



Ateneo School of Government (ASOG) Condemns Perverse Level of Greed

22 Sept 2025

We are appalled by the gravity of human greed that we are witnessing. We are horrified by the blatant disregard for the rule of law. We are stunned by the complicity of leaders in flagrant corrupt practices.

The deepening crisis of corruption is systematically eroding the integrity of public institutions, and corroding the moral fabric of public service. The magnitude of resources siphoned through these practices is not only alarming but profoundly disturbing.

We offer the following data to contribute to finding greater clarity, and deepening the level of discourse on the issue.

1. Flood-gate scandal

Fiscal Year	Flood Control Budget (FCB)	Percentage of FCB in GAA ¹
2015	42,283,158,000	1.62%
2016	64,200,000,000 ²	2.14%
2017	72,926,249,000	2.18%
2018	127,734,500,000	3.39%
2019	90,723,796,000	2.48%
2020	90,123,209,000	2.20%
2021	101,813,674,000	2.26%
2022	128,966,726,000	2.57%
2023	182,989,695,000	3.47%
2024	244,577,911,000	4.24%
2025	254,300,000,000 ³	4.02%

Source: GAA; DPWH

The scandal involving ghost projects, misallocation of funds, collusion between contractors and government officials, conflicts of interest, and monopolies of contractors involving billions of pesos, makes one’s head spin.

¹ Percentage of Flood Control Budget to GAA is computed using open source data

² DPWH data

³ On the **2025 flood control budget**: The 2025 NEP and GAA shows ₱254.3B allocation for flood control. If one goes through the insertions, there are other flood control-like projects totaling ₱242B spread out in the GAA, which can bring the total up to ₱496.3B. In his media statements, PBBM uses the amount ₱350B - this appears to be a subset of the bigger total.



Based on a report by the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD), the Flood Management Program (FMP)⁴ has the biggest allocation in the DPWH budget, at P254.3 billion or 32.1% of the DPWH operations budget in 2025, almost doubled compared to 2022. The FMP budget is higher than the budget of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (P230.1 billion), the Department of Health (P223.2 billion), the Department of Transportation (P180.9 billion), and the Department of Agriculture (P129.0 billion).

Corruption in the DPWH has spanned decades, and fixing the system requires strong political will from the political leaders. The DPWH budget, which for the first time hit one trillion pesos in the 2025 GAA, has so far surpassed the budget for education, in violation of the Constitutional mandate.⁵ . We therefore ask – Are flood control projects (which constitute 22% of the DPWH budget) more important than addressing the 160,000 classroom backlog and the dilapidated condition of 70% of existing classrooms?

The Flood-gate scandal, however, is just the tip of the iceberg. Deeper and more serious concerns need to be surfaced in the debate.

2. Development for whom?

Budget Cut from Agencies	Amount (in Php Billion)
Natl Irrigation Authority	23.2
DA	22.4
DOLE	18
DOTr	16.7
AFP Modernization	5.0
PNOC	2.0

Budget Diverted to Agencies	Amount (in Php Billion)
DPWH	94.3 (26 B was vetoed)
LGSF (Local Govt Support Fund)	7.2
MMDA	3.4
NEA	3.2
TIEZA	1.5
PPA	1.4

Source: 2025 GAB Bicameral Report

⁴ The FMP budget in 2025 is composed of the following: (i) Construction/ Maintenance of Flood Mitigation Structures and Drainage Systems (P136.2 billion), Construction/Rehabilitation of Flood Mitigation Facilities within Major River Basins and Principal Rivers (P90.5 billion), and Flood Control Foreign-assisted Projects (FAPs) with a combined budget of P27.6 billion. (Source: CPBRD)

⁵ Art XIV, Sec 5(5) of the 1987 Constitution requires that education gets the highest budget allocation



Urban infrastructures at the expense of rural development underscores the bias of privileging urban-based over rural-based development. Budget cuts and movement away from strategic transport, infrastructure, agriculture-based investments, to graft-prone projects like flood control, multi-purpose buildings, and hyper-micro local projects, like local roads, footbridges, and deep wells, interrogate the supposed rural development priority of the administration.

Moreover, the inability to properly manage the budget will continue the over reliance on borrowing, and will keep the trend of the national debt growing faster than the GDP growth. For 2025, forty percent of the budget is funded by borrowings. As of the end of April 2025, the national debt has grown to ₱16.75 trillion, up from ₱12.79 trillion in 2022; and debt as a percentage of GDP is 63.1% as of the end of the 2nd quarter 2025, which is above the threshold. The accumulation of debt, combined with high interest rates, will continue to increase the cost of servicing. It was ₱ 1.6 trillion in 2023, grew by 26% in 2024, and may continue to grow in 2025. Debt servicing will continue to eat up a significant portion of budget expenditure.

3. Rules-based versus Padrino-based poverty reduction

The poverty reduction program of the administration is among the casualties in the current corruption malady. The budget cut and subsequent budget diversion are indicative of the priority direction of the administration.

