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MCDF BRIEF

News and Reports on Infrastructure Connectivity, Quality, and Partnership

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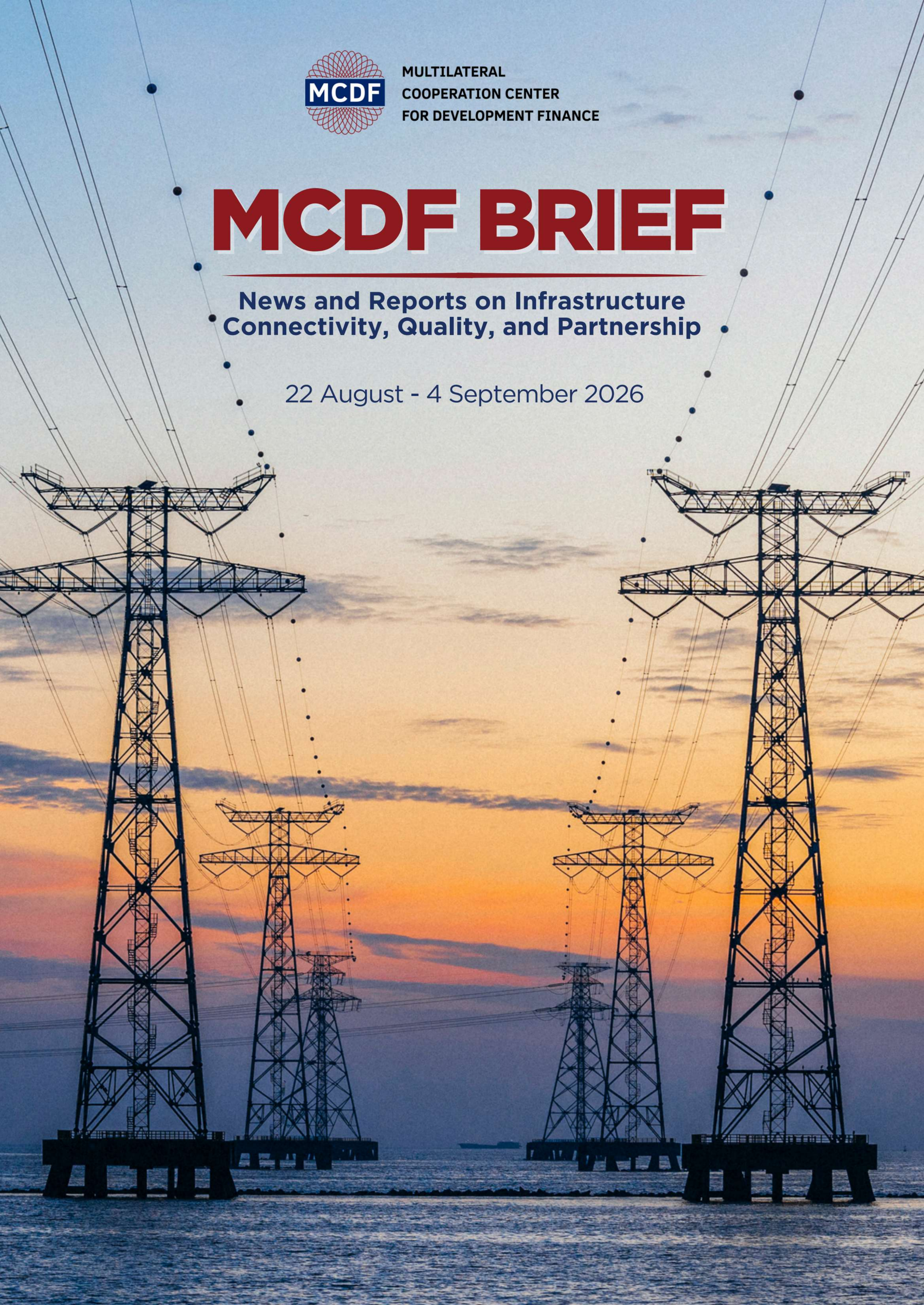

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (Administrator of MCDF)
Tower A, Asia Financial Center, No.1 Tianchen East Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China 100101
Tel: +86-10-8358-0000
secretariat@themcdf.org

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CONNECTIVITY[1]

TRANSPORT

Road: OPEC Fund approves USD30 million loan for road corridor linking Tajikistan and China

The OPEC Fund for International Development and the Republic of Tajikistan have signed a USD 30 million loan agreement for the first phase of the Rushan–Varshez Road Rehabilitation Project. The project will rehabilitate and upgrade 82.2 km of the 235 km Rushan–Varshez corridor. The corridor serves as an important transport link between central and eastern Tajikistan and provides the country's most direct road connection with China. Source: OPEC Fund

Road: Côte d'Ivoire selects preferred bidder for USD353.7 million Abidjan bridge PPP

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire has selected Socoprim as preferred concessionaire for the development of Abidjan's sixth bridge under a USD 353.7 million (FCFA 200 billion) public-private partnership (PPP). The project will create a new transport corridor between rapidly expanding residential districts in the north-east of Abidjan and the city's industrial, logistics, airport and port zones in the south. Source: InfraPPP

Railway: Botswana and Namibia advance USD8 billion Trans-Kalahari Railway towards procurement

Botswana and Namibia are advancing the proposed Trans-Kalahari Railway toward the procurement stage following the completion of feasibility studies for the cross-border rail corridor. The project would connect Botswana's rail network with Namibia's Port of Walvis Bay through the Kalahari region, providing an alternative export route for commodities and strengthening regional transport connectivity. The proposed railway is expected to extend approximately 1,850 km and require an estimated investment of USD 8 billion. Source: InfraPPP

Railway: Viet Nam approves USD11.08 billion investment adjustment for cross-border railway to China

Viet Nam's National Assembly has approved an investment adjustment of USD 11.08 billion (VND 289.34 trillion) for the Lao Cai–Hanoi–Hai Phong railway project, increasing the project's estimated cost from VND 203.2 trillion approved in 2025. The project comprises a 363 km main railway line and 63 km of branch lines extending across six northern provinces and major cities. It will connect Viet

[1] 'Connectivity' infrastructure for MCDF refers to the linkage of communities, economies and nations through transport, communications, energy and water networks across countries.

