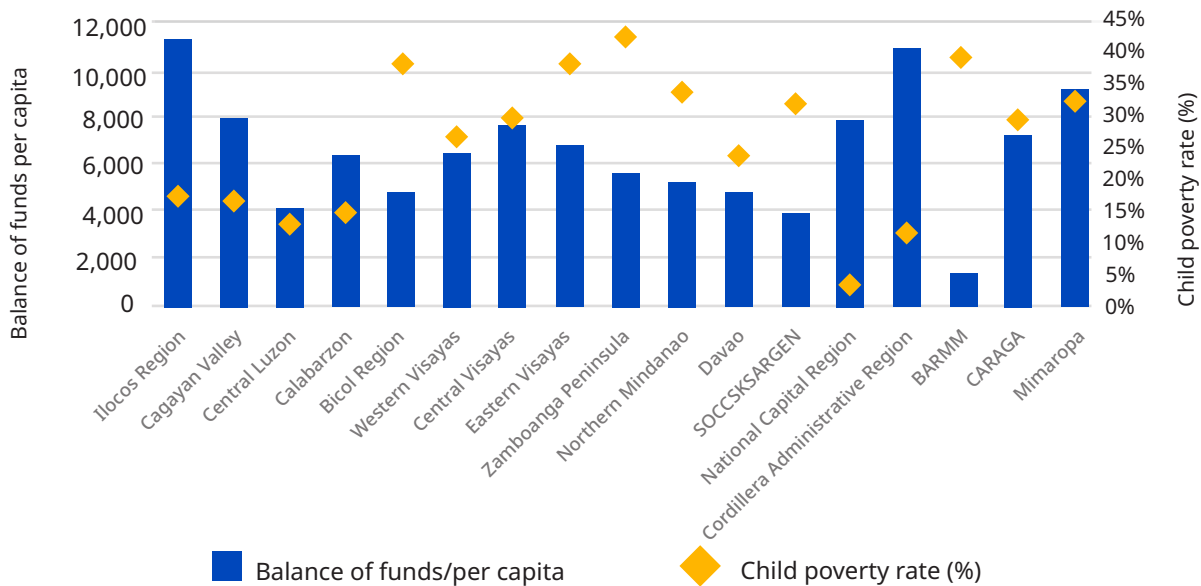
An increase in spending must also go hand-in-hand with the capacity of local governments to design and deliver effective programmes and services. Moreover, it must be noted that social service and welfare expenditures not only benefit children, but the whole population and as such, there might not be a direct effect on child poverty. As the time period coincides with the COVID-19 pandemic, LGUs might have allocated social service expenditures to COVID-19 relief, targeting the working age population, for example, and not focused on children per se. Furthermore, it is likely that there is a time lag in social expenditure and the time that poverty reductions actually materialise.

Ultimately, this stresses the relevance of periodically evaluating the effectiveness of social spending in reducing child poverty. By better understanding the relationship between social spending and child poverty, policymakers at the LGU level can make informed decisions about resource allocation and programme designs to optimise their effectiveness in addressing this pressing issue. For example, pinpointing provinces and areas with the highest child poverty rates in the regions, can help to design and implement targeted interventions to these areas. An evidence-based approach to the use of resources can ensure that limited public funds are directed towards programmes demonstrating the greatest impact on reducing child poverty and promoting equitable outcomes for all children.

## 6.2. Utilising balance of funds for child-sensitive expenditures

Lastly, the analysis compared the per capita balance of funds with child poverty rates across the regions (see Figure 21). The comparison shows a mixed picture, in which some regions with above-average child poverty rates had below-average balance of funds (Region V - Bicol, Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, Region X - Northern Mindanao, Region XI - Davao, Region XII - SOCCSKSARGEN and BARMM), while others had above-average balance of funds (Region VI - Western Visayas, Region VII - Central Visayas, Region VIII - Eastern Visayas, Region XIII - Caraga, Region IV-B - MIMAROPA). For regions with below-average child poverty rates, there was a tendency to have above-average balance of funds (Region I - Ilocos Region, Region II - Cagayan Valley, Region IV-A - CALABARZON, NCR and CAR), with Region III - Central Luzon being the only region with below-average balance of funds.

