

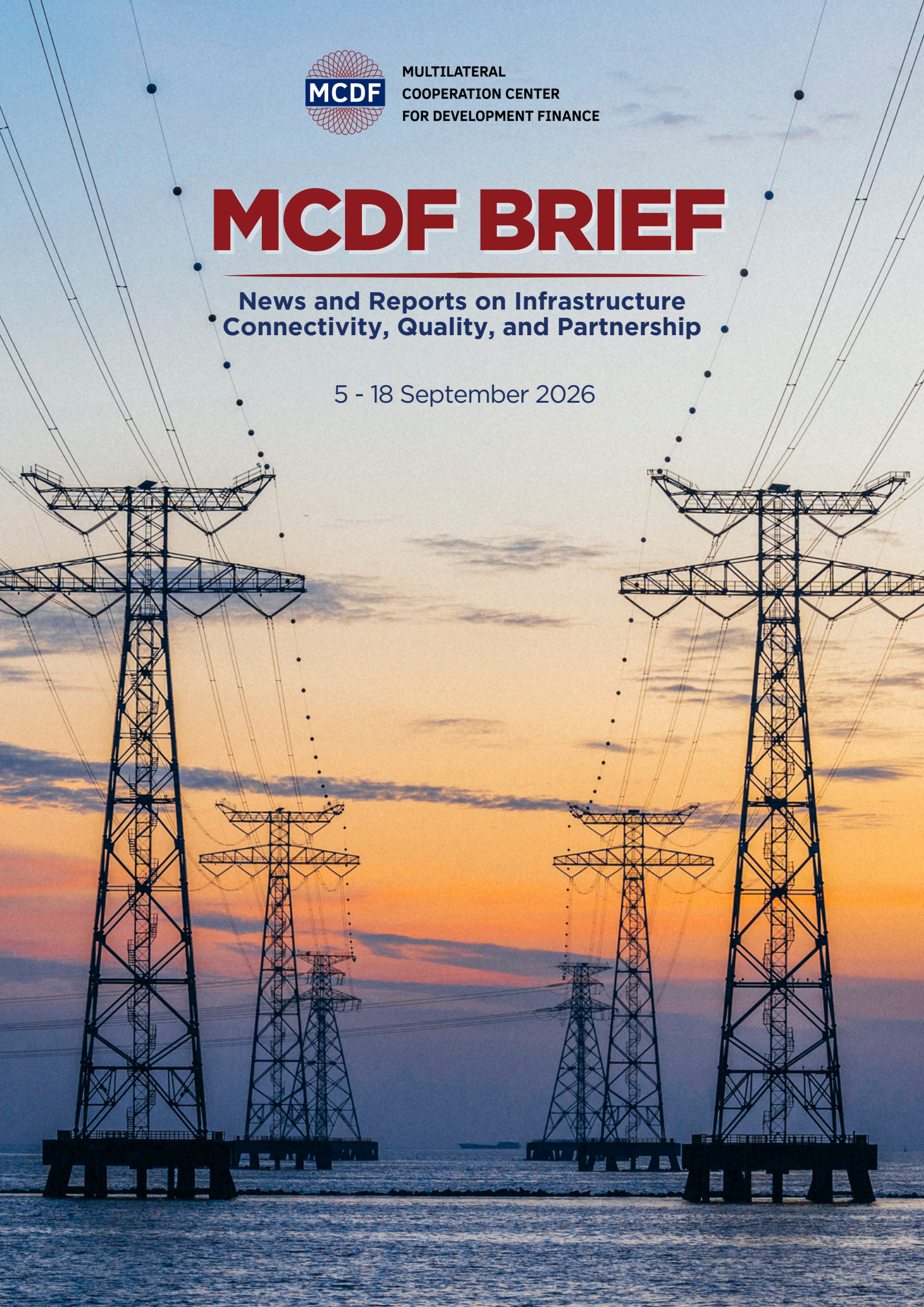


MULTILATERAL
COOPERATION CENTER
FOR DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

MCDF BRIEF

News and Reports on Infrastructure
Connectivity, Quality, and Partnership

5 - 18 September 2026



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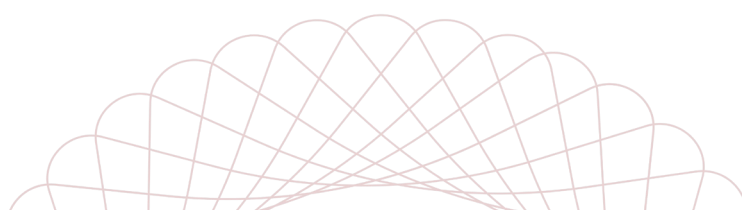
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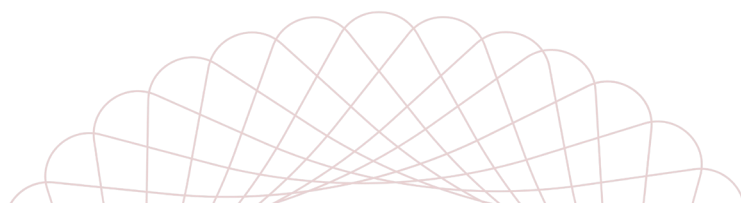
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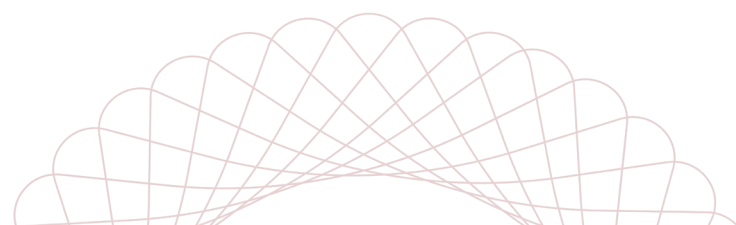
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CONNECTIVITY¹

MCDF NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

MCDF describes connectivity infrastructure's potential to help mitigate AI-induced digital divide during FBAS 2026 panel

The Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCDF) highlighted the role of sustainable cross-border digital connectivity and regional power infrastructure in helping developing countries benefit from artificial intelligence (AI) while avoiding a new digital divide. Speaking at the Special Session of the 6th International Forum on Big Data for the Sustainable Development Goals (FBAS) held in Beijing on 4 September 2026 in Beijing, MCDF Senior Advisor Ayumi Konishi noted that AI uptake depends on access to data centers and reliable power, making regional digital and energy infrastructure increasingly important. He cited MCDF-supported grants for submarine fiber connectivity in Central America, digital connectivity in Antarctica, and universal broadband and regional digital links in Nigeria, underscoring connectivity as a core element of science, technology and innovation strategies.

