

Enabling Social Innovation in Philippines

Country Snapshot

Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ¹

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from Philippine's social innovation ecosystem

- ✓ Direct focus on social innovation
- 🔗 Connected but indirect focus on social innovation
- ✗ No focus on social innovation

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Official Definition of Social Innovation 🔗



- The Philippines has a **legal definition of social innovation** under the [Philippine Innovation Act](#) (Republic Act No. 11293, 2019). Under the Philippine Innovation Act Social Innovation is defined as the development of new or improved products, processes, or services transferred across markets.

Government Body for Social Innovation ✓



- The **National Innovation Council (NIC)** was established in 2019 under RA 11293. Chaired by the President, the NIC is the policy advisory body in the formulation, development, implementation and monitoring of the country's innovation goals, priorities, and long-term national strategy.

Government Strategy for Social Innovation ✓



- The Philippines has no standalone social innovation strategy instead follows a collaborative and forward-looking approach. Thus, social innovation objectives are embedded in the 2023-2032 [National Innovation Agenda and Strategy Document](#) (NIASD) and the 2023-2028 [Philippine Development Plan](#), with a focus on inclusive growth and MSMEs [2].
- REPUBLIC ACT No. 11337** otherwise known as "An Act Providing Benefits and Programs to Strengthen, Promote and Develop the Philippine Startup Ecosystem" and its Implementing Rule and Regulations aims to support the growth of innovative startups in the Philippines through streamlined processes, incentives, and inter-agency collaboration to foster inclusive growth through an innovative economy by encouraging a culture of innovation and streamlining government and non-government initiatives, in both local and international spheres, to create new jobs and opportunities, improve production, and advance innovation and trade in the country.

Policies, Laws & Regulations ✓ 🔗



Directly relevant frameworks:

- Philippine Innovation Act (RA 11293, 2019):** Establishes the NIC, defines social innovation, and provides for an Innovation Fund.

- **Innovation Fund:** An Innovation Fund to strengthen entrepreneurship and enterprises engaged in developing innovative solutions benefiting the poorest of the poor is established. This Fund, from which grants will be issued, shall be administered by the NIC which shall screen and approve qualified proposals. Subject to availability of funds, a revolving fund is allocated for the initial year's implementation of this Act, and such funds necessary for its continuous and effective implementation shall thereafter be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). [4].

Broader enabling frameworks:

- **Philippine Digital Workforce Competitiveness Act (RA 11927)** aims to enhance the country's digital workforce competitiveness and establish the Inter-agency Council for Development and Competitiveness of Philippine Digital Workforce. The law also mandates the development of a digital technology and digital skills roadmap, which will be based on a national skills mapping that will identify skills competencies and gaps and shall serve as the basis for the design and implementation of programs for upskilling, re-skilling, and training of the workforce.
- **Technology Transfer Act of 2009 (RA 10055)** is enacted to promote the effective use, protection, management, and commercialization of IP assets that were generated from publicly funded R&D.
- **Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Delivery of Government Services Act (RA 11302)** aims to streamline the procedure for the issuance of local business licenses, clearances, permits, certifications, or authorizations. The goal to expedite the process followed by local businesses, contributes to an enabling environment for adapting innovation into business and market practices.
- **Personal Property Security Act (RA 11057)** aims to create a conducive legal environment for innovation. It recognizes IP as an intangible property that can be registered as collateral for credits and loans.

Official Statistics



- The Philippines Statistics Authority tracks micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), The estimated 164,473 social enterprises are mainly MSMEs.

Government Programs



- Social innovation is supported indirectly through:
 - Innovation and startup programs (Department of Trade and Industry, National Innovation Council, Department of Science and Technology).
 - Livelihood and community enterprise programs (Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Labor and Employment)
 - Collaboration and partnership with the academe and private companies.
 - Learning and Education (CHED, IPOP, TESDA, DILG, DepEd)
 - Health and Wellbeing (DOH, DILG)
 - Finance (DOF, BSP, DBM, NEDA, COA)
 - Blue Economy and Water (DENR)

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders




- The innovation ecosystem is characterized by dynamic and complex relationship among innovation actors- government, industries, financing institutions, entrepreneurs, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) professionals, social scientists, creatives, research and development (R&D) institutions, and civil society organizations.
- Strong cooperative and microfinance networks support grassroots innovation nationwide.

FINANCE

Financing Schemes

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- Innovation financing in the Philippines includes government grants, loans, and incentives designed to support startups, technology commercialization, and research, driven by the [Innovative Startup Act](#) and the [Philippine Innovation Act](#). Key programs include the DOST-TAPI's [GALING program](#) and [TECHNiCOM](#), alongside [LANDBANK's I-Tech lending](#).
 - There is no consolidated estimate of annual funding for social innovation.
 - Most social enterprises rely on grants, microfinance, CSR and government funding.
 - To support entrepreneurship and innovation, DTI also implemented the Negosyo Center Program to promote ease of doing business and facilitate the access of micro-, small-, and medium enterprises (MSME) to various support services. For technology upgrades, DOST's Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP) allows MSMEs to avail funding support for technology and scientific interventions that will improve their operations.

Financing Inclusivity


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- Financing reaches women and low-income communities, primarily through microfinance.

SOCIETY

Public Awareness of Social Innovation

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- Media narratives focus on **livelihood, disaster response, and youth-led innovation**.

Research

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- Philippine social innovation research focuses on addressing systemic challenges like poverty, health, and disaster resilience through community-engaged, sustainable, and grassroots-led approaches.

Key Research Institutions and Initiatives

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- Social Innovation in Health Initiative SIHI Philippines (UP Manila): Focuses on research, capacity strengthening, and ecosystem building in health.
 - UNDP Accelerator Lab PH: Focuses on circular economy and grassroots innovations.
 - DOST-TAPI: Supports technological, social-driven innovations, particularly from Filipino women inventors.
 - **Practitioner and donor-led research** (e.g. British Council, UNDP, ADB) also provides the evidence base
 - **Promoting collaboration among innovation stakeholders.** Recognizing the importance of collaboration among the innovation stakeholders, the DOST and DTI established Regional Inclusive Innovation Centers (RIICs) that serve as venues for collaboration among government, academe, and industry players. Currently, RIICs have been established in Bicol, Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao, and Southern Mindanao Regions.

Entrepreneurship



_th / **_th** countries

Enabling conditions for business

50th / **139** countries

The Philippines ranks 50th globally in the Global Innovation Index (2025), showing steady improvement

Global Innovation Index 2025.



Social enterprises are active across agriculture, education, and community development

Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity



Participation

86% population

Volunteering

The Philippines ranks high in generosity

World Giving Index 2024: 30th globally



158th / **180** countries

Sustainability

Environmental performance is very weak, indicating major gaps between awareness and outcomes
Environmental Performance Index (EPI)2022

