



### ASSESSING THE CURRENT AND FUTURE MIDDLE SKILLS IN THE PHILIPPINES: INPUTS FOR POLICY AGENDA



This study explores the conceptualization and operationalization of middle skills within the Philippine context, examining how various institutions define and implement middle-skills training. It also assesses the alignment of these training programs with workforce demands, particularly in relation to the priority sectors identified in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028. Employing a multi-method qualitative research design, the study integrates data from the Philippine Statistics Authority's Labor Force Survey, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews with Technical and Vocational Education and Training practitioners and government stakeholders.

The findings suggest that, in the absence of a unified definition and structured policy framework, middle-skills training risks obsolescence in the face of technological change and shifting economic conditions. The study emphasizes the need for a strategic, data-driven approach supported by robust policy coordination, multi-sector collaboration, and a responsive training ecosystem. A comprehensive reform agenda is urgently needed to ensure that middle-skills development contributes meaningfully to workforce adaptability, innovation, and national competitiveness. Future research should examine the long-term impact of middle-skills training on employment trajectories, productivity, and economic resilience.

*Published by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, August 2025.*

### WHAT'S NEW?

- Economics
- Finance sector development
- Gender equality
- Statistics
- Professional development opportunities

### RESEARCH GUIDES

#### EXTENSION

Index to UP ISSI Extension Project Reports

#### RESEARCH

Annotated Guide to UP ISSI Research Papers

Bibliography of UP ISSI Training Reports

#### TRAINING

Index to UP ISSI Training Program Participants' Outputs

#### GENERAL REFERENCES

Annotated Bibliography of UP ISSI Publications

Index to UP ISSI Publications  
Volumes I and II

Index to Philippine MSME Online News  
Sources Volume V

## ECONOMICS

### AFRICA-JAPAN COOPERATION ON PLASTIC CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRANSITION



This brochure presents UNIDO's collaborative plastic circular economy initiatives across Africa, supported by the Government of Japan. Showcasing active projects in Nigeria and Egypt, alongside completed programmes in South Africa and regional assessments, it demonstrates policy framework development, recycling infrastructure enhancement, and innovative solutions including reverse vending machines. These strategic interventions address plastic pollution while fostering sustainable economic development, with new TICAD9 initiatives extending collaboration to eight African nations in 2025.

*Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2025*

### MONETARY POLICY AND CORPORATE PRODUCTIVITY IN EMERGING MARKETS



This paper examines the impact of monetary policy shocks on firm-level productivity across 32 emerging market economies from 2000 to 2023, highlighting implications for policymakers. Results show that contractionary shocks significantly reduce productivity, especially for firms with high financial frictions, low market power, younger age, or those in vulnerable sectors like services. These firms face deeper, longer-lasting losses. Notably, expansionary shocks do not produce equivalent productivity gains. The authors highlight that tightening monetary policy in environments where firms face significant financial frictions can worsen productivity slowdowns. They note the importance of improving access to credit for small and financially constrained firms.

*Published by the Asian Development Bank, July 2025*

## FINANCE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

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### FINANCING INDUSTRIES FOR DEVELOPMENT - UNLOCKING PRIVATE, PUBLIC, AND BLENDED INVESTMENT IN A NEW AID ERA



This report highlights the changing landscape of finance for developing the future of industry. It calls for an expanded approach combining both domestic and international efforts, mobilizing private and public resources, and which places industry at the center of economic development strategies. Only by investing in industry today can we build prosperity, resilience and sustainability for tomorrow.

*Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2025*

### NONPERFORMING LOANS WATCH IN ASIA 2025



This report analyzes Asia's nonperforming loan (NPL) and resolution landscape and assesses the pressures facing asset management companies as the region looks to tackle structural challenges and boost financial stability. Based on surveys and interviews, the initiative between ADB and the International Public Asset Management Companies Forum (IPAF) shows NPLs fell in 2024 but are tipped to grow through 2027 due to rising credit stress in real estate and other sectors. The report assesses divergent national strategies, and shows how greater digitalization, data transparency, and secondary market liquidity, alongside stronger legal frameworks would result in a more resilient regional NPL ecosystem.