[Source: MCDF](#)

TRANSPORT

Port: UAE-based port operator Gultainer expands into Thailand with strategic investment in Suksawat Terminal

Gultainer, a United Arab Emirates-based port operator and integrated logistics company, has signed a binding agreement for a strategic investment in Suksawat Terminal on Thailand's Chao Phraya River, marking its entry into Thailand. Located in Samut Prakan, south of Bangkok, the terminal serves Greater Bangkok importers and exporters and connects by barge to Laem Chabang, Thailand's main deep-sea port. Gultainer plans to expand capacity, productivity and services at Suksawat, positioning the terminal as part of a broader integrated logistics platform linking Bangkok, Laem Chabang and international markets. The investment supports the company's strategy to develop connected trade infrastructure across Southeast Asia and wider Asia–Middle East–Africa corridors. [Source:](#)

[Gultainer](#)

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

Railway: Turkey plans high-speed line along Black Sea coast

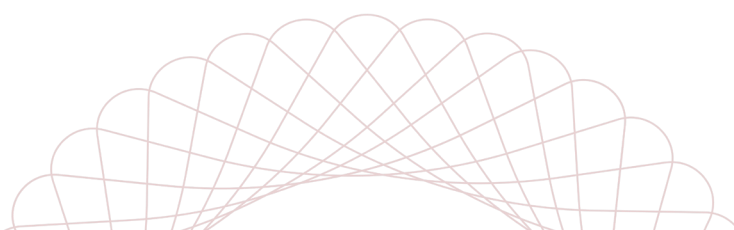
Türkiye plans a 513km high-speed railway along the Black Sea coast from Samsun to Trabzon and Sarp on the Georgian border, designed for 250km/h and 14 stations, with tendering possible later in 2026. The line is expected to carry 12 million passengers and 14 million tons of freight annually, cutting Samsun–Trabzon travel to two hours and easing regional road congestion. It complements the 293km Ankara–Samsun corridor via Kırıkkale and Çorum, where the Delice–Çorum section is under construction for 2029 completion, including major tunnels, bridges, viaducts, underpasses and culverts. [Source: IRJ](#)

Railway: Pakistan seeks USD2.5 billion consortium financing for Main Line-1 railway upgrade with ADB as lead financier

Pakistan is seeking USD2.5 billion in consortium financing for the long-delayed Main Line-1 (ML-1) railway upgrade, with Asian Development Bank (ADB) expected to lead and potentially provide USD1 billion, alongside possible participation from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the World Bank. ADB aims to finalize the ML-1 design in October 2026 before procurement and further approvals, as the government seeks to move the project from planning toward construction. First conceived under the National Trade Corridor and later included in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, ML-1 remains a priority rail modernization project intended to improve Pakistan's core north–south railway corridor. [Source: Profit by Pakistan Today](#)

Railway: Bids invited for Istanbul North Rail Crossing Project in Türkiye cofinanced by WB, AIIB, ADB, EBRD, IsDB and OPEC Fund

Türkiye has invited bids for the 127km greenfield, double-track and electrified Istanbul North Rail Crossing, a high-capacity Bosphorus rail bypass linking Çayırova on the Asian side with Catalca on the European side via the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge. The four-lot package covers 122.3km of main line and 4.7km of connections, including extensive tunnels, bridges, viaducts, stations and associated infrastructure, while telecommunications and signaling will be procured separately. The project is jointly financed by the World Bank (WB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and OPEC Fund for International Development (OPEC Fund), with proposals due by 14 October 2026 under a single-stage, two-envelope international procurement process. [Source: InfraPPPWorld](#)



Water: CEXIM commits USD1 billion loan to Integrated Water Resources Management Project that will provide Cambodia with its first inland waterway link to the sea

China Exim Bank has signed a USD1 billion loan with Funan Techo Coastal-Inland Waterways Company for a landmark water resources management public-private partnership (PPP) project in Cambodia, following an earlier USD200 million loan and effectively covering the project's estimated USD1.2 billion cost. Funan Techo Coastal-Inland Waterways Company Ltd is a joint venture created to develop the project. The joint venture combines local Cambodian stakeholders (three Cambodian companies holding 51 percent) with the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), a subsidiary of the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) holding 49 percent.

The 172.6–180km waterway will connect the Mekong River system to the Gulf of Thailand through Kandal, Takeo, Kampot and Kep, aiming to lower logistics costs and reduce Cambodia's reliance on routes through Vietnam. The project is expected to become Cambodia's first inland waterway link to the sea by 2028. [Source: CamboJA News](#)

ENERGY

Solar+storage: Bangladesh prepares solar with BESS tender supported by ADB

Bangladesh is preparing an Asian Development Bank (ADB)-supported request for proposals for the 130MW Sonagazi solar PV and battery energy storage (BESS) public-private partnership (PPP) in Feni, the country's first solar-plus-BESS project under the PPP framework. The private partner is expected to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the facility under a 20–25-year concession, with Bangladesh Power Development Board as offtaker on the facility, possible transmission connection to Mirsarai substation, and use of 412 acres of Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority land as a pilot to mobilize private capital for clean energy. Bid submission is expected in October 2026, followed by preferred bidder selection in November, PPP signing in December and construction of up to 18 months. [Source: GSI](#)

Nuclear: Vietnam's Petrovietnam and Korea Electric Power Corporation advance cooperation on Ninh Thuan 2 Nuclear Power Project

Petrovietnam and Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO) have advanced cooperation on Vietnam's Ninh Thuan 2 nuclear power project following a senior-level meeting in Seoul focused on implementation of their nuclear-sector agreement. Petrovietnam has been

designated as project investor, with local authorities reporting 97.5 percent land clearance and remaining site preparation expected to be completed soon. KEPCO offered to share experience from the Barakah nuclear project in the United Arab Emirates, while both sides agreed to continue work on technical, investment and financing solutions and seek support from relevant agencies in Vietnam and Korea. Both countries believe that Vietnam's determination to advance the project, combined with KEPCO's experience and capabilities in the nuclear power sector, will lay the foundation for Vietnam-Korea energy cooperation to enter a new phase and contribute to the achievement of Vietnam's energy security and sustainable development goals. [Source: CINIE](#)

CGD paper: Will There Be an African Energy Revolution? That Depends on Who Funds What

A Center for Global Development (CGD) paper argues that Africa's rapid distributed-solar growth requires a shift in public energy financing strategy. Falling panel costs have helped cumulative solar capacity rise from 8GW in January 2020 to 65GW by March 2026, with most new capacity outside South Africa deployed through household and small-business systems rather than utility-scale projects. This expands electricity access but reduces daytime grid demand, complicating the economics of utility power systems and long-term grid reliability.