Nam's transport network with China through a cross-border rail link at Lao Cai and terminate at Hai Phong. Source: Global Times

Port: USD434 million to be invested in Jeddah Islamic Port terminal expansion to strengthen its role as regional logistics hub

Red Sea Gateway Terminal (RSGT) and CMA CGM Group have signed definitive agreements to jointly develop and operate Terminal 4 at Jeddah Islamic Port in partnership with the Saudi Ports Authority. The project will involve an investment of approximately USD 434 million and is expected to increase the port's container handling capacity by around 2.6 million TEUs annually.

Located on one of the region's key maritime trade routes, the expansion is expected to strengthen Jeddah Islamic Port's role as a regional logistics hub, improve cargo handling efficiency, and support growing trade flows through the Red Sea. The project forms part of broader efforts to enhance Saudi Arabia's transport and logistics infrastructure and strengthen its position in global shipping networks. Source: Seatrade Maritime News

Port: Ukraine launches concession tender for Chornomorsk Ferry Terminal to strengthen Black Sea connectivity

The Government of Ukraine has launched a concession tender for the Chornomorsk Ferry Terminal at the Port of Chornomorsk in the Odesa region. Located on key regional transport corridors, the terminal previously provided ferry connections to Georgia, Bulgaria, and Türkiye and handled approximately 1.7 million tonnes of cargo annually prior to the war.

The 35-year concession aims to restart regular ferry operations and develop new shipping routes, potentially including services to Greece and other Mediterranean markets. Project preparation has been supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) since 2020. The government estimates that the concession could maintain cargo throughput of around 2 million tonnes annually and strengthen Ukraine's regional trade connectivity. Source: InfraPPP

Airport: India advances PPP programme for 11 airports through bundled concession model

The Government of India has advanced plans to privatise 11 Airports Authority of India (AAI) airports through a public-private partnership (PPP) programme, following in-principle approval from the Public-Private Partnership Appraisal Committee. The initiative proposes grouping airports into five concession bundles, with private operators responsible for the operation, management, and development of airport infrastructure under 50-year concession agreements.

The programme will cover airports in Amritsar, Kangra, Varanasi, Gaya, Kushinagar, Bhubaneswar, Hubballi, Raipur, Aurangabad, Tiruchirappalli, and Tirupati. The bundling approach is intended to use revenues from larger airports to support investment and long-term financial sustainability at smaller facilities, while improving regional air connectivity. Source: InfraPPP

ENERGY

Hydropower: Tanzania commissions 2.1 GW Julius Nyerere project to support regional power exports

Tanzania has officially commissioned the 2,115 MW Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) on the Rufiji River, a USD 2.8 billion investment that more than doubles the country's electricity generation capacity and creates a substantial surplus for regional electricity trade. With installed generation capacity now reaching 4.6 GW against peak domestic demand of 2.27 GW, the government is pursuing electricity export opportunities with neighbouring countries including Kenya and Zambia.

Construction of the project began in 2019 and was completed in 2025. The facility is expected to improve the reliability of electricity supply and reduce power shortages that have previously affected economic activity. With the commissioning of the plant, hydropower is expected to account for around 60 percent of Tanzania's electricity generation mix, strengthening the country's role as a regional energy supplier while supporting efforts to expand cross-border power trade in East and Southern Africa. Source: Enerdata

Dialogue Earth Article: *How Laos' Role as Southeast Asia's "Battery" Is Changing*

An article from Dialogue Earth examines how Laos' role as Southeast Asia's leading electricity exporter is evolving as the region's energy transition accelerates. Over the past two decades, Laos has developed a hydropower-based export model that supplies electricity to neighbouring countries including Thailand, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore. The article notes that electricity exports generate approximately USD 2.6 billion annually and remain a significant component of the Lao economy.

The article argues that the country's traditional role as the "Battery of Southeast Asia" is being reshaped by growing investments in solar, wind, battery storage, and regional electricity interconnections. While hydropower remains central to regional energy trade, new cross-border transmission infrastructure and initiatives such as the Laos-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore Power Integration Project and the ASEAN Power Grid are creating a more diversified and interconnected regional electricity market. At the same time, environmental and social concerns associated with large hydropower projects continue to influence debates about the future direction of regional energy development.

The article concludes that Laos is likely to remain an important participant in Southeast Asia's electricity trade, but that its future role will increasingly depend on regional grid integration, cross-border transmission infrastructure, and a more diversified renewable energy mix. Source: Dialogue Earth

East Asia Forum Article: *Charging Up Southeast Asia's Mekong Battery*

An article from *East Asia Forum* examines the evolving role of the Mekong subregion in strengthening Southeast Asia's energy security and regional power integration. The article argues that the 2026 Strait of Hormuz disruption highlighted the region's dependence on imported energy and reinforced the importance of developing regional electricity markets. Given its substantial hydropower resources and growing renewable energy capacity, the Mekong subregion is increasingly being viewed as a strategic component of ASEAN's efforts to expand cross-border power trade and reduce energy security risks.

The article notes that while the Mekong has significant hydropower capacity, its potential is constrained by fragmented electricity systems, uneven grid development, differing technical standards, and limited coordination of cross-border energy markets. It argues that stronger interconnections, more integrated grid operations, and greater complementarity between hydropower and non-hydro renewable energy will be necessary to support a more resilient regional energy system. The article concludes that deeper regional electricity integration, supported by transmission infrastructure, diversified renewable energy sources, and closer cross-border cooperation, will be essential for improving Southeast Asia's long-term energy security and resilience. Source: East Asia Forum

WATER

Nile Basin partners establish USD100 million facility for regional water infrastructure projects

An Egypt-backed USD 100 million financing mechanism has been established to support the preparation and implementation of development projects in southern Nile Basin countries. The facility will finance projects identified and prioritized by participating countries, with a focus on infrastructure that supports water security, energy access, and sustainable development across the basin.

