

# OUR SECTORAL AGENDA

**EPANAW  
SAMBAYANAN**

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# PEOPLES' AGENDA

*This document is an output of series of consultations between community organization, non-government organizations, national government agencies and local government units spearheaded by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflicts. From the thousands of burning issues submitted and processed by the NTF-ELCAC, this document presents a comprehensive perspective in an attempt to introduce resolutions to sectoral problems and historical injustices.*

# **PEOPLES AGENDA**

**Developing a National Food Security Strategy Based on Community-Level Food Production**

**Strengthening State Support for Agro-Industrial Value Chains as a Pillar of Manufacturing and Processing**

**Implementing Convergence Strategies to Sustain Interventions for Indigenous Communities**

**Creation of a National Plan for the Informal and Subsistence Economy Sectors**

**Strengthening Existing Mechanisms for Sectoral Participation in Local Councils and Bodies**

**Expansion of the Universal Health Care Program and Strengthening Health-Based Social Protection**

**Urban Planning and Sustainable Development Based on the Fundamental Right to Decent Housing**

**Localized Approach to Climate Change Adaptation, Environmental Protection and Conservation**

**Creation of a Comprehensive Social Protection Program for Disadvantaged Sectors**

**Review of Credit and Financing Policies to Enhance Peoples' Access to Capital**

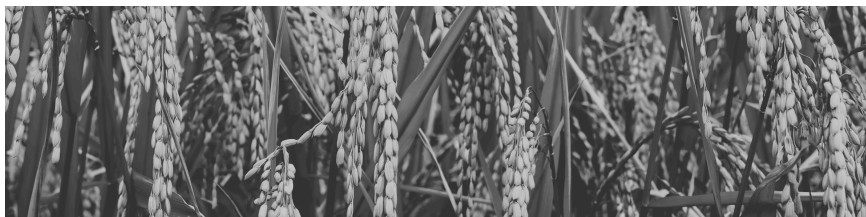
**Mainstreaming Multi-Stakeholder Solutions and Peace Tables at the Local Level**

## Developing a National Food Security Strategy Based on Community-Level Food Production

*The COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in national and regional supply chains, highlighting the urgent need for community-driven food production systems. A national strategy for food sovereignty will empower localities—particularly barangays and municipalities—to establish self-reliant food systems that can sustainably provide essential nutrients, including carbohydrates, proteins, and vitamins, tailored to local cultural and dietary needs. This effort will focus on government support for easy-to-grow, nutritionally rich, and locally endemic crops, alongside the development of food processing methods that extend shelf life and enhance community resilience. Additionally, the policy will prioritize transforming underutilized arable lands into productive spaces, fostering local food production and strengthening food security at the grassroots level*

## Strengthening State Support for Agro-Industrial Value Chains as a Pillar of Manufacturing and Processing

*To enhance the competitiveness of high-value agro-industrial products like virgin coconut oil, cocowater, cocosugar, abaca, and cotton, the state will provide both fiscal and non-fiscal incentives. This support aims to bolster these products' presence not only in international markets but also in domestic consumption. Mapping and optimizing value chains will be a priority, ensuring more efficient extraction, processing, distribution, and exportation. The state will further encourage private sector participation by offering graduated tax incentives and expanding agro-industrial economic zones, particularly benefiting industries like mining. However, this growth will be carefully regulated to ensure that industrial development benefits both investors and the communities that host these sectors, promoting a balance between private enterprise and public good.*

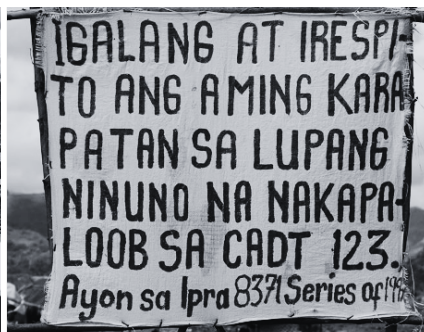




## Implementing Convergence Strategies to Sustain Interventions for Indigenous Communities

*The whole-of-nation approach has proven effective in mobilizing various government agencies to deliver essential social services and address policy gaps. This strategy will be applied to fully implement the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA), focusing on the needs of indigenous peoples and cultural communities. Coordination among national agencies—such as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) for ancestral domain, the Department of Agrarian Reform for agrarian areas, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for reserves—as well as local government units, will be essential to avoid overlap and ensure comprehensive support.*

*Additionally, emphasis on the four bundles of rights must be strengthened, particularly those related to the protection and utilization of ancestral lands and the promotion of indigenous cultures. With the gradual devolution of national functions, local bodies composed of indigenous representatives will be empowered to advocate for their rights to self-determination, self-administration, and autonomy, particularly in regions like the Cordilleras. This will enable indigenous communities to make decisions regarding the management of their ancestral domains effectively*