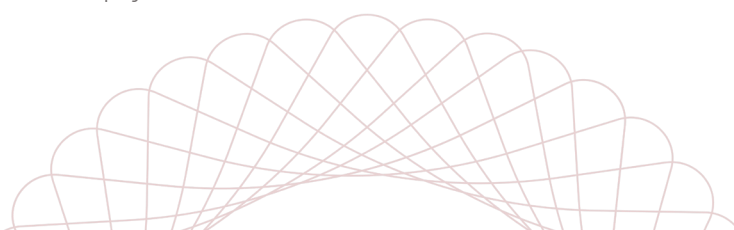
The paper finds that utility-scale solar in Sub-Saharan Africa remains heavily dependent on public and concessional finance, while high private financing costs and take-or-pay contracting² can increase fiscal and utility risks as distributed solar expands. It recommends relying primarily on private distributed solar to extend household access, while directing public and multilateral development bank finance toward core grid infrastructure, storage, hydro, geothermal, gas and reliable generation needed for industrial productivity and structural transformation. [Source: CGD blog](#) and [CGD paper](#)

DIGITAL

Cable: Thai Gulf Development and Singaporean Singtel partner in submarine cable connectivity between Thailand and Singapore

Thai energy and infrastructure conglomerate Gulf Development and Southeast Asia's largest telecommunications multinational Singtel Group have formed a strategic partnership to develop and invest in submarine cable connectivity between Thailand and Singapore, with an initial focus on the Vietnam–Thailand–Singapore Cable System expected to be operational by 2030. The partnership combines Gulf's infrastructure and digital business portfolio with

² A take-or-pay contract is a legal agreement that requires a buyer to either accept delivery of a minimum amount of goods or services or pay a set fee for the shortfall.



Singtel's subsea cable expertise, supported by Singtel Singapore and Thai Advanced Info Service (AIS), the largest GSM mobile digital phone network operator in Thailand, to meet rising demand for cloud, artificial intelligence, data center and digital services while strengthening Thailand's regional connectivity and Singapore's role as a digital gateway. The partners may also pursue terrestrial and additional subsea cable investments as Southeast Asia's digital infrastructure market expands. [Source: Gulf Development](#) and [Singtel](#)

Data center: Thailand moves toward a coordinated national framework for data center regulation

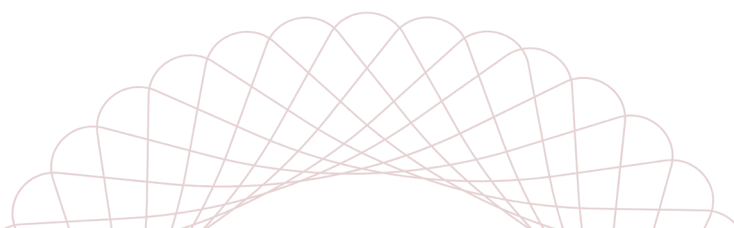
Thailand has paused review or approvals for 166 data center projects—49 under construction and 117 awaiting permits—while it prepares a national framework for electricity and water use, site selection, safety, environmental safeguards and economic benefits.

The temporary freeze responds to rapid artificial intelligence (AI)- and cloud-driven demand and fragmented approvals that obscure cumulative resource and community impacts. New criteria will cover economic value, infrastructure capacity, sites, buildings and environmental standards, while a proposed dashboard would track project status, locations, resource use and rules. Existing operators will receive a transition period to comply. [Source: Asia News Network](#)

Data center: Zettabyte and Raku Advanced Tech sign MoU on green AI data centers across Asia

Zettabyte and Raku Advanced Tech have signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop green AI data centers across Asia, starting with Taiwan and Thailand. Zettabyte is an AI computing company that designs and operates GPU infrastructure for artificial intelligence (AI) training and inference workloads. Raku Advanced Tech Co., Ltd. is a Taipei-based smart-energy and AI infrastructure integrator. The partnership combines Zettabyte's zSUITE AI compute platform³ with Raku's solar, battery storage, energy management and data center development capabilities, aiming to address rising regional demand for AI computing while managing power costs and environment, social, and governing (ESG) commitments. [Source: Zettabyte](#)

³ A zSUITE platform typically refers to the digital commercial escrow and subaccounting software provided by ZSuite Technologies to help banks and financial institutions automate and manage specialty accounts.



Data center: Property company Goodman raises USD455 million of equity for the Goodman Hong Kong Data Centre Partnership

Goodman Group, a publicly traded global property company that owns, develops, and manages logistics properties and data centers, has raised USD455 million in equity for the Goodman Hong Kong Data Centre Partnership (GHKDC), its private institutional platform focused on Hong Kong's data center market. Proceeds will mainly fund the mechanical and electrical fit-out of Goodman HKG10, converting an existing warehouse in Tsuen Wan into a data center expected to enter service in early 2028. The platform spans six assets, including four operating facilities and two under development, and accounts for 30 percent of Hong Kong's data center power capacity. [Source: Goodman](#)

Data center: Zankore expands Southeast Asia's AI compute infrastructure with NVIDIA

Zankore, an artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure and neocloud⁴ platform focused on Southeast Asia, is developing an initial 100MW of NVIDIA-powered AI infrastructure in Indonesia to provide GPU cloud services for AI-native firms⁵, enterprises, startups, developers and institutions across Indonesia and Southeast Asia. The platform is intended to support AI training, fine-tuning, inference and agentic applications, while strengthening Indonesia's domestic AI cloud capacity and regional role in Southeast Asia's digital economy.