*Published by the Asian Development Bank, August 2025*

## GENDER EQUALITY

### DIGITALIZATION IN SHAPING FEMALE AND MALE ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIAL

This paper analyzes how digitalization enhances entrepreneurial opportunities of both female and male entrepreneurs. The result shows that digitalization widens the gender gap in economies where male entrepreneurship exceeds female entrepreneurship, but has no significant effect where female entrepreneurship dominates. It also finds that competitive environments have a stronger influence on female entrepreneurial potential, underscoring the need for policies that address these dynamics to promote gender-balanced entrepreneurial growth.

*Published by the Asian Development Bank, August 2025*



### GREEN FINANCE AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES: A GROWTH OPPORTUNITY FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Following a market assessment of 90 financial institutions in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, this brief explores strategies to improve access to green finance for women-owned micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises.

The brief highlights that leveraging digital financial services and providing tailored training can also empower women entrepreneurs to engage in green business practices. By supporting women entrepreneurs in adopting green practices, financial institutions can contribute to, and benefit from, a more inclusive and sustainable economic future for the country.

*Published by the Asian Development Bank, July 2025*



## STATISTICS

### IMPROVING ENTERPRISE SURVEYS THROUGH MIXED-MODE DIGITAL DATA COLLECTION

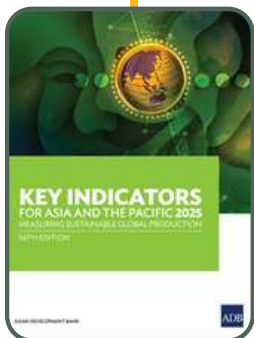


This brief draws on a survey of officials in statistical agencies in Asia and the Pacific about their experiences of using mixed-mode data collection. It explores the benefits of this approach and how challenges can be addressed.

Mixed-mode data collection uses computer-based methods and blends internet, telephone, and personal interviewing to balance cost, reach, and response rate. Barriers to its wider adoption include limitations in digital infrastructure, staff capacity, and financial resources. It is important to strengthen skills in blending data collection methods.

*Published by the Asian Development Bank, June 2025*

### KEY INDICATORS FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC 2025



This publication provides updated statistics on a comprehensive set of economic, financial, social, and environmental measures as well as select indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The report covers the most recently available economic, financial, social, and environmental indicators for the 50 regional members of Asian Development Bank. It discusses trends in development progress and the challenges of achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth across Asia and the Pacific. This 56th edition also explores how harmonized environmental-economic data can serve as a public good for guiding cooperation toward resilient, sustainable development.

*Published by the Asian Development Bank, August 2025*

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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## A. CONFERENCES

### **11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Southeast Asia (ICONSEA2025)**

Department of Southeast Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Universiti Malaya

December 11-12, 2025

*For other details, please visit the website: <https://umevent.um.edu.my/ICONSEA2025>*

### **5<sup>th</sup> Food & Society Asia-Pacific Conference**

Vinpearl Landmark 81 Autograph Collection Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

November 26-28, 2025

*For other details, please visit the website: <https://asiapacificfoodstudies.com/etn/2025-conference/>*

### **Asia Pacific International Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage Conference 2026 (APIRTP Conference 2026)**

Cebu, Philippines

January 13 to 16, 2026

*For other details, please visit the website: [www.irtp.co.uk](http://www.irtp.co.uk)*

## B. SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

### **Scholarships for Staff and Instructors' Knowledge Advancement Program (SIKAP) for Full-Time and Part-Time Study**

For questions and/or clarifications, please contact CHED - NCR Local Graduate Scholarships Unit (LGSU) through cellphone no. 0905-686-2630 or through email at [sikapgrant.ncr@ched.gov.ph](mailto:sikapgrant.ncr@ched.gov.ph).