The mechanism will also build on Egypt's existing development cooperation programs in Nile Basin countries, including investments in dams, solar-powered groundwater wells and pumping stations, river docks, water-storage facilities, rainfall forecasting centres, and water-quality laboratories. The mechanism is expected to support a range of projects, including dams, water-storage facilities, solar-powered groundwater systems, river infrastructure, water-quality laboratories, and hydrometeorological services. Sources: Cairo Scene

TWD Article: *Water Cooperation Runs on Trust: Key Takeaways from The Consultative Session on Water for Cooperation*

A regional consultation held during World Water Week 2026 in Stockholm brought together governments, researchers, international organizations, and civil society representatives to identify practical approaches for strengthening water cooperation ahead of the 2026 UN Water Conference. Convened under the theme "Water for Cooperation," the dialogue focused on transboundary water governance, scientific collaboration, conflict sensitivity, and inclusive participation in water management processes.

Participants emphasized that effective water cooperation depends on building trust through transparent institutions, shared evidence, and inclusive decision-making. Discussions highlighted the importance of joint monitoring systems, shared databases, participatory planning mechanisms, and stronger science-policy interfaces to support cooperation across shared river basins and water resources. The consultation also underscored the growing role of climate change in increasing water-related risks and uncertainty, reinforcing the need for coordinated approaches to water governance, adaptive management, and long-term resilience. Participants concluded that strengthening cooperation requires not only technical solutions and institutional agreements, but also processes that build confidence, reduce tensions, and support collective action among water users and riparian states. Source: TWD

DIGITAL

Data Centre: YTL Power and JLand to develop gigawatt-scale data centre campus in Malaysia

YTL Power and JLand Group have agreed to jointly develop a gigawatt-scale data centre campus at Sedenak Tech Park (STeP) West in Johor, Malaysia, expanding digital infrastructure capacity in one of Southeast Asia's fastest-growing data centre markets. Located near Singapore and supported by expanding power and telecommunications infrastructure, the project is expected to strengthen Johor's role as a regional digital hub while attracting investment across the energy, utilities, and digital infrastructure value chain. Source: The Star

Data Centre: Actis begins construction of large-scale AI-ready data centre campus in Brazil

Actis, through its Latin American data centre platform Terranova, has commenced construction of the Campus Campinas data centre complex in São Paulo state, Brazil. Located within the Innovation Hub for Sustainable Development (PIDS) in Campinas, the project is being developed to support growing demand for cloud computing and artificial intelligence applications across the region. The project is designed to serve hyperscale customers and strengthen digital infrastructure capacity in Latin America. Source: Developing Telecoms

World Bank Article: *Risks and Opportunities in Data Center and AI Investment in Emerging Markets*

A World Bank analysis examines the rapid expansion of data centre investment across developing economies and its implications for economic development, digital transformation, and infrastructure planning. The study finds that emerging markets in Asia and Latin America, and to a lesser extent Africa, are becoming increasingly important destinations for digital infrastructure investment as global technology firms expand their cloud computing and artificial intelligence (AI) capacity.

The analysis highlights both the opportunities and challenges associated with the growth of AI infrastructure. While data centres can strengthen digital ecosystems, attract technology investment, and support productivity gains, their development requires complementary investments in energy infrastructure, digital skills, and regulatory frameworks. The report argues that the long-term development impact of AI infrastructure will depend on countries' ability to align digital expansion with electricity supply, transmission networks, workforce development, and policy readiness.

The analysis concludes that AI infrastructure can become an important driver of economic growth and digital transformation in developing economies, but only when supported by coordinated investments in energy systems, digital infrastructure, skills development, and enabling policy frameworks. Source: IFC and insight

The Economist Article: *AI and Public-Sector Effectiveness in Developing Asia*

An analysis published by *The Economist* examines whether artificial intelligence (AI) can help developing countries overcome longstanding constraints in public administration and service delivery. Drawing on examples from Asia, the article argues that AI has the potential to improve government capacity by enhancing data analysis, forecasting, case management, and the targeting of public services, particularly in countries facing resource constraints and increasingly complex development challenges.

The analysis highlights both opportunities and risks associated with the deployment of AI in the public sector. While pilot initiatives in areas such as judicial administration, utility management, agricultural forecasting, and social protection have demonstrated gains in efficiency and productivity, outcomes remain heavily dependent on data quality, institutional capacity, and the ability of governments to oversee and evaluate AI systems effectively. Source: The Economist

TRADE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

African Development Bank and ECCAS strengthen partnership to advance regional integration in Central Africa

The African Development Bank Group and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) have agreed to strengthen their partnership and advance preparation of the Regional Integration Strategy Document for Central Africa covering 2026–2031. Discussions focused on aligning the strategy with ECCAS' regional development priorities and accelerating implementation of initiatives that support economic integration, regional connectivity, and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Participants identified resilient regional infrastructure and the development of human capital and institutional capacity as the two main priorities for the next phase of cooperation. The dialogue also highlighted plans to expand collaboration on multimodal transport corridors, energy interconnections, trade facilitation measures, and regional industrial processing hubs. Between 2019 and 2025, the African Development Bank Group mobilized USD 1.23 billion for 28 regional infrastructure projects in

Central Africa, while its current regional portfolio stands at USD 1.69 billion across 37 operations. The two institutions also agreed to establish a joint technical committee, institutionalize annual high-level dialogue, and strengthen cooperation on the preparation and implementation of regional projects. Source: AfDB

ADB accelerates support for ASEAN connectivity and cross-border infrastructure

Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masato Kanda called for faster implementation of cross-border connectivity projects in Southeast Asia, highlighting the need to strengthen regional power, transport, digital, and financial links. Speaking at the ASEAN High-Level Conference on Connectivity, he noted that infrastructure investment and project preparation remain critical constraints to deeper regional integration despite growing demand for cross-border connectivity.