The company has signed a senior term loan facility of up to USD3.1 billion to acquire and deploy advanced NVIDIA GPU infrastructure, with Citi as exclusive debt adviser and Citi, ING, Natixis CIB, QNB and UOB as senior mandated lead arrangers, underwriters and bookrunners. The financing follows Zankore's launch with Ooredoo Group, Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison, NVIDIA and Nokia, and supports a phased ambition to build up to 1GW of NVIDIA AI computing capacity. The transaction underscores growing lender interest in AI compute as an infrastructure-linked asset class, supported by revenue-sharing and credit-support mechanisms that align deployment with customer demand. [Source: Zankore](#)

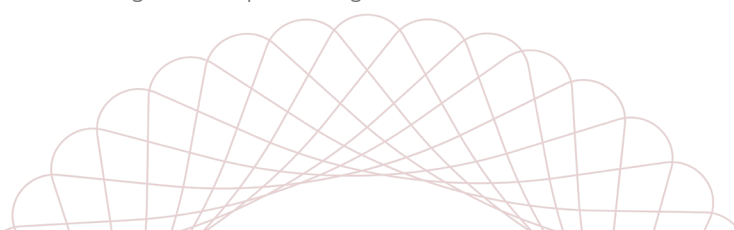
GPU: IFC lines up first GPU financing

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is arranging its first global financing for Graphics Processing Unit (GPU)⁶ infrastructure, linked to an India-based data center in Mumbai and

⁴ The term *neocloud* refers to a cloud provider that primarily offers GPU-as-a-Service (GPUaaS).

⁵ *AI-native firms* are businesses designed from the ground up with artificial intelligence as their core operational and structural foundation, rather than simply bolting AI tools onto legacy systems.

⁶ A GPU is a specialized electronic circuit designed to process thousands of mathematical calculations at the same time. In artificial intelligence (AI), GPUs serve as the core engine powering the heavy matrix and vector math required for machine learning and deep learning.



expected to include three Indian banks. The rupee-denominated transaction, under documentation, is expected to start as a letter of credit before converting into a 5.5-year loan and could close by end-2026. The deal would move IFC beyond financing data-center buildings toward the compute layer that underpins artificial intelligence (AI) workloads, building on recent IFC data-center financings in India and the Philippines while requiring additional due diligence for a new asset class. [Source: GSI](#)

Digital public infrastructure: CAF and Co-Develop philanthropy join forces to accelerate digital transformation in Latin America and the Caribbean

CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean and Co-Develop, a global philanthropic fund that supports large-scale digital transformation through a digital public infrastructure (DPI) approach, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support digital transformation in Latin America and the Caribbean. The partnership aims to move countries and cities from isolated digital initiatives toward interoperable, reusable systems that reduce costs, support scale and generate public value across sectors.

Priority areas include agriculture, land administration and cadaster, health, social protection and climate resilience, with particular attention to subnational governments. The partnership will also promote safeguards for inclusive, ethical and people-centered digital transformation, adapt diagnostic and measurement tools, and convene governments, private sector actors, civil society and development partners for regional learning. [Source: CAF](#)

AI: Gates foundation commits USD1 billion to help build and deliver equitable AI that improves health and expands opportunity

The Gates Foundation has committed at least USD1 billion over two years to expand equitable access to artificial intelligence (AI), alongside its 2026 *Goalkeepers Report*, the Gates Foundation's annual flagship report tracking progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in areas such as health, poverty, education, gender equality, agriculture, and development equity.

The 2026 report focuses on equitable artificial intelligence. It argues that AI could either help close development gaps or widen them, depending on whether tools are designed for underserved communities, local languages, local data realities, and practical use by frontline workers such as health professionals, teachers, farmers, and developers. The report calls for AI tools to work across languages, reflect local contexts and data governance, and enable doctors, farmers, teachers and developers to evaluate and adapt solutions. It urges governments, technology companies and philanthropy to measure AI success by benefits for underserved users, not only profitable markets. [Source: Gates Foundation](#) and [2026 Goalkeepers Report](#)

World Bank article: *Small AI Transforms Farming in India*

A World Bank feature highlights how small AI tools⁷ are helping Indian smallholders access localized, low-cost advisory services through basic smartphones, including in local languages and low-connectivity settings. Supported through the World Bank's AgriConnect initiative, these tools combine AI, satellite imagery, remote sensing and trusted public data to improve decisions on sowing, irrigation, pest management, market access and government support. In Kerala, the KATHIR platform already covers more than 3 million farmers and 1.1 million hectares of crops, while Maharashtra's MahaVISTAAR-AI chatbot has been downloaded more than 3 million times. The article underscores that inclusive AI in agriculture depends on digital infrastructure, public-sector data systems, local-language interfaces and regulatory frameworks that enable practical tools to improve productivity, resilience, finance access and rural jobs. [Source: World Bank](#)

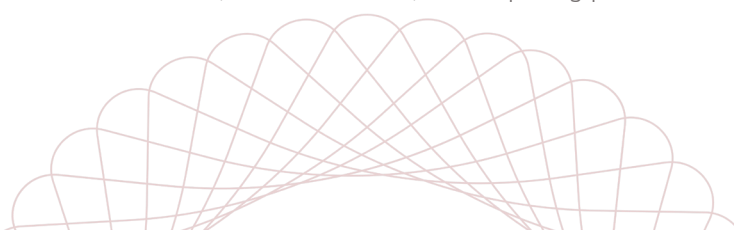
Pinsent-Masons article: *Artificial intelligence: can GPU compute become a financeable asset class?*

This article by a UK-based international law firm and business advisor gives insights on an emerging infrastructure asset class and related questions. As artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure investment accelerates, lenders are assessing whether GPU compute can become a financeable asset class beyond conventional data center real estate or chip acquisition. Graphics processing units (GPUs) underpin many AI services and are increasingly being monetized through GPU-as-a-service (GPUaaS) business models. Emerging GPUaaS models rely on revenue from access to compute capacity, raising questions about the bankability of contractual revenue streams, access rights and customer demand rather than ownership of physical infrastructure.

The market is still at an early stage. Lenders will need clearer frameworks to assess technology life, residual value, amortization, long-term compute offtake, transferability of capacity rights, security over contracts and receivables, insolvency risk and exposure to export controls on advanced chips. These issues differ from traditional infrastructure finance, where lenders can rely on established asset valuation, long-term offtake agreements and security over physical assets.

