



## UK Science & Innovation Network Summary:

# Philippines

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### 1. Science and Innovation Landscape

The Philippines is among the most dynamic economies in Southeast Asia averaging an annual growth rate of 6.4% in the period 2010-2019, with a previous average of only 4.5% in 2000-2009. Strong consumer demand supported by a vibrant labour market and robust remittances buoys economic progress. The country has continuous increasing urbanization, a growing middle class, and a large and young population. (Source: [GDP growth \(annual %\) - Philippines | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#)).

Advancement in science and innovation has been modest, with the Philippines ranking 56th of 132 economies in the 2023 Global Innovation Index (GII), previously 59th in 2022 and 51st in the 2021 ranking. Among the 37 lower middle-income economies, the Philippines ranked 4th, behind India, Vietnam and Ukraine. With fewer than 174 full-time researchers per million population, the country's gross expenditure on R&D (GERD) stands at 0.322%, substantially lower than the global average of 2.04% and the recommended 1% benchmark. Nonetheless, relative to GDP, the Philippines is performing above expectations for its level of development. (Source: [ph.pdf \(wipo.int\)](#)).

The [Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028](#) on R&D, technology, and innovation outlines four desired outcomes: strengthening basic R&D and knowledge creation; advancing market-driven R&D; scaling-up technology adoption, utilization, and commercialization; and accelerating innovation and entrepreneurship. The [Department of Science and Technology \(DOST\)](#) is responsible for providing central direction, leadership and coordination of all scientific and technological activities, and formulating policies, programs and projects to support national development. DOST provides funding for research as well



as support for technology transfer and venture financing for start-up and technology-based enterprises. The DOST Strategy Framework 2023 - 2028 focuses on four main pillars: human well-being, wealth creation, wealth protection and sustainability.

Other than local research institutes, the Philippines is home to the [Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture \(SEARCA\)](#) and the [International Rice Research Institute \(IRRI\)](#).

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## 2. UK partnership with the country on ST&I

The *Newton Agham* (“science” in Filipino) Programme was the first bilateral co-funding collaboration with the Philippines. Over ten years, the programme supported over £16m of research into infectious diseases, agriculture and environmental resilience. High impact outcomes include novel surveillance techniques for diseases of significance in the Philippines and a [National Hydrological Model](#) to assess disaster risk and resilience plans. Beyond the Newton Fund, DOST and UKRI have continued co-funding research grants through the [sustainable mineral resources in the Philippines](#) programme.

To build on a decade of impactful bilateral research collaboration, the inaugural [UK-Philippines Joint Committee Meeting \(JCM\) on Science and Technology \(S&T\)](#) was held last February 2024 affirming **health, food security, climate change and resilience to hazards, and technology transfer and commercialisation** as priority areas for joint work. These themes were likewise indicated in the UK-PH Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation signed in July 2019.

Further bilateral cooperation is supported by the [International Science Partnerships Fund \(ISPF\)](#), notably in climate change and resilience with the [Weather and Climate Science Services Partnership](#) with the Met Office, and on health, potentially with large-scale research grants with UKRI on infectious diseases with epidemic or antimicrobial resistance (AMR) potential in Southeast Asia. Technology Policy work on AI ethics and governance is being organised with the Philippine government, with the Philippines among the countries represented in the 2023 AI Safety Summit and part of The Bletchley Declaration.



In addition, the FCDO Research and Evidence Directorate funds evidence-based research and partnerships supporting communities, academia, and policy development and implementation in the country. Current programmes include [Transforming Energy Access \(TEA\)](#), a research and innovation platform supporting early stages of clean energy technologies and business models, along with the [Reversing Environmental Degradation in Africa and Asia \(REDAA\)](#), which aims to address how societies can restore ecosystem and halt biodiversity loss.

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