ADB highlighted its commitment to mobilize up to USD 30 billion by 2030 in support of ASEAN priorities, including public and private sector financing, project preparation, and cross-border coordination. The ASEAN Power Grid remains a central component of this effort, with ADB planning to provide up to USD 10 billion through 2035 to support regional electricity interconnections. The bank also noted that studies are underway through its Regional Connectivity Fund for Energy in Southeast Asia, which supports the preparation of ASEAN Power Grid investments and aims to help advance projects from feasibility assessment to bankable investment opportunities. Source: ADB

IFC-WTO Report: *Trade Finance: How Volatile Financial Conditions Influence its Availability and Impact Trade Levels*

This joint report by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) examines how global financial conditions affect the availability of trade finance and, in turn, international trade flows. Drawing on a global dataset compiled from the International Chamber of Commerce Trade Finance Register covering more than 100 countries, the report analyzes how trade finance responds to changes in trade activity, financial market development, and global financial volatility.

The report finds that access to trade finance remains a critical enabler of international trade, particularly in emerging markets and developing economies where firms face greater payment, liquidity, and counterparty risks. It also highlights persistent gaps in trade finance provision and shows that global financial uncertainty can significantly reduce access to trade finance, with disproportionate impacts on developing economies.

The report concludes that strengthening domestic financial systems and maintaining access to trade finance during periods of market stress can improve resilience and help developing economies participate more effectively in global trade. Source: IFC and report

East Asia Forum Article: *Striking a New Bargain on India–Sri Lanka Free Trade*

An article published by the East Asia Forum examines the evolution of the India–Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) as it marks its 25th anniversary. The article argues that while the agreement has significantly expanded bilateral trade since its implementation in 2000, changing regional and global trade patterns are creating pressure for a broader and more modern framework to support deeper economic integration between the two countries.

According to the analysis, bilateral merchandise trade between India and Sri Lanka has increased substantially under the agreement, reaching approximately USD 5.4 billion in 2025. The article notes that trade has diversified beyond traditional commodities and has been accompanied by growing investment and tourism flows. It also highlights the increasing importance of regional supply chains, services trade, and logistics connectivity as South Asia responds to shifts in global production networks and geoeconomic fragmentation. The article concludes that deeper economic integration between India and Sri Lanka could support trade growth, regional supply-chain participation, and broader economic cooperation. Source: East Asia Forum

World Bank Report: *Integrating Africa: From Threads to Hubs*

The World Bank's *Integrating Africa: From Threads to Hubs* report argues that the next phase of Africa's integration agenda should focus on building regional production networks and making continental markets function more effectively across borders. Developed in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the report examines how implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can be accelerated through improvements in trade facilitation, infrastructure connectivity, and regulatory coordination.

The main findings of the report are the following:

- **Africa's trade structure, rather than trade volume, is the primary constraint on transformation:** African economies trade extensively, but exports remain heavily concentrated in primary commodities with limited domestic value addition and weak industrial linkages. Intra-African trade, by contrast, is more concentrated in manufactured and higher-value goods.
- **Regional value chains offer the greatest opportunity for industrialization:** Regional integration can pool markets, capabilities, and production networks, allowing African countries to participate in higher-value sectors that are often too small to develop at a national level.
- **Trade costs remain among the highest in the world:** The report estimates that approximately 60 percent of Africa's trade costs originate within countries rather than at borders, reflecting inefficient logistics, weak infrastructure, fragmented regulations, customs delays, and limited digitalization.
- **Transport and logistics reform is as important as tariff liberalization:** Corridor inefficiencies, restrictive trucking regulations, fragmented transit systems, and poor interoperability continue to increase costs and limit regional trade. The report highlights one-stop border

posts, electronic cargo tracking systems, and harmonized transport regulations as priority reforms.

- **Regional public goods are essential for integration:** Cross-border infrastructure, power pools, transportation corridors, digital payment systems, and security cooperation are identified as necessary complements to trade liberalization. The report argues that without these systems, integration efforts will remain shallow.
- **The AfCFTA's greatest gains will come from implementation rather than additional negotiations:** Simulations reviewed in the report suggest that removing non-tariff barriers, improving trade facilitation, liberalizing services, and strengthening investment regimes generate significantly larger trade gains than tariff reductions alone.

The report concludes that Africa's integration challenge is fundamentally an implementation challenge. It argues that creating competitive regional markets will require coordinated investments in transport, logistics, energy, trade facilitation, digital systems, and regional institutions, supported by stronger enforcement mechanisms and deeper economic cooperation under the AfCFTA framework. Source: World Bank and report

QUALITY

MCDF NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

MCDF and MDB partners highlight practical approaches for strengthening occupational health and safety in infrastructure projects

Practical approaches for strengthening occupational health and safety (OHS) in infrastructure projects were highlighted during a virtual capacity building workshop for project implementing units (PIUs), contractors, and environmental and social (E&S) practitioners, co-organized by the Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCDF), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and World Bank on 24 August.

The workshop addressed the common challenge of translating OHS requirements into effective risk management and safer practices on infrastructure project sites. The moderator, Ms. Kisa Mfalila, Senior Advisor to the MCDF CEO on Environmental, Social, and Governance, emphasized the importance of translating multilateral development bank (MDB) OHS requirements and lessons learned into stronger project design, contractor practices, site supervision, and corrective action. A live poll led by Mr. Noel Tecson, Senior Safeguard Officer (Environment) at ADB, identified participants’ priority OHS issues.

Through technical presentations, practical exercises, and question and answer (Q&A) discussions, specialists from ADB, AIIB, and the World Bank examined how E&S standards within OHS requirements can be adopted throughout the project cycle—from project preparation and design to procurement, contractor management, construction supervision, and incident management. Ms. Brenda Omuombo of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) facilitated the workshop’s Q&A sessions and contributed to its overall design. Below are six key takeaways:

- **OHS starts before construction:** During the opening session on OHS requirements in MDB-financed projects, the World Bank’s Mr. Maged Mahmoud Hamed, ADB’s Mr. Felix Nii Tettey Oku, and AIIB’s Mr. Muzaffar Ahmad said risks should be integrated into project designs and managed early. Early consideration of OHS provides greater opportunities to eliminate hazards or reduce risks at the source before construction begins, they noted.
- **Procurement and contracts are critical mechanisms for converting OHS requirements into enforceable action:** In a session on embedding OHS in procurement, contracts, and contractor systems, Mr. Tecson, AIIB’s Ms. Rupal Kulkarni, and Mr. Hamed explained that contractor qualifications, bidding documents, contractual requirements, staffing, and resources all play a crucial role in ensuring implementation and enforcement of OHS expectations.
- **Management plans only add value when they are site-specific, adequately resourced, and effectively implemented in the field:** Contractor E&S and OHS management plans need to respond to actual activities, hazards, workforce, communities, and site conditions rather than function primarily as compliance documents, explained Mr. Tecson, Mr. Kulkarni, and Mr. Hamed.