Pinsent Masons notes that Southeast Asia could become an important testing ground given rising investment in data centers and digital infrastructure. If standardized compute offtake arrangements, enforceable access rights and clearer security packages emerge, financing may shift from GPUs as hardware toward the businesses and cashflows enabled by compute capacity. [Source: Pinsent Masons](#)

⁷ Small AI tools are compact, lightweight artificial intelligence applications designed to perform specific, localized tasks quickly with minimal data, internet access, or computing power.



TRADE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Trade corridor: 14th GMS Economic Corridors Forum advances project-oriented agenda for resilient, sustainable, and inclusive regional growth

The 14th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Corridors Forum, held in Vientiane and online on 14–15 September 2026, called for economic corridors to move beyond transport connectivity toward project-oriented platforms for trade, investment, jobs, skills, urban development, digital systems and resilience. Participants emphasized that infrastructure must be paired with stronger planning, institutions, financing, local-government coordination and private-sector engagement to generate wider economic and social benefits.

Discussions highlighted inclusive labor mobility, skills recognition, employment services, special economic zones, border areas and digital economic corridors as priorities for the next generation of GMS cooperation. The forum concluded that regional corridors would require coordinated cross-sector action and practical use cases that build trust, interoperability and local ownership. [Source: GMS](#)

World Bank paper: *Beneath the Surface: Deep Trade Agreements and the Potential of a Deeper AfCFTA*

This World Bank paper finds that the trade effects of agreements depend strongly on institutional depth and enforceability. Using machine learning and structural gravity analysis, the study classifies global trade agreements as shallow, medium or deep, and finds that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is currently medium-depth in the baseline but could deliver larger gains if implemented as a deeper agreement.

The paper estimates that a deeper AfCFTA could generate additional trade gains and an average GDP increase of 0.7 percent for African economies in the sample. Provisions most associated with deeper agreements include stronger disciplines on trade-defense instruments, legal enforceability and visa-related measures, underscoring the importance of implementation quality rather than tariff liberalization alone. [Source: World Bank](#) and [World bank paper](#)

IDB-WTO-WB report: *Digital Trade in Latin America and the Caribbean: Connecting Markets, Powering Growth*

A new report by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), World Trade Organization (WTO), and World Bank (WB) finds that Latin America and the Caribbean's exports of digitally delivered services nearly quintupled from USD18.5 billion in 2005 to USD87.7 billion in 2024, but the region still accounts for only 2 percent of global exports in this market. Digital trade

is lowering market-entry costs, enabling smaller firms and women-led businesses to reach customers abroad, and creating new opportunities through platforms, artificial intelligence and digitally enabled services.

The report identifies significant scope to expand regional digital trade, noting that only 8.4 percent of digitally deliverable services exports stayed within the region in 2023. It calls for stronger digital infrastructure, modernized regulation, interoperable payment systems, streamlined border procedures, export promotion, digital skills, access to finance and better measurement of digital trade. [Source: IDB](#)

OECD report: OECD Review of Investment Policies in ASEAN: Mobilising Investment for the Green and Digital Transitions

A recent review by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) finds that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) remains a leading destination for foreign direct investment (FDI), accounting for 15 percent of global FDI inflows in 2025, but faces a more uncertain outlook amid geopolitical tensions, shifting trade patterns and maturing demographics. Sustaining growth will increasingly require productivity gains and better alignment of investment with the region's green and digital transitions.

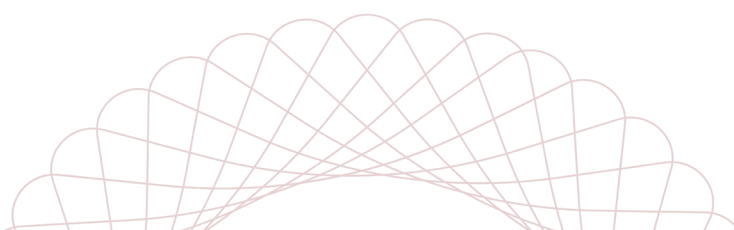
Between 2021 and 2025, one-third of greenfield FDI went to medium- and high-technology manufacturing, more than half to digital sectors and 8 percent to renewable energy. Greenfield FDI generated 1.6 million jobs, equivalent to 6 percent of net employment growth and 13 percent of global FDI-related job creation. The review urges ASEAN economies to focus on investment quality, targeted incentives, regulatory clarity, transparent risk management and stronger responsible business conduct to maximize development impact.

[Source: OECD](#) and [OECD report](#)

CROSS SECTORAL

Central Asia's first Korea Summit produces different deals for each country

The first Central Asia–Republic of Korea Summit on 16 September 2026, elevated Korea's engagement with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan from a ministerial forum to a leaders-level platform focused on critical minerals, energy, industrial cooperation, transport, digital technologies and supply-chain resilience. The Seoul Declaration commits the partners to biennial summits, with Kazakhstan to host the next meeting in 2028, and envisages Korea Desks across Central Asia to help firms navigate administrative barriers and develop projects.



The summit produced differentiated country agendas. Kazakhstan announced USD19 billion in agreements, including major gas processing, refinery expansion, power generation, lithium drilling, rare-earth processing and possible nuclear cooperation. Uzbekistan is discussing an USD8 billion Korea Eximbank partnership program covering high-speed trains, a new Tashkent–Samarkand railway, critical minerals, biotechnology, digital technologies and semiconductor-related facilities. Turkmenistan’s agenda broadened Korean participation from gas chemicals into water, ports, transport, communications and shipbuilding, including potential modernization of a 250km section of the Karakum Canal.

Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan presented smaller but strategically relevant opportunities. Tajikistan highlighted critical minerals, including antimony, alongside rail and logistics needs that could improve the economics of export-oriented mining. Kyrgyzstan will establish a Korea Desk to support trade and investment and explore cooperation on critical minerals and halal certification. The summit underscored Korea’s search for secure energy and raw-material supplies and Central Asia’s interest in Korean technology, finance and industrial participation, but the announced agreements will require project preparation, financing and implementation to translate into development impact. [Source: The Times of Central Asia](#)

QUALITY

MCDF NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

MCDF and ADB partner with China Export-Import Bank to build its infrastructure project evaluation capacity

The Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCDF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) partnered with China Export-Import Bank (CEXIM) to strengthen project evaluation capacity and improve infrastructure project quality and development impact. At a Beijing workshop for CEXIM senior management and staff held on 4th September 2026, participants discussed global evaluation standards, accountability and learning, joint evaluations, and the evolving role of independent evaluation in International Financial Institutions.