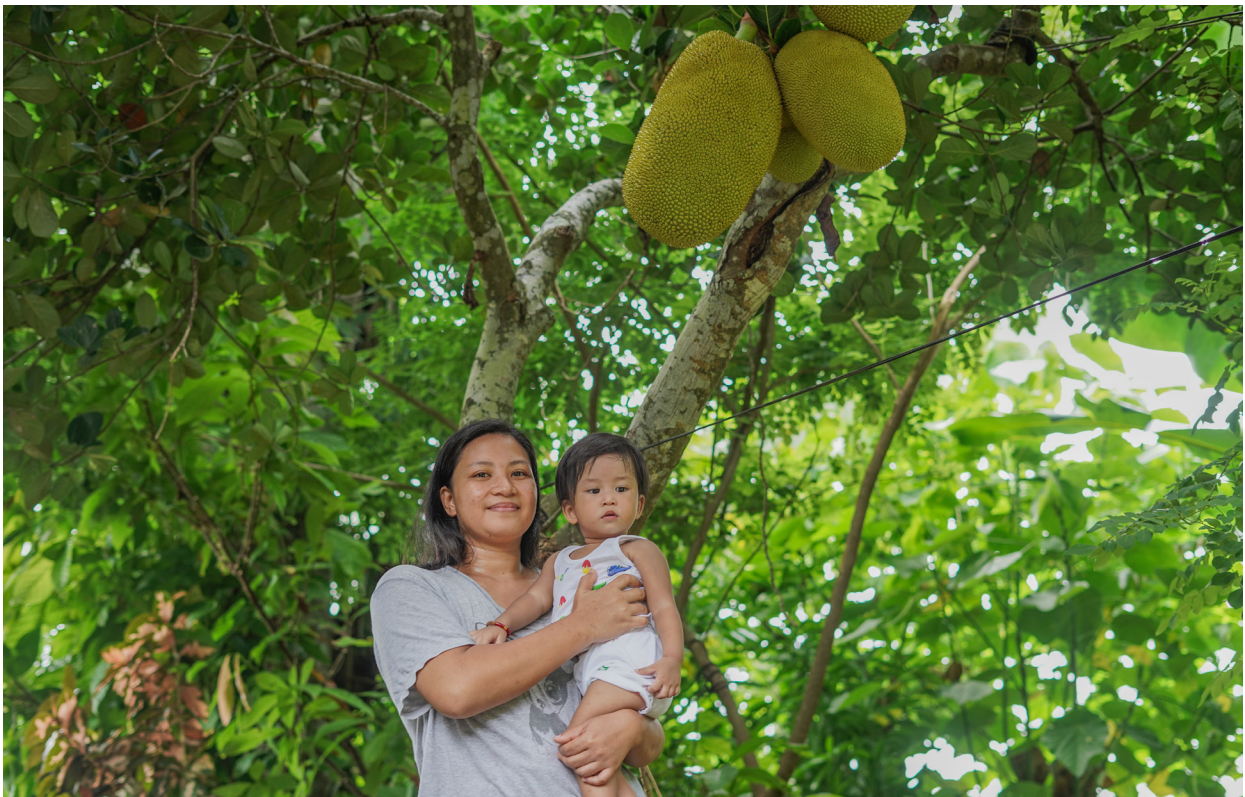
**Figure 21. Balance of funds/per capita and child poverty rates (%) in regions (2023)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on FIES and statement of receipts and expenditure from DOF-BLGF

Ultimately, the availability of resources in the LGUs can certainly be beneficial to reducing poverty rates, but a high balance of funds does not necessarily equate to a low rate of child poverty. While it might seem counter-intuitive, the presence of significant financial reserves does not guarantee effective allocation of resources towards addressing the complex issue of child poverty. Indeed, there might be several reasons why the existence of resources does not automatically translate into reduced child poverty rates.

As highlighted above, LGUs might face a range of challenges that inhibit higher spending of available resources. A lack of capacity and resources or structural and procedural challenges that might make it difficult to spend funds, ultimately resulting in underspending and contributing to increasing balances of funds. Also, the absence of political will might inhibit the effective use of resources to reduce child poverty. Thus, to effectively leverage existing fund balances to address child poverty, local governments must also prioritise strategic allocation of resources.