- **Effective supervision means verifying that critical controls are working – not simply checking that documents exist:** Particular attention should be given to controls intended to prevent serious injuries and fatalities and gauge whether they remain effective as construction conditions change, added Mr. Tecson, Mr. Kulkarni, and Mr. Hamed.
- **OHS responsibilities must cascade through contractors and subcontractors and extend to both workers and affected communities:** Effective risk management requires clear responsibilities throughout the project delivery chain and consideration of project-related risks beyond the construction workforce to both workers and affected communities, said Mr. Hamed and Mr. Ahmad in a session on incident and near-miss reporting, investigation, and corrective actions.
- **Strong safety cultures learn from incidents by examining systemic causes rather than simply blaming workers:** Incident investigation must look beyond immediate individual actions to underlying factors such as supervision, training, equipment, work planning, management practices, and organizational culture, continued Mr. Hamed and Mr. Ahmad. This approach is critical for identifying lessons that can inform corrective action and prevention, they said.

Interactive exercises allowed participants to apply these OHS principals to practical scenarios involving hazard identification, selection of appropriate controls, incident reporting and investigation, and site supervision. Source: MCDF

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE

BU-GDPC Working Paper: *Transnational Advocacy and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank*

This working paper examines how civil society organizations (CSOs) and transnational advocacy networks have adapted their engagement strategies as the development finance landscape has become more fragmented. Focusing on the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the paper explores how the rise of new multilateral development banks has altered opportunities for advocacy on environmental, social, and governance issues. It argues that the expansion of development finance beyond the traditional Bretton Woods institutions has created new challenges for organizations seeking to influence development standards and accountability mechanisms.

The study finds that advocacy directed at the AIIB has largely emerged from networks and campaigns originally developed around the World Bank and other established multilateral development banks. The paper concludes that the evolution of development finance institutions will require corresponding adjustments in accountability and advocacy strategies to ensure that environmental, social, and governance standards continue to be upheld across a more diverse global financing architecture. Source: BU-GDP and working paper

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

UNEP Report: *Limiting Overshoot: Navigating Exceedance of 1.5°C and Pathways Towards Return*

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report *Limiting Overshoot* examines the implications of global temperatures likely exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and outlines strategies to limit the magnitude and duration of this overshoot. The report argues that the most realistic pathway now involves an "overshoot, peak and decline" trajectory, in which temperatures temporarily exceed 1.5°C before being reduced through sustained emissions reductions, adaptation measures, and carefully governed carbon dioxide removal (CDR) approaches.

The report stresses that every fraction of a degree above 1.5°C increases climate risks and adaptation challenges, while raising the probability of irreversible environmental and economic impacts. It emphasizes the need for immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen resilience, and prepare societies for the possibility of operating in a world that temporarily exceeds internationally agreed climate targets.

The report concludes that limiting the duration and scale of temperature overshoot requires immediate acceleration of emissions reductions, stronger adaptation efforts, expanded climate finance, and greater international cooperation. It emphasizes that delaying action will make both mitigation and adaptation significantly more difficult and expensive. Source: UNEP and report

DEBT SUSTAINABILITY

EFSD approves USD200 million budget support loan for Tajikistan

The Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD) and the Republic of Tajikistan have signed a USD 200 million loan agreement to support the country's macroeconomic stabilization programme and structural reform agenda. The financing has a 20-year maturity, including a 10-year grace period, and will be disbursed in three tranches during 2026–27, subject to the implementation of agreed reform measures.

The programme supports efforts by the Government of Tajikistan and the National Bank of Tajikistan to strengthen macroeconomic and financial stability while maintaining priority public expenditures. The reform package covers three broad areas: macroeconomic stability, fiscal policy and the reduction of quasi-fiscal risks, and improvements in transparency and accountability in macroeconomic and structural policymaking. The loan is also intended to help ease fiscal pressures associated with upcoming Eurobond repayments while safeguarding social spending and supporting longer-term economic reforms. Source: EFSD

ADB supports fiscal resilience and energy transition in Palau

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a USD 12.5 million concessional loan with Palau to complete a program supporting fiscal resilience and economic stability. Cofinanced by New Zealand, the program has helped strengthen revenue collection, reduce public debt, rebuild fiscal buffers, and establish new institutions including a Debt and Investment Office and a National Planning Office to support long-term public investment management.

ADB also emphasized the importance of accelerating Palau's energy transition to reduce exposure to volatile fuel prices and external economic shocks. With diesel currently accounting for around three-quarters of the country's electricity generation, expanding renewable energy, grid infrastructure, battery storage, and utility capacity will be critical to improving energy security and affordability. During the Pacific Islands Forum, ADB highlighted its broader support for energy transition initiatives across the Pacific, where more than USD 600 million in energy projects are currently under implementation. Source: ADB

PROJECT CYCLE AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

IRENA Article: *Data-Driven Energy Planning for Universal Access: The Senegal Experience*

An article by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) highlights how Senegal has strengthened its institutional capacity for energy planning through a multi-year Energy Planning Capacity Building Programme led by the Ministry of Energy, Petroleum and Mines, with support from IRENA and development partners.

The programme has focused on improving the use of analytical planning tools, strengthening coordination among energy-sector institutions, and supporting the preparation of investment-ready projects. It has supported the development of long-term electricity demand forecasts, power sector expansion models, and geospatial electrification planning tools. The initiative also contributed to the establishment of Senegal's first cross-institutional task force for long-term power sector planning and the creation of a harmonized electricity-sector database. According to IRENA, institutionalized energy planning, supported by robust data and analytical tools, can help translate long-term energy transition objectives into bankable investment pipelines and implementable infrastructure projects. Source: IRENA

PARTNERSHIP

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES, FUNDS, AND INITIATIVES

AFC establishes captive insurer to support infrastructure financing activities in Africa

Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) has established AFC Captive Insurance Company Ltd, a wholly owned Bermudian subsidiary designed to strengthen risk management and support the expansion of the corporation's infrastructure financing activities across Africa. Capitalized with up to USD 30 million, the captive insurer will initially provide insurance coverage for loans originated by AFC, helping the institution manage risk more efficiently and reduce reliance on external commercial insurance markets.