MCDF emphasized that clear objectives, strong results frameworks, robust monitoring systems and reliable data are essential to better risk management and development outcomes, while participants noted evaluation's value in capturing lessons and converting operational experience into institutional knowledge for future projects. [Source: MCDF](#)

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE

OECD report: *Making Development Co-operation More Effective Progress Report 2026*

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s 2026 progress report finds that development effectiveness monitoring remains important but under pressure twenty years after the aid effectiveness agenda began. The 2023–26 Global Partnership monitoring round draws on reporting from 44 partner country governments, 93 development partners, civil society, trade unions and private sector representatives. More than half of the reporting countries registered declines in multi-stakeholder monitoring of effective development co-operation, pointing to weaker transparency, accountability and partnership systems.

The report calls for renewed joint action on country ownership, inclusive partnerships, use of country systems, predictable financing, transparency and mutual accountability. Key gaps include limited use of national results and public financial management systems, weak medium-term predictability, incomplete development co-operation information systems and declining integration of development finance into national budgets. By May 2026, 22 partner countries had convened follow-up dialogues to translate monitoring evidence into agreed

actions on national planning, statistical systems, budget integration, public financial management use and non-state actor engagement. [Source: OECD](#) and [OECD report](#)

OECD report: *The Impact of Decentralised Development Co-operation - Driving Local Governance and the SDGs*

This Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report finds that decentralized development co-operation led by cities and regions is growing even as overall Official development assistance (ODA) faces sharp pressure. Across 15 OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries with available data, decentralized ODA doubled from USD1.8 billion in 2013 to USD3.6 billion in 2024. Drawing on localized ODA data, surveys of more than 180 subnational governments and 16 case studies, the report finds that city- and region-led partnerships can strengthen local governance, service delivery and UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation in partner countries, while also improving peer learning and multi-level coordination in DAC countries. [Source: OECD](#) and [OECD report](#)

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

UNEP report: *Hidden assets: The economic and health case for climate and clean air action*

This United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Climate and Clean Air Coalition report finds that integrated climate and clean-air action can return USD15 in economic benefits for every USD1 invested, rising above the returns from tackling climate and air pollution separately. The assessment covers 25 measures across energy, industry, transport, agriculture, residential energy and waste, and estimates that delayed action would forgo more than USD1.5 trillion annually in benefits.

Full implementation could prevent 144 million air pollution-related premature deaths by 2050, halve global CO₂ emissions, reduce methane by 60 percent and cut major air pollutants by 70 percent. The report argues that fragmented decision-making, weak enforcement and limited institutional coordination are the main constraints, and calls for integrated climate, air-quality, health and economic planning backed by aligned public and private finance. [Source: UNEP](#) and [UNEP report](#)

UNIDO paper: *Circular Economy Perspectives in Solar Value Chains - Circular business models for photovoltaic and solar water heating systems*

This United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) paper argues that the next phase of solar deployment should focus not only on new installations but also on keeping photovoltaic and solar water heating systems operating longer through circular business models. With global photovoltaic (PV) capacity surpassing 1TW in 2022 and solar PV accounting for two-thirds of new renewable capacity added in 2023, maintenance, refurbishment, second life and material recovery are becoming central to climate gains, local jobs and system affordability.

The paper highlights five entry points: design for circularity, solar-as-a-service models, standardized requalification and digital product passports, regional infrastructure for collection and high-value recovery, enabling policy, standards and traceability. It notes that PV waste could reach 60–78 million tons globally by 2050, creating both waste-management risks and opportunities to recover aluminium, copper, glass, steel and critical minerals.

[Source: UNIDO](#) and [UNIDO paper](#)

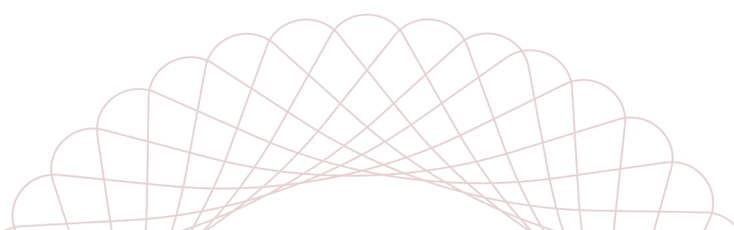
ACE report: *Handbook for CO₂ Capture, Transportation, Utilisation, and Storage: A Practical Guide to Key CO₂ Technologies for Decarbonising Power and Industry*

A new Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Energy (ACE) handbook provides a practical technology guide for CO₂ capture, transportation, utilization and storage to support decarbonization of power and industry in ASEAN Member States. It reviews commercially available carbon capture and storage (CCS) and carbon capture utilizations and storage (CCUS) technologies and adoption considerations to help policymakers design informed regulations, deployment frameworks and decarbonization strategies. [Source: ACE](#) and [ACE handbook](#)

PROCUREMENT, ANTI-CORRUPTION, TRANSPARENCY AND DISCLOSURE

BDN draft paper: *Embedding Blue Dot Network Quality Criteria in Infrastructure Procurement*

A Blue Dot Network (BDN) draft paper argues that infrastructure quality must be embedded before tendering, not inspected after delivery. With global infrastructure needs estimated at USD106 trillion by 2040 and public debt above USD100 trillion, the paper frames



procurement as a strategic policy tool for ensuring that limited infrastructure investment delivers lifecycle value, resilience, transparency, social inclusion and public trust.

The framework consolidates more than 80 international standards into 10 elements, 47 themes and 131 criteria, organized across Essential, Superior and Best-in-Class performance levels. The paper emphasizes that authorities should apply the framework proportionately, selecting material criteria linked to project risks and development objectives rather than treating it as a checklist. Requirements should be clear enough for bidders to price, evaluators to assess and contract managers to monitor.

