

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY ON THE SDGs

# Philippines



## Respondent Profile

### Some details on the respondent:

- A representative from the Commission on Higher Education accomplished the ARC9 survey. The respondent is involved in the priority setting, drafting, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation stages of the policy cycle. Their knowledge of SDG-related concepts is on the Intermediate level. The same is true for their knowledge of existing higher education policies aimed at contributing to the SDGs.

## Understanding the National Context

### Who do you expect to be most responsible in pushing forward the implementation of the SDGs in higher education in your country? Is there a department/agency in-charge of such efforts and what are the priorities?

- By order of responsibility, the government and policymakers are seen as the primary actor responsible in pushing forward SDG-related efforts, followed by higher education institutions (HEIs), and civil society.
- Government's primary role in the implementation of the SDGs in higher education is establishing a common vision and strategy. By order of importance given by the respondent, this is followed by providing funding opportunities, building capacity, enforcing regulations, and providing reputational incentives.
  1. Establish a common vision and strategy
  2. Provide funding opportunities
  3. Build capacity (special units advising, tools for self-assessment, optional institutional reviews, guidelines)
  4. Enforce regulations (e.g. accreditation requirements, audits, non-binding policy statements)
  5. Provide reputational incentives (e.g. national ranking, labels, awards)
- There is a department/agency responsible for implementing the SDGs in higher education: the Commission on Higher Education.

### Are there policy documents for higher education's response to the SDGs? What are some obstacles faced by HEIs in contributing to the SDGs?

- The Commission issued a memorandum order titled "[Pathways to Equity, Relevance and Advancement in Research, Innovation, and Extension in Philippine Higher Education](#)" in 2016.
- In the memorandum order, sustainability is addressed in the area of Research. The dimensions of sustainability addressed by higher education are Economic, Environmental, and Social.
- In terms of obstacles faced by universities, they are mostly strategic (lack of or unclear strategy on the SDGs) and structural (lack of time, funding, human resources, infrastructure) in nature.

### What are the top 5 SDG priorities for higher education in the country?

- Its top 5 SDG priorities in higher education are SDG4: Quality Education, SDG8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG13: Climate Action, and SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Priority 1	SDG 4	Quality Education
Priority 2	SDG 8	Decent Work and Economic Growth
Priority 3	SDG 11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
Priority 4	SDG 13	Climate Action
Priority 5	SDG 17	Partnership for the Goals

## Policy Tools

**What policy tools are used to encourage HEIs to address the SDGs in your country? What specific higher education area do they target?**

- The Commission employs a number of policy tools to encourage universities to contribute to the attainment of the SDGs, such as:
  - **Financial support or budget allocation** which target the areas of education and teaching, research, and partnerships and societal engagement
  - **National rankings, labels and awards** which target the areas of education and teaching, research, and partnerships and societal engagement
  - **Access to facilities and infrastructure** that mainly focuses on education and teaching and campus operations and governance
  - **Tools for self-assessment** in campus operations and governance
  - **Optional institutional reviews** also in campus operations and governance
  - **Accreditation requirements** focused on education and teaching
  - **Audit, monitoring, and evaluation** intended for education and teaching as well as campus operations and governance

	Education & Teaching	Research	Campus Operations & Governance	Partnerships and Societal Engagement
Financial support or budget allocation	x	x		X
National rankings, labels and awards	x	x		X
Access to facilities and infrastructure	x		X	
Special units advising and guidelines				
Tools for self-assessment			X	
Optional institutional reviews			X	
Legal obligations				
Accreditation requirements	x			
Audit, monitoring, or evaluation	x		x	

- No example was given on the Commission’s use of policy tools to encourage HEI contributions to the SDGs, but it was noted that there is an on-going discussion with Times Higher Education (THE) on the implementation of an SDG Dashboard in connection with the impact rankings.
- Policy tools providing financial support or budget allocation cut across the SDGs while tools on accessing facilities and infrastructure, self-assessment, optional institutional reviews, accreditation requirements, and audit, monitoring, or evaluation are primarily focused on SDG4.

## Contextualising Higher Education Policies for SDGs

**What steps has your country taken to contextualize the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in its higher education context? Which partners were involved in these steps?**

To contextualise SDG-related policies, the Commission has taken the following policy steps:

- Established governance and coordination mechanisms
  - Undertook multi-stakeholder consultations
  - Reviewed national plans and strategies
  - Mapped targets
  - Prioritized and adapted targets
  - Mainstreamed into existing or new strategies
  - Assessing interlinkages, synergies, and tradeoffs
  - Established monitoring arrangements for reporting and follow-up to the SDGs
  
- The Commission has involved **HEIs and think-tanks** from among the above steps in:
  - Establishing governance and coordination mechanisms
  - Multi-stakeholder consultations
  
- The Commission has also cooperated with **central/national government authorities** in
  - reviewing national plans and strategies,
  - mapping targets, prioritising and adapting targets,
  - mainstreaming concepts into existing or new strategies,
  - assessing interlinkages, synergies, and tradeoffs,
  - the evaluation of the implementation or impact of policies, and
  - establishment of monitoring arrangements for reporting and follow-up to the SDGs.

## Sources

The information was provided by the **Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines**, as of 10 November 2022.

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