The new entity is expected to enhance AFC's capital efficiency and support the scaling of infrastructure investment by improving the management of financing risks. Licensed as a Class 2 insurer, AFC Captive will also have the ability to provide insurance services to AFC affiliates and selected third parties. AFC stated that the platform is intended to develop specialized insurance and risk-mitigation solutions for infrastructure projects, supporting greater financing capacity for investments in sectors including energy, transport, telecommunications, and industrial development. Source: AFC

WIOCC Group secures USD300 million investment from AFC and Vision Invest to expand digital infrastructure across Africa

WIOCC Group, Africa's largest carrier-neutral digital infrastructure platform, has secured a combined USD 300 million investment from Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) and Vision International Investment Company (Vision Invest) to accelerate the expansion of digital infrastructure across the continent. The investment will support WIOCC's long-term growth strategy and strengthen its position as a provider of open-access connectivity infrastructure serving more than 30 African countries.

The financing will be used to accelerate data centre deployment, expand terrestrial fibre networks, and invest in new subsea cable infrastructure, improving digital connectivity within Africa and between the continent and global markets. The investment comes as demand for cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and digital services continues to increase, while internet penetration in Africa remains well below the global average. By supporting the expansion of open-access digital infrastructure, the project is expected to strengthen regional connectivity, facilitate cross-border data flows, and support the continued growth of Africa's digital economy. Source: AFC

ADB approves USD400 million facility to modernize borders and strengthen trade connectivity in the CAREC Region

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 400 million regional financing facility to modernize border crossing points and improve trade connectivity across the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) region. The Border Upgrades for Integration, Logistics, and Development (BUILD) Facility will support investments aimed at reducing transport and logistics costs while facilitating the movement of people and goods across regional economic corridors.

The facility will finance upgrades to road and rail border crossing points, including modern infrastructure, digital systems, inspection and screening equipment, and more efficient border management procedures. In addition to reducing border crossing times and improving logistics efficiency, BUILD will support institutional capacity building, transport and logistics reforms, and greater private sector participation. By strengthening connectivity across CAREC member countries, the facility is expected to improve regional trade integration, enhance competitiveness, and create new opportunities for businesses, particularly micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises participating in regional value chains. Source: ADB

AFC launches climate-resilient infrastructure fund to mobilise domestic institutional capital in Africa

Africa Finance Corporation (AFC), through its asset management subsidiary AFC Capital Partners (ACP), has launched the Infrastructure Climate-Resilient Fund Nigeria (ICRF Nigeria), a dedicated investment platform designed to mobilise domestic institutional capital for climate-resilient infrastructure projects across Nigeria and the wider African continent. Registered as a closed-end fund, the vehicle will channel capital from pension funds, insurers, asset managers, and other institutional investors into infrastructure sectors critical to economic development and climate resilience.

ICRF Nigeria forms part of ACP's broader USD 750 million Infrastructure Climate-Resilient Fund, which aims to integrate climate considerations throughout the infrastructure lifecycle, from project design through operation. The fund targets investments in renewable energy, transport and logistics, digital infrastructure, and industrial development, while using blended finance and risk-sharing mechanisms to attract private capital. The platform has already secured support from a range of international and African investors, including a USD 253 million first-loss commitment from the Green Climate Fund, alongside participation from the European Investment Bank, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, the Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority, and African pension funds. Source: AFC

AIIB invests in venture capital fund to support infrastructure innovation in Asia

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has committed USD 5 million in equity to Glory Ventures Investments Fund III, a venture capital fund focused on early-stage technology companies developing solutions for green and technology-enabled infrastructure across emerging Asia. The investment forms part of AIIB's Venture Capital Investment Program for Green and Technology-Enabled Infrastructure and seeks to address financing gaps for innovative businesses operating in infrastructure-related sectors.

Managed by Shanghai-based Glory Ventures, the fund will invest in companies developing deep technologies and artificial intelligence applications in areas including digital infrastructure, sustainable energy, climate solutions, and smart mobility. AIIB expects the investment to help mobilize additional private capital while expanding financing opportunities for startups that can contribute to low-carbon and technology-driven infrastructure development. In addition to financing, AIIB will support the strengthening of environmental, social, and governance practices and promote knowledge sharing to help scale innovative infrastructure solutions across the region. Source: AIIB

IFIS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRY FINANCIERS

IFC and Bank CenterCredit partner to expand trade finance in Kazakhstan

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Bank CenterCredit (BCC) have established a partnership under IFC's Global Trade Finance Program (GTFP) to expand access to trade finance for businesses in Kazakhstan. Through the arrangement, BCC will participate as both an issuing and confirming bank, enabling the use of IFC guarantees to support trade finance instruments such as letters of credit. The partnership is intended to improve access to cross-border financing for Kazakh businesses. Source: IFC

EBRD and Attijari bank Tunisia expand risk-sharing facility to support private-sector and ESG investment

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has expanded its existing risk-sharing facility with Attijari bank Tunisia from EUR 20 million to EUR 70 million to support increased lending to businesses across Tunisia. The facility is expected to improve access to finance for companies operating in a range of sectors, supporting private-sector development and investment growth in the country.