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## VII. Conclusions

The analysis of poverty trends has shown that poverty rates in the Philippines increased from 2018 to 2021 and then decreased again until 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities, pushing many Filipino families into poverty. Even more so, children experienced a more significant increase in poverty rates compared to adults from 2018 to 2021, stressing their comparatively higher vulnerability to falling into poverty when affected by contingencies. The analysis also highlighted factors such as education level of the household head, household size, urban-rural divide, and sex of the household head, all of which influence child poverty rates. The regional analysis of child poverty in the Philippines reveals significant disparities across the country. While some regions such as the NCR and CAR, have relatively low rates of child poverty, others, like Region XII - Caraga, Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula, and Region V - Bicol face severe challenges.

The analysis of public finances in the regions focused on the allocation of government funds through the NTA, regional expenditures and balance of funds, has uncovered substantial disparities across the Philippines. Despite significant variations, the analysis suggests that the current system of intergovernmental transfers and government expenditure on social policies may not be effectively utilising child poverty data to inform resource allocation and support the much-needed scale up delivery of social services. The persistently high child poverty rates in some regions furthermore highlight the need for a more targeted and data-driven approach to addressing regional disparities.

Utilising child poverty data to inform public finances in the Philippines carries vast potential. The convergence of social services can be better designed and implemented as children require multiple needs at one given time to achieve their full potential. By disaggregating data by region, province and LGU, policymakers can accurately identify areas with the most pressing child poverty challenges. This granular information can then be used to allocate resources strategically, monitor expenditure and measure impact of intended results, focusing on regions with the highest rates of poverty and deprivation.

Moreover, by tracking trends over time, the government can evaluate the effectiveness of existing poverty alleviation programs and make necessary adjustments. Such data-driven decision-making can optimise public spending, support the devolution and fiscal decentralisation processes in the country, ensuring that public resources are maximised, and optimal results are achieved for all children in the Philippines.

# VIII. Policy implications and recommendations

## 1. Review national poverty lines to reflect present living standards, in order for poverty to be adequately measured and tracked.

The national poverty lines are policy tools utilised to identify poor households and target groups, to inform and guide social protection policy development, and to evaluate the implementation of programmes and their effectiveness in reducing poverty. To ensure that poverty lines can accurately be used as such policy tools, they must be regularly updated in line with the living circumstances in a country. As the Philippines moves to become an upper-middle income country, it must therefore be considered to adjust the national poverty lines accordingly and move it closer towards the international poverty line for upper-middle income countries of ₱ 48,487 per capita/year (2023). The adequate measurement of poverty is also necessary to track progress towards achieving the goals of poverty reduction stipulated in the PDP 2024-2028, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Table 6. Different poverty lines in Php per capita/year (2023)**

Poverty line	Threshold 2023
Monetary poverty line	₱ 33,296
Food poverty line	₱ 22,994
Near-poverty line	₱ 41,620
International poverty line	₱ 48,487

## 2. Complement monetary poverty measurements with regular measurement of monetary and multidimensional child poverty.

Children are more than twice as likely as adults to live in poverty and can be considered among the most vulnerable members of any society. As a result, children are also more vulnerable to falling into poverty when affected by economic crises, climate shocks or individual shocks. The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, has shown that child poverty rates increased disproportionately. The measurements of poverty should also include a multidimensional child poverty lens, which goes beyond assessing income and consumption, and also look at various deprivations that children might face.

### **3. Monitor child poverty at regional level to inform programming.**

The analysis of child poverty rates at the regional level should be conducted regularly and systemically. As a way of further institutionalising child poverty analysis, relevant indicators could be included in the PSA Small Area Poverty Estimates and child poverty rates could be made available in the PSA Annual Statistical Yearbook. These efforts can help to address major data gaps in relation to child poverty and child well-being and in turn support better monitoring of progress towards achieving child-related SDGs at regional level. Furthermore, child poverty data can inform policy dialogues and programming on equity for children. It could, for example, inform and further refine the design and implementation of social protection programmes for children and their families. A poverty analysis focusing on the characteristics of households that poor children live in can further help to design programming in other sectors, for example, livelihoods and employment, education, health, and so on, to address child poverty comprehensively.