The paper sets out a five-phase approach covering project preparation, pre-qualification, tender design, bid evaluation and contract management. It calls for quality objectives to be defined early; value-for-money assessments to include lifecycle costs, resilience and social and environmental outcomes; and tender commitments to be carried through into key performance indicators, monitoring and, where relevant, certification. The report concludes with recommendations on lifecycle integration, project readiness, buyer capability, delivery-model choice, market competition, permitting, outcome-focused contracts and use of performance evidence to improve future projects. [Source: Blue Dot Network](#) and [BDN draft paper](#)

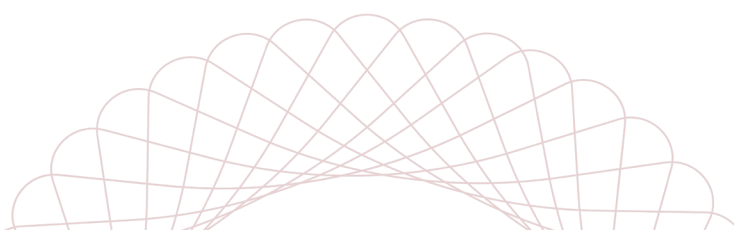
PROJECT CYCLE AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Afreximbank, GIIF and Ghana's 24-Hour Economy Authority launch project preparation partnership to accelerate infrastructure and industrial projects

Afreximbank, Ghana Infrastructure Investment Fund (GIIF) and Ghana's 24-Hour Economy Authority⁸ have launched a Joint Project Preparation Facility to accelerate priority projects under Ghana's 24H+ production-led development program. The wider pipeline is valued at USD11.5 billion, with Afreximbank and GIIF each making an initial USD5 million contribution for technical, financial, legal and advisory work to improve project bankability.

The facility will jointly screen and prepare projects across energy, logistics, digital connectivity, industrial parks, manufacturing, agro-processing, minerals beneficiation, tourism, creative industries and healthcare. It also includes institutional development for GIIF through training, knowledge transfer, capacity building and staff secondments, supporting a stronger domestic project-preparation platform. [Source: Afreximbank](#)

⁸ Ghana's 24-Hour Economy Authority is the central statutory coordinating body established to implement and oversee the national 24-Hour Economy and Accelerated Export Development Programme (24H+).



PARTNERSHIP

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES, FUNDS AND INITIATIVES

Actis launches Yeltica Energy, a new greenfield Mexican renewables platform anchored by solar PV and battery storage tender award

Actis, a global investor that specializes in sustainable infrastructure, has launched Yeltica Energy, a greenfield renewable energy platform in Mexico targeting 2GW of generation capacity. The platform is anchored by three solar-plus-storage projects awarded under Mexico's first Federal Electricity Commission (CFE) Mixed Investment Tender⁹, totaling 330MWp of solar PV and 255MWh of battery storage, with 25-year US dollar-denominated and inflation-indexed power purchase agreements backed by state utility CFE.

Yeltica plans to scale through public tenders and proprietary origination with developers and offtakers, supporting Mexico's power-sector reforms and target to raise renewable electricity from 20 percent today to 38 percent by 2030. [Source: Actis](#)

IFIS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRY FINANCIERS

Afreximbank and DBSA establish a Joint Project Preparation Facility to advance bankable projects in Southern Africa

Afreximbank and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) have signed a Joint Project Preparation Facility Framework Agreement to prepare high-impact, trade-enabling infrastructure and industrial projects in South Africa and the wider Southern African region. Each institution may contribute up to USD10 million to support technical, financial and legal preparation, helping address the shortage of bankable projects and move priority investments from concept to financing readiness.

The agreement follows South Africa's accession to Afreximbank in February 2026 and complements the institutions' Master Risk Participation Agreement, extending cooperation upstream into project preparation. Priority sectors include power and energy, transport and logistics, information and communication technology, strategic minerals beneficiation and other national, regional and continental priorities aligned with South Africa's National Development Plan 2030, Southern African Development Community (SADC) integration and

⁹ A CFE Mixed Investment Tender is a competitive public procurement process launched by Mexico's state-owned power utility, the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE), to partner with private developers on joint-venture power generation projects.

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) implementation. Prepared projects may seek downstream financing from Afreximbank, DBSA, development finance institutions, commercial lenders or private investors, subject to separate appraisal and approval. [Source: Afreximbank](#)

Afreximbank extends USD10 million facility to Azania Bank to support SMEs in Tanzania

Afreximbank has extended a USD10 million facility to Azania Bank to expand finance for Tanzanian Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in export value chains. Delivered under Afreximbank's Export SMEs Development Programme, the facility will provide working capital and medium-term finance for business expansion, asset acquisition and pre- and post-export operations across agriculture, manufacturing, trade, technology, logistics and value-added exports.

The facility aims to strengthen export readiness, employment, regional value-chain participation and SME access to African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)-related opportunities. Afreximbank will also provide business development support, including export-readiness training, financial management advisory services, market linkages, digitalization support and access to SME knowledge platforms. [Source: Afreximbank](#)

AIIB invests USD100 million in DenizBank green bond to support Türkiye's climate transition

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has invested USD100 million in a five-year green bond issued by DenizBank to support Türkiye's climate transition. Proceeds, placed under DenizBank's Euro Medium-Term Notes programme and aligned with the International Capital Market Association (ICMA) Green Bond Principles, will finance renewable energy, energy efficiency, emissions reduction, water efficiency and sustainable transport projects by private sector borrowers.

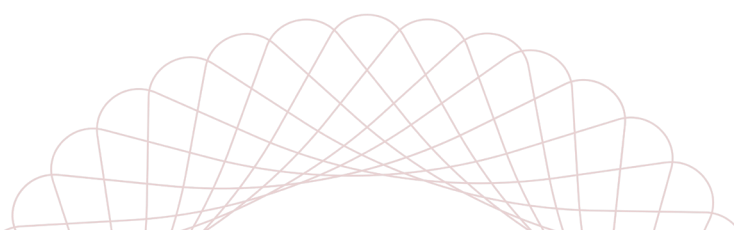
The transaction is AIIB's first financial-institution project with DenizBank and first engagement with United Arab Emirates banking group, Emirates NBD, broadening cross-regional green-finance links between Türkiye and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It supports AIIB's green-financing priority and Türkiye's climate commitments, while building on DenizBank's growing portfolio of green bond issuances with international development and investment banks. [Source: AIIB](#)