In addition, the EBRD is providing a new USD 10 million facility to support environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investments by corporate clients. Eligible investments may include energy-efficiency improvements, renewable energy projects, waste-reduction technologies, employee training, and initiatives promoting gender equality and stronger risk management practices. Projects financed under the facility will be eligible for grant support through the High-Impact Partnership on Climate Action (HIPCA), funded by the United Kingdom. To date, the EBRD and Attijari bank Tunisia have supported 25 projects through their risk-sharing partnership, mobilizing approximately TND 400 million (EUR 118 million) in financing. Source: EBRD

PRIVATE CAPITAL MOBILIZATION

ADB Report: *Private Sector Operations in 2025 Report on Development Effectiveness*

The Asian Development Bank's *Private Sector Operations in 2025 Report on Development Effectiveness* highlights continued growth in private sector financing and capital mobilization across Asia and the Pacific. According to the report, ADB's private sector operations reached USD 9.5 billion in 2025, an increase of 38 percent from the previous year, while private capital mobilization increased by 31 percent to USD 4.7 billion. The report notes that financing commitments continued to support infrastructure, clean energy, digital connectivity, housing, water services, and financial inclusion across the region.

The report highlights the growing role of private capital in addressing development challenges and scaling infrastructure investment. Projects committed in 2025 are expected to generate 7,839 GWh of clean energy, support the provision of 7.7 million cubic meters of potable water annually, install 500 telecommunications towers, and improve housing and financing access for businesses and households. The report also notes that more than one-quarter of ADB's commitments were directed toward frontier and emerging markets, reflecting efforts to mobilize private investment in underserved economies. Source: ADB and report

UPCOMING EVENTS

OECD Interim Economic Outlook 2026

Date: 23 September 2026
Organizer: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Objective: The OECD will present its latest *Interim Economic Outlook*, providing updated projections for GDP growth and inflation across G20 economies, the OECD area, the euro area and global aggregates.

The event will feature presentations by OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann and OECD Chief Economist Stefano Scarpetta, followed by discussion of recent economic developments and outlook trends.

Target participants: Policymakers, international financial institutions, development practitioners, researchers, private sector representatives and media.
Format: In-person and webcast.
Source: OECD

8th World Bank/ ODI Global / IFS Public Finance Conference

Time: 24 - 25 September 2026
Place: Washington DC, USA and streamlined
Organizer: World Bank, ODI, IFS

Objective: We are pleased to announce the 8th World Bank/ODI Global/Institute for Fiscal Studies Public Finance Conference, taking place in Washington, DC on September 24-25, 2026, hosted by the Development Economics Vice Presidency and the Fiscal Policy Unit of the World Bank. This annual conference brings together researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to discuss cutting-edge research on public finance of relevance for low- and middle-income countries (L&MICs).

We primarily focus on research related to L&MICs but also welcome relevant studies from high-income contexts. We invite submissions across all areas of public finance, including:

- Tax Policy and Administration
- Subsidies and Compensation/Wage Bill Reforms
- Political Economy of Fiscal Reforms
- Public Financial Management, Public Goods Provision, and Procurement
- Cash Transfers, Social Protection and other Poverty Alleviation, and Inequality Reduction Programs
- Artificial Intelligence in Public Finance

We are pleased to feature Nathaniel Hendren, Professor of Economics at MIT and Founder/Co-Director at Policy Impacts, as our keynote speaker.

The conference will take place in person in Washington DC with streaming available for non-presenting attendees. Presenters are expected to attend in person. The organizers will arrange economy-class travel for invited presenters.

Target participants: Researchers, policy makers.
Registration: No need for the streamlining.
Source: World Bank

2026 AIIB Annual Meeting

Time: 28 – 29 September 2026
Place: Doha, Qatar
Organizer: AIIB and the Government of Qatar

Objective: As AIIB's core governance and stakeholder engagement event, the Annual Meeting will discuss the Bank's strategic direction, operational priorities and future agenda.

AIIB and the Government of Qatar are working closely to prepare the Annual Meeting. The Bank and the Qatari authorities look forward to welcoming participants to Qatar and remain committed to delivering a successful gathering that fosters dialogue, collaboration and partnership among global stakeholders.

At the same time, the Bank and the Host Member are maintaining appropriate contingency arrangements to ensure the Annual Meeting can be delivered successfully under a range of circumstances.

Target participants: Member delegations, policymakers, business leaders, clients, partners, civil society organizations and other stakeholders from around the world.
Registration: Here
Source: AIIB

CAREC Business Forum 2026

Time: 30 September – 1 October 2026
Place: Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Organizer: Asian Development Bank (ADB), Government of Mongolia, EuroChamber Mongolia, Business Council of Mongolia, and Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Objective: The CAREC Business Forum 2026 will be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 30 September to 1 October 2026 alongside the 25th CAREC Ministerial Conference. Organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and partners, the forum is expected to convene around 250 participants from the private sector, governments, investors, business associations, and development institutions to discuss opportunities for regional cooperation and infrastructure investment across the CAREC region.

The forum will focus on three priority sectors: green energy, smart transport and logistics, and critical minerals. Discussions will cover public-private partnership (PPP) opportunities, investment pipelines, and approaches to advancing regionally significant infrastructure projects. The event will also include sessions on ADB procurement policies and business opportunities, as well as business-to-business and business-to-government matchmaking aimed at fostering investment partnerships and regional connectivity initiatives.

Target participants: Private sector companies, SMEs, startups and investors, Development finance institutions and partners, Government agencies and state-owned enterprises, Business associations and chambers of commerce and industry, Infrastructure and financing service providers.
Registration: Here.
Source: ADB

Global AI and Digital Summit 2026

Time: 19 – 22 October 2026
Place: Seoul, Republic of Korea and online with selected live streams.
Organizer: World Bank and Korea

Objective: The world is changing at extraordinary speed, and AI and digital technologies are reshaping economies, industries, and the future of work. The Global AI & Digital Summit 2026 comes at a pivotal moment, as countries seek not only to keep pace with technological change, but to turn it into more and better jobs, higher productivity, and broader opportunity.

With 1.2 billion young people entering the workforce in developing countries over the next 10-15 years, how AI and digital technologies drive growth and expand access to jobs is a defining challenge of our era.

Hosted by the World Bank Group together with the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Science and ICT and Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Summit will bring global leaders to explore how AI and digital transformation can deliver practical development gains. The Summit will also highlight the importance of responsible AI that builds trust to ensure that innovation serves people and development goals.

The Summit will spotlight how digital access, affordability, ecosystems and AI readiness are the foundation for unleashing inclusive digital and AI solutions. And how practical, context-specific AI applications can strengthen businesses, improve public services, and expand access to opportunity, including in low-connectivity environments. Across sectors such as agriculture, health, education, tourism, and government services, the emphasis is on how digital tools and AI can help countries translate innovation into results.