### **4. Use evidence on child poverty rates in the region to support localisation of child-related SDGs.**

The analysis has shown the great variation in child poverty rates across the regions of the Philippines. Eleven regions have above-average child poverty rates, including Region IX - Zamboanga Peninsula (42.8 per cent), BARMM (39.6 per cent) and Region V - Bicol (38.6 per cent) with the highest child poverty rates in 2023. This regional divergence stresses that aggregate poverty analysis at national level alone is not a true reflection of the conditions children face on the ground. The data on child poverty from the regions should therefore be used to inform tailored policy and programme responses, considering the vast regional variations and realities. Ultimately, a programming approach for one region may not always be a relevant and adequate approach for another region.

The regional data on child poverty can also be a first step towards localising the SDGs in the regions and LGUs. At the local level, SDGs progress is varied and some LGUs may need more human and financial resources to support the full devolution process of social services. Child poverty rates in the regions may provide that first step to disaggregated data analysis. As a step further, a deep dive of child poverty rates at the LGU levels might be a goal to be established as part of the upcoming roll out of the community-based monitoring survey (CBMS).

### **5. Systematically review public finance patterns at regional level and consider child poverty rates to render intergovernmental transfers more equitable.**

The NTA is the main financial source for LGUs to support the devolution process and to finance their activities. However, as of today, poverty and child poverty rates are not considered in the allocation of intergovernmental transfers. To make these transfers more targeted according to the prevailing needs in a region and to enable regions

that are lagging behind to catch up and move faster, it should be considered to take child poverty rates into account when calculating the NTA allotments to LGUs across the regions. This would be a step to address income inequalities across regions and inequities in access to services, while maximising public investment for children. It must be stressed that adequate and up to date child poverty statistics, disaggregated to the regional level, are necessary for this revision.

## **6. Explore harmonisation of budget and expenditure classification.**

Explore how to better classify and monitor utilisation of LGUs' expenditure in education, health, nutrition and social welfare within the fiscal decentralisation reform. Currently, these expenditures are aggregated in one category, making it challenging to track resources that are specific to addressing child poverty. It is recommended that the DBM, in consultation with other agencies and LGUs, can further study the possibilities of classifying and monitoring expenditure to strengthen evidence-based policy making, transparency and accountability.



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# Annexes

## Disaggregation of child poverty figures

### Annex A. Child poverty by age group (2023)

Age groups	Poverty status (number)					Poverty status (per cent)				
	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total*	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total*
Children (0-17 years old)	2,770,010	8,755,376	5,361,026	28,824,658	37,580,035	7.4%	23.3%	14.3%	76.7%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	1,531,777	4,969,968	3,233,868	18,602,951	23,572,919	6.5%	21.1%	13.7%	78.9%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	2,276,114	8,653,048	7,175,391	68,344,461	76,997,509	3.0%	11.2%	9.3%	88.8%	100.0%
Total	5,084,935	17,463,304	12,513,472	95,318,649	112,781,953	4.5%	15.5%	11.1%	84.5%	100.0%

\* Poverty categories follow a hierarchical classification. Individuals identified as food poor are included within the poor population, while those classified as near-poor are included within the non-poor population. Totals are based on the binary classification of "poor" and "not poor" and may not correspond to the sum of all categories shown. See pages 9 and 10 of methodology section for detailed definitions of poverty categories.