IFI intermediate finance to support agriculture

- **IFC partners with Absa Bank and Ghanaian AgTech Platform in Ghana:** The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has announced two partnerships in Ghana to expand agricultural finance and technology-enabled market access:
 - **Up to USD50 million support to Absa Bank through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) Private Sector Window:** in an unfunded risk participation facility, enabling up to USD200 million in financing for licensed buying companies to purchase traceable cocoa and sustain market access for more than 139,000 smallholder farmers.
 - **USD2.4 million convertible loan and USD660,000 in advisory and grant support:** to Complete Farmer, a Ghanaian AgTech platform to scale input financing and agronomy services. [Source: IFC](#)
- **EUR7.5 million loan from EIB to Centenary Bank Malawi:** EIB Global, the international arm of the European Investment Bank, will provide EUR7.5 million loan to Centenary Bank Malawi under the European Union (EU)'s Global Gateway initiative to expand long-term finance for smallholder farmers and micro agri-food enterprises. The loan is backed by an EU-financed guarantee and technical assistance. [Source: EIB](#)
- **USD12 million loan from IFAD to Bank of Kigali and Aceli in Rwanda:** The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Bank of Kigali, and Aceli Africa, a market-catalyst and incentive facility that mobilizes private-sector finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in East Africa's agriculture sector have signed a financing agreement to expand finance for Rwanda's farmers' organizations and smallholder farmers. The Farmers' Organizations Financing Programme – Rwanda (FOFP-R) is a blended finance initiative that will mobilize USD21 million, combining USD12 million from IFAD with USD9 million from Bank of Kigali co-financing. [Source: IFAD](#)
- **USD500 million loan by CAF to Banconal in Panama:** CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean and Banco Nacional de Panamá (Banconal) have signed a USD500 million A/B loan to expand finance for agriculture, agribusiness and SMEs in rural Panama and to support green investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainability. [Source: CAF](#)

IDB Invest and Banco Unión expand access to financial services for older adults in Colombia

IDB Invest, the investment arm of the Inter-American Development Bank, will provide Banco Unión, a Colombian financial institution, with a subordinated loan of up to Colombian Peso (COP)40 billion (USD13 million), to expand credit for retired older adults in Colombia and strengthen the bank's capital base. The operation targets an underserved segment: in 2024,



only 30.6 percent of people over 65 had access to credit, compared with 41.8 percent of adults aged 41–65.

The financing comprises a committed and uncommitted tranche of up to COP20 billion each. IDB Invest will also provide advisory services to help Banco Unión refine its value proposition for the silver economy, strengthen corporate governance and responsible management, and scale lending to older adult clients. [Source: IDB Invest](#)

OPEC Fund signs agreements with Armeconobank in Armenia and Banco de América Central Honduras

- OPEC Fund for International Development (OPEC Fund) is providing a USD35 million syndicated loan to Armeconobank: a Yerevan-headquartered commercial bank focused on small businesses and retail business development, to expand finance for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and eligible climate-related investments in Armenia. The package comprises a USD20 million A-loan from the OPEC Fund and a USD15 million B-loan from the Allianz Credit Emerging Markets Fund, mobilizing private capital alongside development finance. [Source: OPEC Fund](#)
- OPEC Fund has signed a USD50 million loan with Banco de América Central Honduras S.A. (BAC Honduras): to expand finance for MSMEs, including women-owned businesses, and support climate-related investments. The operation strengthens the OPEC Fund's private-sector engagement in Honduras by targeting entrepreneurship, financial inclusion and green finance through a local financial institution. [Source: OPEC Fund](#)

PRIVATE CAPITAL MOBILIZATION

AfDB and African Forum of Deposit Funds enter into new alliance to mobilize more long-term financing

The African Development Bank (AfDB) and African members of the African Forum of Deposit Funds have formed a strategic alliance to mobilize more long-term financing for sustainable development, productive investment and inclusive growth. The partnership aims to combine AfDB's development finance capacity with deposit funds' ability to channel long-term public savings into national and regional development priorities.

Cooperation will focus on co-financing, joint operations, resource mobilization, investment vehicles, productive investment, entrepreneurship, job creation, knowledge sharing and institutional capacity development. The framework also seeks to strengthen resilience to economic, financial, climate-related and external shocks and support the New African Financial Architecture for Development. [Source: AfDB](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

ASEAN Energy Business Forum - *Clean Energy Unlocked: A Stronger ASEAN - Driving innovation and investment toward a sustainable energy future*

Time: 5 - 9 October 2026

Place: Manila, The Philippines

Organizer: ACE

Objective: The ASEAN Energy Business Forum (AEBF) is an annual platform for policymakers, industry leaders, and researchers to share insights and forge partnerships that can lead to groundbreaking initiatives.

First held in 2000, AEBF is organized by the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE)'s annual flagship convening platform that brings together policymakers, the industrial leaders, investors, academia and other key stakeholders to engage and advance ASEAN's key energy cooperation priorities, plans, and commitments, while identifying collaboration and investment opportunities in the energy sector across the region. AEBF contributes to a secure, resilient and a just and inclusive energy transition in Southeast Asia. AEBF is held in conjunction with the annual ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM), which gives the opportunities as well as for the Business to Government (B2G) meeting in the regional level.

In conjunction with the 44th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM), the 26th ASEAN Energy Business Forum (AEBF-26) will be hosted by the Department of Energy (DOE) Philippines. This event will support the 2026 ASEAN Chairship under the Philippines' central theme *Navigating Our Future, Together*.

As the twenty-sixth edition of ASEAN's annual premier conference and exhibition, the Forum will be a high-level, business-driven platform designed to position ASEAN as a competitive and reliable destination for clean energy and digital infrastructure investment. Building on the opportunities and market trends discussed above, AEBF-26 brings together senior policymakers, the private sector, investors, financial institutions, and industry leaders. It aims to accelerate ASEAN's energy priorities and commitments, while identifying specific collaboration and investment opportunities to contribute to a secure, resilient, just, and inclusive energy transition in Southeast Asia.

Target participants: Open to all.

Registration: [Here](#)

Source: [AEBF-26](#)

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.

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](#)

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.

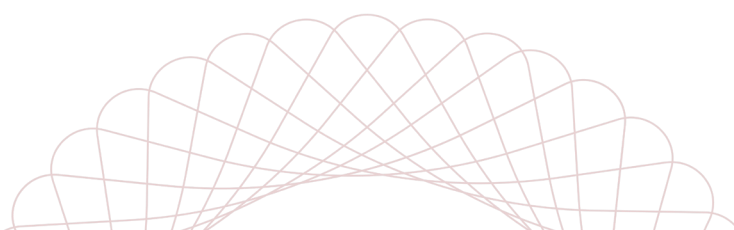
Sessions will examine infrastructure as a driver of regional integration, industrialization and productive growth, including how national development plans can become credible PPP pipelines, how domestic savings can be channeled into infrastructure, and how MDBs, DFIs and regional development banks can 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.

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