By bringing together governments, development partners, private sector leaders, researchers, civil society, and youth, the Summit aims to help shape a more inclusive AI and digital future in which technology works for people and economies alike.

Target participants: Governments, development partners, private sector leaders, researchers, civil society, and youth.
Registration: By invitation only except for the live-stream sessions.
Source: World Bank

EFSD International Economic Conference: *Towards Balanced Economic Development*

Time: 29 October 2026
Place: Astana, Kazakhstan
Organizer: Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development (EFSD)

Objective: The EFSD International Economic Conference will bring together deputy ministers, central bank representatives, officials from international financial institutions, academics and experts to discuss long-term economic development challenges across Eurasia. The conference will feature the launch of an EFSD flagship report examining labor market trends in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, including the links between demographics, labor productivity, employment and economic growth.

Discussions will also address methodologies for estimating potential GDP and identifying key drivers of sustainable long-term growth. The event aims to promote policy dialogue and the exchange of practical approaches to strengthening economic resilience and supporting balanced economic development across the region.

Target participants: Government officials, central bank representatives, international financial institutions, researchers and economic policy experts.
Registration: Details to be announced.
Source: EFSD

31 Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 31)

Date: 9-20 November 2026
Location: Antalya EXPO Center, Antalya, Türkiye
Organizer: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Government of Türkiye

Objective: Türkiye will host the thirty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 31), together with the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 21) and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 8). The conference will bring together governments, international organizations, development finance institutions, private-sector participants and civil society representatives to advance global climate action and implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Topics: Climate finance, adaptation, mitigation, resilience, energy transition, sustainable infrastructure, carbon markets, nature-based solutions, technology deployment and international cooperation.

Participants: Governments, multilateral development banks, international organizations, private-sector representatives, investors, civil society organizations, researchers and development practitioners.

Source: UNFCCC

Africa PPP Infrastructure Finance, Investment & Partnerships Summit (Africa PPP) 2026: *Building Africa's Prosperity: Transformative Infrastructure, Investment and Partnerships to Accelerate Economic Development*

Time: 11 – 13 November 2026
Place: Nairobi, Kenya
Organizer: Kenya, AMETrade

Objective: The 16th Africa PPP Infrastructure Finance, Investment & Partnerships Summit will take place in Nairobi on 11–13 November 2026, focusing on how Africa can convert infrastructure ambitions into bankable projects, investable pipelines and practical public-private delivery partnerships. The event comes as Kenya's PPP Directorate reports 51 PPP projects, including 10 under implementation and 41 at different stages of preparation, and as the country advances a National Infrastructure Fund to mobilize private and institutional capital while reducing reliance on public debt.

At continental level, the summit responds to a shift from capital scarcity toward more effective capital deployment. Africa Finance Corporation's 2026 infrastructure report notes that non-bank domestic capital pools exceed USD 2 trillion and pension and insurance assets exceed USD 1 trillion, underscoring the need for stronger project preparation, risk-sharing tools and integrated infrastructure systems linking energy, transport, industry and digital networks. Against this backdrop, Africa PPP 2026 will convene governments, PPP units, infrastructure agencies, MDBs, DFIs, institutional investors, commercial lenders, developers and advisers to move projects from concept through preparation, procurement, financial close and implementation.

Sessions will examine infrastructure as a driver of regional integration, industrialization and productive growth, including how national development plans can become credible PPP pipelines, how domestic savings can be channeled into infrastructure, and how MDBs, DFIs and regional development banks can help de-risk projects and mobilize private capital. Kenya will provide a practical host-country context as an East African logistics, financial, digital and industrial hub linked to regional priorities including corridors, power transmission, affordable housing, water, special economic zones and EAC and AfCFTA trade flows.

The programme will cover roads, rail and border infrastructure for intra-African trade; bankable energy, transmission and regional power trade; water, health, housing and waste PPPs; ports, maritime logistics and aviation; and infrastructure for agriculture, agro-industrialization and food security. A full-day pre-conference masterclass on 11 November, *From Vision to Investment*, will provide practical guidance on project preparation, pipeline development, procurement strategy, investor due diligence, contract structuring and implementation. Curated meetings, project discussions, networking sessions and technical and investment visits will support focused engagement among project owners, capital providers, advisers and delivery partners.

Target participants: Open to all.
Registration: Here
Source: 16th edition of Africa PPP

World Bank Group Land Conference 2027

Time: 17 – 21 May 2027
Place: Washington DC, USA and streamlined
Organizer: World Bank

Objective: The World Bank Group Land Conference has catalyzed the global land community for over 20 years. The Land Conference is the premier global forum for the land sector, bringing together participants from governments, development partners, civil society, academia, and the private sector to showcase policy-relevant research, discuss technical issues and sector good practice, and inform our dialogue.

The Land Conference also aims to encourage cross-sectoral knowledge exchange and has incubated numerous investments, initiatives, and research projects led by diverse stakeholders, including the Voluntary Guidelines, the Land Governance Assessment Framework, and the Stand for Her Land Campaign. The theme for the 2027 Land Conference will be *Land Markets for Jobs and Growth*. Stay tuned for updates on registration and the call for proposals, expected in October 2026.

Target participants: Open to all.
Registration: No need for the streamlining.
Source: World Bank

MCDF Brief

The bi-weekly Brief is a collection of news, research, analysis, and case studies/best practices, featuring “connectivity”, “quality” and “partnership” to facilitate information and knowledge sharing among MCDF partners and potential partners. Topics cover but are not limited to: transport; communications; water; climate and energy; digitalization; debt sustainability; biodiversity; procurement; environmental, social, and governance (ESG) including anti-corruption safeguards; and transparency and information disclosure.

About MCDF

The Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCDF) is an independent multilateral initiative to foster high-quality infrastructure and connectivity investments that adhere to the Accredited International Financial Institutions (IFIs) Standards.

Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance
Tower A, Asia Financial Center
No. 1 Tianchen East Road
Chaoyang District, Beijing
www.themcdf.org