## Annex B. Child poverty by sex of household head and age (2023)

Age group and sex	Poverty status (number)					Poverty status (per cent)				
	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Children (0-17 years old)</b>										
Male headed households	2,426,936	7,429,212	4,350,495	21,530,053	28,959,265	8.4%	25.7%	15.0%	74%	100.0%
Female headed households	343,074	1,326,164	1,010,530	7,294,605	8,620,770	4.0%	15.4%	11.7%	84.6%	100.0%
<b>Adolescents (10-19 years old)</b>										
Male headed households	1,325,761	4,156,447	2,582,219	13,646,577	17,803,024	7.5%	23.4%	14.5%	76.7%	100.0%
Female headed households	206,016	813,521	651,649	4,956,374	5,769,895	3.6%	14.1%	11.3%	85.9%	100.0%
<b>Adults (18+ years old)</b>										
Male headed households	1,975,520	7,262,210	5,746,249	49,410,157	56,672,367	3.5%	12.8%	10.1%	87.2%	100.0%
Female headed households	300,594	1,390,838	1,429,142	18,934,304	20,325,142	1.5%	6.8%	7.0%	93.2%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>										
Male headed households	4,421,324	14,698,643	10,062,260	69,935,927	84,634,570	5.2%	17.4%	11.9%	82.6%	100.0%
Female headed households	663,611	2,764,661	2,451,212	25,382,722	28,147,383	2.4%	9.8%	8.7%	90.2%	100.0%

## Annex C. Child poverty by education level of household head and age (2023)

Age group and sex	Poverty status (number)					Poverty status (per cent)				
	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Children (0-17 years old)</b>										
No grade	224,013	415,882	104,612	236,753	652,636	34.3%	63.7%	16.0%	36.3%	100.0%
Primary	1,710,461	4,682,194	2,187,872	7,229,686	11,911,880	14.4%	39.3%	18.4%	60.7%	100.0%
Highschool	737,198	3,152,747	2,539,213	13,651,742	16,804,489	4.4%	18.8%	15.1%	81.2%	100.0%
Post-secondary	98,339	504,554	529,329	7,706,477	8,211,031	1.2%	6.1%	6.5%	93.9%	100.0%
<b>Adolescents (10-19 years old)</b>										
No grade	119,452	240,813	67,578	159,778	400,591	29.8%	60.1%	16.9%	39.9%	100.0%
Primary	963,796	2,729,344	1,419,483	4,966,472	7,695,816	12.5%	35.5%	18.4%	64.5%	100.0%
Highschool	389,939	1,702,345	1,444,072	8,577,585	10,279,930	3.8%	16.6%	14.1%	83.4%	100.0%
Post-secondary	58,591	297,466	302,734	4,899,116	5,196,581	1.1%	5.7%	5.8%	94.3%	100.0%
<b>Adults (18+ years old)</b>										
No grade	185,557	451,072	180,397	645,088	1,096,160	16.9%	41.2%	16.5%	58.9%	100.0%
Primary	1,433,756	4,850,225	3,366,757	18,397,289	23,247,514	6.2%	20.9%	14.5%	79.1%	100.0%
Highschool	571,370	2,875,557	2,986,185	29,143,255	32,018,812	1.8%	9.0%	9.3%	91.0%	100.0%
Post-secondary	85,431	476,194	642,052	20,158,829	20,635,023	0.4%	2.3%	3.1%	97.7%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>										
No grade	408,510	865,128	286,096	870,024	1,735,151	23.5%	49.9%	16.5%	50.1%	100.0%
Primary	3,173,215	9,562,908	5,571,947	25,418,085	34,980,993	9.1%	27.3%	15.9%	72.7%	100.0%
Highschool	1,316,045	6,052,018	5,490,103	42,059,798	48,111,816	2.7%	12.6%	11.4%	87.4%	100.0%
Post-secondary	187,165	983,251	1,165,326	26,970,742	27,953,993	0.7%	3.5%	4.2%	96.5%	100.0%