## Creation of a National Plan for the Informal and Subsistence Economy Sectors

*Despite contributing significantly to the national output, the informal and subsistence economy sectors face substantial gaps in state support, largely due to the absence of a designated government agency to oversee their welfare. Recognizing the informal nature of these sectors and the enhanced role of local government units (LGUs) following the Mandanas Ruling, it is proposed that LGUs take the lead in protecting the interests of informal workers. This can be initiated by establishing a comprehensive registry and database for informal workers at the municipal and city levels, ensuring their rights are protected and that local social protection mechanisms are in place to support them effectively.*



## Strengthening Existing Mechanisms for Sectoral Participation in Local Councils and Bodies

*Sectoral participation mechanisms in local governance platforms shall be emphasized as a cornerstone of devolution and good governance. The importance of sectoral participation as a building block of good governance is based on the institutional partnership between the government sector and their community counterparts in effecting inclusive development in localities. This shall include incorporating the sectors in government planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation as partners and not limited to being sectoral clientele. Although there are already laws guaranteeing the participation of the sectors in governance processes – such as in Republic Act No. 8425 and in the Local Government Code – gaps and challenges in its implementation shall be addressed through the review of these existing policies.*

## Expansion of the Universal Health Care Program and Strengthening Health-Based Social Protection

*In light of the COVID-19 pandemic's crippling effects on our national healthcare system, it is crucial to enhance national and local investments aimed at improving the absorptive capacities of regional and provincial hospitals. This initiative will involve a gradual increase in funding through expansionary fiscal policies, alongside strengthened guarantees from the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation, particularly for indigent patients. Efforts will also be made to streamline the convergence of government agencies focused on healthcare. Additionally, a fixed percentage of returns from Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations will be allocated to bolster investments in the healthcare sector. To further support community health, barangay-based healthcare interventions will be enhanced through targeted upskilling and capacity-building activities.*

## Urban Planning and Sustainable Development Based on the Fundamental Right to Decent Housing

*The urgent enactment of a national land use plan will encompass policies designed to strengthen and promote both state and private sector investments in community mortgage programs for mid-rise housing and in-city relocations. In existing relocation sites, it is essential to enhance collaboration between national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) responsible for both sending and receiving displaced communities. This integration will focus on ensuring the provision of essential social services—such as electricity, water, education, and livelihood facilities—within these relocation areas. Furthermore, governance structures in these sites, including homeowners' associations and other community organizations, will be incorporated into the barangay development councils of the receiving LGUs to foster effective local governance and community engagement.*





## **Localized Approach to Climate Change Adaptation, Environmental Protection and Conservation**

*Local climate action is focused on increasing the attention to local adaptation, linking adaptation and mitigation efforts together with other local ecological concerns, and greater engagement with active community members and grassroots community initiated climate change actions. These three key aspects provide climate change adaptation with a local saliency and tangibility, spur more effective action, build community resiliency and reduce vulnerability.*

*Furthermore, climate action and disaster risk management shall also incorporate existing indigenous and local knowledges and practices in order to strengthen the communities' acceptance towards the implementation of these mechanisms.*

## **Creation of a Comprehensive Social Protection Program for Disadvantaged Sectors**

*The institutionalization of mechanisms through policy reform and the establishment of a comprehensive national action plan for social protection will significantly enhance the long-term security of social guarantees, particularly for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. This approach will help shield social protection measures from political manipulation and ensure a sustained commitment from state authorities, regardless of changes in the political landscape or leadership. A successful social protection program should empower local government units (LGUs) to access and implement mechanisms that support disadvantaged sectors within their communities. Given that various line agencies have their own programs aimed at providing social protection to specific constituencies, it is crucial for these initiatives to converge at the LGU level.*



## Review of Credit and Financing Policies to Enhance Peoples' Access to Capital

*The Philippines is recognized as a country where accessing capital through credit is particularly challenging. The documentary and technical requirements often act as barriers, preventing poor and marginalized individuals from obtaining financial assistance, while those who are better off continue to receive steady access to microfinancing. To address this significant gap, local government units (LGUs) should take the initiative in assisting low-income families and community organizations to secure credit for business and enterprise development. Additionally, mechanisms for continuous capacity-building in financial literacy and proposal writing for community organizations should be implemented year-round, facilitating broader access to microfinance opportunities.*

## Mainstreaming Multi-Stakeholder Solutions and Peace Tables at the Local Level

*To enhance local peace and order, the integration of multi-stakeholder solution-seeking and peace tables into the processes of local government units (LGUs) is essential. It is important to recognize that sectoral and community issues are often exploited by communist terrorist groups for their agitation and propaganda efforts. By mainstreaming a nationally coordinated, centrally directed, and locally supervised peace process, local peace tables can be empowered to implement reforms and streamline the delivery of essential social services to those most in need. This approach will facilitate collaboration among various stakeholders, fostering a more effective response to local challenges and enhancing community resilience.*







*EPANAW SAMBAYANAN is a coalition of peoples' organizations advocating for lasting peace and inclusive development, especially for the poor and marginalized, and indigenous communities residing in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. EPANAW is an indigenous Mindanao term which means journey, signifying the historical journey of indigenous communities hand-in-hand with the basic sectors to correct historical injustices and introduce sectoral reforms for the benefit of the Filipino people.*