Budget Cut from Agencies	Amount (in Php Billion)
DSWD	94.3
PhilHealth	74.4
DOH	25.8
DepEd	12
DOLE	18
NCIP	1.6

Budget Diverted to Agencies	Amount (in Php Billion)
AKAP (Ayuda para sa Kapos ang Kita Program)	26
MAIFID (Medical Assistance to Indigent and Financially Incapacitated Patients)	14.3
AICS (Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation)	9.5
SUCs (State Universities and Colleges)	7.0
TUPAD (Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/ Displaced Workers)	3.4



Rules-based programs, like the 4Ps or the Conditional Cash Transfer Program, the flagship of the country’s anti-poverty efforts, together with Philhealth, have suffered severe cuts in their budgets.

In 2025, the 4Ps budget was reduced by ₱50 billion, part of the ₱94 billion taken from the DSWD budget. Philhealth’s subsidy of ₱74.4 billion was reduced to zero. In their place, generous funding was provided to cash dole outs, like AKAP, AICS, MAIFP and TUPAD. These programs have no system for identifying beneficiaries and conditions for qualifying as a beneficiary. In 2025, the budget for these programs totaled ₱130 billion. Greater role and discretion are given to politicians in the selection of projects, beneficiaries and amounts of assistance and visibility in the distribution of the same. Social services are headed towards becoming a matter of *utang na loob*, not a matter of right.

4. Complicity in corruption

The executive and legislative directly benefited from budget diversion.

Diverted to (in Php Billion)	
House of Rep	17.3
Office of the Pres	5.0
Senate	1.0

Source: 2025 GAB Bicameral Report

The table below presents the total annual budget of the Office of the President, the Office of the Vice President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. A computation is made to show the breakdown of how much taxpayers pay to sustain each political leader on a per month and per day basis.⁶ The 2016 budget is shown for comparative purposes.

Institution	2025 Budget (Php)	2016 Budget (Php)	Percentage increase over 2016 budget ⁷
Office of the President	15,845,475,000	2,825,998,000	461% increase
OP budget per Month	1,320,456,250		
OP Budget per day	43,412,260		
Office of the Vice Pres	733,198,000	500,000,000	47% increase
OVP budget/ Month	61,099,833		
OVP budget / day	2,008,762		
Senate	13,930,174,000	3,717,633,000	275% increase
Budget Per Senator/ Year	580,423,917		

⁶ Computation of monthly and daily costs is done by ASOG using annual figures; budget per day is computed using 365 days/ year

⁷ Formula for Percentage Increase = [(2025 Budget - 2016 Budget)/2016 Budget] * 100



Budget/ Senator/ month	48,368,659		
Budget/ Senator/ day	1,590,202		
House of Representatives⁸	33,670,000,000	8,861,413,000	280% increase
Budget/ Representative/ year	105,880,503		
Budget/ Rep per Month	8,823,375		
Budget/ Rep per Day	290,083		

Source: 2025 GAB Bicameral Report; 2016 GAA

Why was there an exponential increase in the budget of these agencies? How much of these are under oversight scrutiny, and how much are confidential funds?

We therefore pose this challenge – if the administration is serious in weeding out corruption, we demand that it carry out an institutional scrutiny up to the highest echelon of power.

The Pillage of the Budget Demoralizes the Bureaucracy

The repeated violation of laws and jurisprudence on matters of budget has weakened the rule of law and the system of checks and balances that are cornerstones of our system of representative democracy.

As an institution that’s committed to ethics and integrity in governance, we join the public in making the following demands:

- (1) We call on our legislators to continue the conduct of hearings in aid of legislation, and correct the flaws and loopholes of our existing laws; we must end the grandstanding and public hearings *in-aid-of-reelection* practice;**
- (2) We call on the newly created Independent Commission on Infrastructure (ICI) to remain faithful to its mandate and sworn duty, and carry out the investigation truthfully;**
- (3) We call on agencies - DPWH, DBM, DILG, and concerned LGUs, to give their full support to the investigation of the ICI -**

The Senate and the House of Representatives must also submit to the ICI the *Bicameral Conference Committee Reports of 2023, 2024 and 2025* that were signed by the Bicam conferees and ratified by the plenary of both chambers.

These Reports are public documents and therefore must also be made accessible to the public.

⁸ 318 HOR members in 2025



(4) We ask the ICI to include the following in the conduct of their investigation -

- a) Senate and HOR Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Finance and Appropriation Committees, including the technical staff;**
- b) Former Senate President Chiz Escudero and former Speaker Martin Romualdez;**
- c) Executive Secretary and members of the Development Budget Coordinating Committee (DBCC), to answer why huge budget cuts and diversions happened in 2023, 2024 and 2025 without any interventions and protestations from the Executive;**
- d) Commission on Audit for its failure to ensure responsible use of public funds.**

(5) We call for transparent, inclusive, and honest hearings and investigations, giving the public due access to the records related to government funds and the national budget.

Public office is a public trust. Today, the trust is broken.

We support the current efforts of the administration to address the issue and regain the trust of the public. We challenge the President to sustain the momentum and to penalize all who are involved in corruption. We offer our talents to help find solutions to governance problems.

**Ateneo School of Government
Quezon City, Philippines
22 Sept 2025**