## Annex D. Child poverty by number of children in household and age (2023)

Age group and sex	Poverty status (number)					Poverty status (per cent)				
	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Children (0-17 years old)</b>										
1	65,342	380,477	504,776	6,286,461	6,666,938	1.0%	5.7%	7.6%	94.3%	100.0%
2	281,886	1,446,272	1,494,923	10,111,577	11,557,849	2.4%	12.5%	12.9%	87.5%	100.0%
3	551,329	2,263,673	1,639,509	7,155,456	9,419,129	5.9%	24.0%	17.4%	76.0%	100.0%
4 and more	1,871,453	4,664,954	1,721,818	5,271,165	9,936,119	18.8%	47.0%	17.3%	53.1%	100.0%
<b>Adolescents (10-19 years old)</b>										
0	5,147	46,043	69,215	1,150,982	1,197,025	0.4%	3.9%	5.8%	96.2%	100.0%
1	55,308	328,261	400,341	4,628,953	4,957,214	1.1%	6.6%	8.1%	93.4%	100.0%
2	158,625	844,766	873,336	5,869,701	6,714,467	2.4%	12.6%	13.0%	87.4%	100.0%
3	288,717	1,203,723	913,898	4,026,750	5,230,473	5.5%	23.0%	17.5%	77.0%	100.0%
4 and more	1,023,980	2,547,175	977,078	2,926,565	5,473,740	18.7%	46.5%	17.9%	53.5%	100.0%
<b>Adults (18+ years old)</b>										
0	108,186	705,089	1,005,315	24,688,269	25,393,358	0.4%	2.8%	4.0%	97.2%	100.0%
1	217,574	1,208,005	1,527,223	18,515,691	19,723,696	1.1%	6.1%	7.7%	93.9%	100.0%
2	400,363	1,991,306	2,039,733	14,293,845	16,285,151	2.5%	12.2%	12.5%	87.8%	100.0%
3	499,801	2,030,981	1,477,565	6,893,007	8,923,988	5.6%	22.8%	16.6%	77.2%	100.0%
4 and more	1,050,190	2,717,666	1,125,555	3,953,650	6,671,316	15.7%	40.7%	16.9%	59.3%	100.0%

Age group and sex	Poverty status (number)					Poverty status (per cent)				
	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Total</b>										
0	137,525	819,781	1,129,345	25,348,376	26,168,157	0.5%	3.1%	4.3%	96.9%	100.0%
1	299,775	1,663,462	2,067,663	24,285,955	25,949,417	1.2%	6.4%	8.0%	93.6%	100.0%
2	708,807	3,485,681	3,511,986	23,612,670	27,098,351	2.6%	12.9%	13.0%	87.1%	100.0%
3	1,059,744	4,270,873	3,072,406	13,461,568	17,732,441	6.0%	24.1%	17.3%	75.9%	100.0%
4 and more	2,879,084	7,223,508	2,732,072	8,610,080	15,833,587	18.2%	45.6%	17.3%	54.4%	100.0%

## Annex E. Child poverty by urban/rural divide and age (2023)

Age group and sex	Poverty status (number)					Poverty status (per cent)				
	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total	Food poor	Poor	Near-poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Children (0-17 years old)</b>										
Urban	729,467	2,715,417	2,208,844	17,125,186	19,840,603	3.7%	13.7%	11.1%	86.3%	100.0%
Rural	2,040,543	6,039,960	3,152,182	11,699,473	17,739,433	11.5%	34.1%	17.8%	66.0%	100.0%
<b>Adolescents (10-19 years old)</b>										
Urban	404,327	1,495,598	1,303,270	10,947,458	12,443,056	3.3%	12.0%	10.5%	88.0%	100.0%
Rural	1,127,450	3,474,371	1,930,598	7,655,493	11,129,864	10.1%	31.2%	17.4%	68.8%	100.0%
<b>Adults (18+ years old)</b>										
Urban	563,711	2,505,580	2,635,986	41,139,309	43,644,889	1.3%	5.7%	6.0%	94.3%	100.0%
Rural	1,712,403	6,147,468	4,539,405	27,205,152	33,352,620	5.1%	18.4%	13.6%	81.6%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>										
Urban	1,308,044	5,237,796	4,836,151	57,082,253	62,320,049	2.1%	8.4%	7.8%	91.6%	100.0%
Rural	3,776,891	12,225,508	7,677,320	38,236,396	50,461,904	7.5%	24.2%	15.2%	75.8%	100.0%

