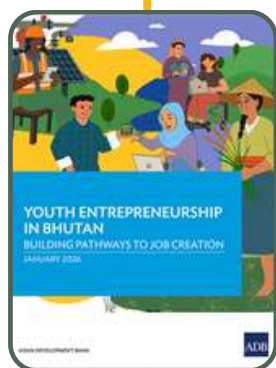




YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN BHUTAN: BUILDING PATHWAYS TO JOB CREATION



Analyzing why Bhutan faces a youth unemployment challenge as its economy diversifies, this report explores how supporting entrepreneurship could unlock productivity and drive resilient economic growth. The report sets out issues facing Bhutan's slow-growing youth entrepreneurship sector as it struggles with low levels of mentorship and underdeveloped financial markets. It shows how by adopting policies that consider the entire lifecycle of a business, and targeting education and financial support, Bhutan can transform entrepreneurship, empower young people, and boost innovation. Drawing on survey data, international benchmarking, and insights from local entrepreneurs, the report sets out how Bhutan could shift focus from start-up promotion to business development, modernize skills, and foster a supportive ecosystem. It highlights how targeted, stage-specific support could make youth entrepreneurship a cornerstone of Bhutan's inclusive growth strategy.

Published by the Asian Development Bank, January 2026

WHAT'S NEW?

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AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES

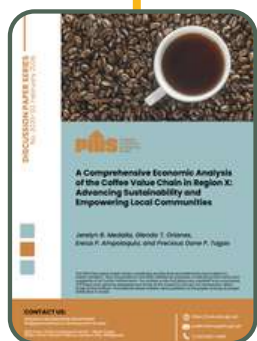
AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION AND THE FUTURE OF INDUSTRIALIZATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



Transforming agrifood systems creates major opportunities for industrialization in developing countries. As agriculture moves from subsistence to market-oriented production, demand grows for diverse, safe and processed foods, boosting activity in food processing and related industries. This shift also increases demand for industrial goods and infrastructure, opening new paths for jobs and economic development. To benefit, domestic agrifood and manufacturing sectors must compete with imports. Strengthening local industrial ecosystems, supporting SMEs and adopting green technologies can accelerate transformation and make it inclusive and sustainable.

Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, February 2026

A COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN IN REGION X: ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY AND EMPOWERING LOCAL COMMUNITIES



This study examines the economic, structural, and sustainability dimensions of the coffee value chain in Region X (Northern Mindanao), focusing on Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental, emerging centers for Robusta and Arabica production in the Philippines. It highlights coffee's growing significance in the national agenda, as noted in the Philippine Coffee Industry Roadmap, and the rising interest among upland farmers in specialty coffee, value-added processing, and climate-resilient agricultural livelihoods. SWOT and TOWS analyses reveal opportunities for upgrading, such as regional branding initiatives, digital traceability systems, farmer clustering, and cooperative consolidation. Risks remain, notably climate variability, aging trees, and price volatility in domestic and international markets. The study concludes that enhancing postharvest systems, strengthening extension and technical services, and establishing unified regional governance are vital for improving the competitiveness and sustainability of the Region X coffee value chain.

Published by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, February 5, 2026

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI AND THE FUTURE OF INDUSTRY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



AI is rapidly reshaping industrial production and policymaking, with applications that boost productivity, quality and resilience. Yet adoption remains slow and uneven, especially in developing countries facing gaps in infrastructure, skills, finance and data. This policy brief examines recent developments in AI and outlines key challenges and opportunities for future industrialization. It highlights the growing concentration and capital intensity of AI development, which limit new entrants, and shows how industrial policy can support adoption, build capabilities, strengthen data ecosystems and foster collaboration. Strategic action is essential to ensure AI drives inclusive industrialization rather than widening global divides.

Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, March 2026

FINANCE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

POLICY APPROACHES TO SUPPORT GREEN FINANCING OF MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES: ASIA-PACIFIC FINANCIAL INCLUSION FORUM



This report draws on the experience of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation members to highlight ways of improving much-needed green financing for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) by increasing capacity, harnessing technology, and building knowledge. Noting the crucial role of MSMEs in creating jobs and driving economic growth, the report outlines how challenges such as high costs and compliance hurdles restrict their access to finance such as green bonds, loans, and insurance. It shows how policies designed to develop the use of fintech, support MSME training, and work with the private sector to improve data collection can expand green finance access, accelerate the low-carbon transition, and support inclusive growth.

Published by the Asian Development Bank, December 2025

GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

UNDERSTANDING GENDER GAPS IN PHILIPPINE MSME POLICIES: LESSONS FROM THE COVID-19 EXPERIENCE



This paper examines the gendered impacts of policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic on entrepreneurs, focusing on how relief measures and business continuity programs addressed the distinct needs of women entrepreneurs. Drawing on the lived experiences of business owners during the pandemic, the study assesses the extent to which a gender lens was integrated into the design, implementation, and monitoring of policies. It examines how government interventions influenced access to resources, coping strategies, and recovery outcomes across genders. Findings highlight that while most policy responses were intended as universal solutions, they did not consider structural gender differences in business ownership, caregiving responsibilities, and access to finance, emphasizing the importance of embedding gender-responsive frameworks in crisis policy design to ensure equitable resilience and recovery for all entrepreneurs.

Published by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, December 23, 2025.

INDUSTRIALIZATION

NAVIGATING A FRAGMENTING GLOBAL ECONOMY: WHAT GVC RECONFIGURATION MEANS FOR FUTURE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT



Global value chains are being reshaped by growing economic uncertainty and technological change. Amid this turbulence, imports and investments patterns are gradually reshuffling, including between the world's two largest economies, China and the United States. The reconfiguration of global value chains creates both risks and opportunities for developing economies. This brief focuses on the key products and sectors at the centre of decoupling. While reshoring poses a risk, it may be outweighed by new export opportunities emerging from the reconfiguration of value chains across both low- and high-technology sectors. To capitalize on these opportunities, continued investment in production and innovation capabilities will be required.

Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, February 2026.

MANUFACTURING

THE GREEN TRANSFORMATION AND THE FUTURE OF MANUFACTURING: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



The green transformation is reshaping global manufacturing and creates a dual challenge for developing countries: meeting stricter environmental standards while advancing industrialization. As economies shift to low-carbon production, competitiveness pressures intensify across energy-, resource-, labour- and technology-intensive sectors. These shifts risk marginalizing firms but also open green windows of opportunity, enabling value-chain entry, upgrading and potential leapfrogging. This brief highlights three levers for structural change: leveraging natural endowments, using green latecomer advantages and harnessing digital-green synergies. Timely, targeted policies are essential to turn green disruption into sustainable industrial development.

Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, March 2026.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN AN ERA OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION



This brief examines how demographic change and automation will shape global employment needs by 2050. It breaks down future labour demand by demographic trends, participation shifts and automation impacts, revealing sharp regional differences. Developing economies will face intense pressure to create jobs due to rapid population growth, while advanced economies confront smaller demographic needs but higher risks of automation driven displacement. Under a scenario of moderate automation—where technology replaces labour faster than workers can reskill—global demand for new jobs could rise by one billion by 2050. The brief underscores the urgency of context specific strategies in labour market governance, skills development, industrial policy and social protection.

Published by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, March 2026.

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