## Annex F. Child poverty by region and age (2023)

Age groups and region	Poverty status (number)		Poverty status (per cent)		
	Poor	Not poor	Poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Region I-Ilocos Region</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	285,155	1,302,521	18.0%	82.0%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	164,805	893,720	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	300,141	3,401,160	8.1%	91.9%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>592,607</b>	<b>4,584,436</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>88.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region II – Cagayan Valley</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	203,395	1,009,119	16.8%	83.2%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	117,209	654,097	15.2%	84.8%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	211,182	2,394,225	8.1%	91.9%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>412,596</b>	<b>3,262,299</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>88.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region III – Central Luzon</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	535,741	3,469,113	13.4%	86.6%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	296,292	2,250,769	11.6%	88.4%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	513,968	8,646,680	5.6%	94.4%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,046,773</b>	<b>11,772,666</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>91.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age groups and region	Poverty status (number)		Poverty status (per cent)		
	Poor	Not poor	Poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Region IV-A - CALABARZON</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	851,657	4,695,882	15.4%	84.7%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	468,453	3,031,527	13.4%	86.6%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	749,313	11,338,991	6.2%	93.8%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,610,745</b>	<b>15,687,031</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>90.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region IV-B - MIMAROPA</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	388,361	810,000	32.4%	67.6%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	211,070	519,036	28.9%	71.1%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	345,911	1,749,814	16.5%	83.5%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>737,302</b>	<b>2,514,915</b>	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>77.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region V – Bicol Region</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	862,273	1,372,028	38.6%	61.4%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	504,632	926,875	35.3%	64.8%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	842,706	3,005,758	21.9%	78.1%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,700,202</b>	<b>4,322,303</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	<b>71.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region VI – Western Visayas</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	726,784	1,940,928	27.2%	72.8%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	429,008	1,292,131	24.9%	75.1%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	737,613	4,829,131	13.3%	86.8%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,479,674</b>	<b>6,640,360</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>81.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age groups and region	Poverty status (number)		Poverty status (per cent)		
	Poor	Not poor	Poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Region VII – Central Visayas</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	805,982	1,879,622	30.0%	70.0%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	491,037	1,241,471	28.3%	71.7%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	905,566	4,859,113	15.7%	84.3%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,727,609</b>	<b>6,651,797</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>79.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region VIII – Eastern Visayas</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	688,103	1,091,661	38.7%	61.3%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	404,271	740,199	35.3%	64.7%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	697,028	2,518,417	21.7%	78.3%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,381,114</b>	<b>3,577,498</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>72.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region IX – Zamboanga Peninsula</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	623,960	835,400	42.8%	57.2%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	366,828	536,139	40.6%	59.4%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	655,402	1,775,973	27.0%	73.0%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,294,202</b>	<b>2,583,289</b>	<b>33.4%</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region X – Northern Mindanao</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	651,831	1,251,393	34.3%	65.8%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	331,260	786,669	29.6%	70.4%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	622,908	2,759,856	18.4%	81.6%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,272,591</b>	<b>3,947,359</b>	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age groups and region	Poverty status (number)		Poverty status (per cent)		
	Poor	Not poor	Poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Region XI – Davao Region</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	500,253	1,545,800	24.5%	75.6%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	278,347	989,351	22.0%	78.0%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	459,004	3,527,670	11.5%	88.5%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>954,245</b>	<b>5,004,025</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>84.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region XII – SOCCSKSARGEN</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	551,259	1,139,070	32.6%	67.4%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	291,194	718,934	28.8%	71.2%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	546,227	2,494,338	18.0%	82.0%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,097,729</b>	<b>3,556,767</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>National Capital Region (NCR)</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	149,863	4,080,562	3.5%	96.5%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	83,426	2,562,326	3.2%	96.9%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	114,640	10,550,813	1.1%	98.9%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>269,865</b>	<b>14,400,238</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>98.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	63,020	505,530	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	36,088	331,101	9.8%	90.2%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	66,257	1,201,465	5.2%	94.8%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>131,076</b>	<b>1,666,646</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>92.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age groups and region	Poverty status (number)		Poverty status (per cent)		
	Poor	Not poor	Poor	Not poor	Total
<b>Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	659,066	1,007,145	39.6%	60.5%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	365,137	580,250	38.6%	61.4%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	593,543	1,680,530	26.1%	73.9%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,261,061</b>	<b>2,675,646</b>	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>68.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Region XIII – Caraga</b>					
Children (0-17 years old)	324,803	772,756	29.6%	70.4%	100.0%
Adolescents (10-19 years old)	186,525	492,743	27.5%	72.5%	100.0%
Adults (18+ years old)	292,453	1,609,714	15.4%	84.6%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>617,098</b>	<b>2,348,190</b>	<b>20.8%</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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