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2017

WDI IMPACT REPORT: Improving Business Education in the Philippines



WILLIAM DAVIDSON INSTITUTE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

THE CHALLENGE

The Philippines is facing an exodus of young, highly skilled workers. At the same time, its higher education system is not training enough engineers, scientists and technologists to satisfy the recruitment needs of many companies operating in the country or hoping to expand there. Addressing these interlinked challenges is critical to growing the island nation's economy.

Many Philippine companies have expressed concern that colleges and universities do not properly prepare graduates, especially those in the science, technology and innovation fields. Most top graduates in these disciplines leave the country in pursuit of better opportunities.

In 2013 the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for Development (STRIDE) program in the Philippines through its implementing partner RTI International. The program aims to spur inclusive economic growth by boosting science and technology research in the country. By working closely with local academic institutions and industries, STRIDE seeks to transform their capacity to produce research, graduates, and innovation partnerships that accelerate economic development.

As part of the STRIDE project, the William Davidson Institute (WDI) at the University of Michigan was tasked with providing academic support for Philippine university faculty from dozens of universities around the country. WDI organized several workshops with multiple goals in mind, including teaching faculty how to write and teach business case studies for instructing their own students, and helping professors increase engagement with local industries and companies.

Acknowledgements

This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through USAID under the terms of Cooperative Agreement #AID-492-A-13-00011. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government. This report was prepared by WDI based on four case writing workshops conducted from April 2014 to September 2016 in the Philippines. The workshops were a part of the STRIDE project, funded by USAID and in partnership with RTI.

THE WDI ROLE

Integrating case studies into management training is effective because case studies provide in-depth examinations of concrete business scenarios. For many students, case studies simulate on-the-job training. Students are required to use their critical-thinking skills and apply what they have learned in class.

Students tend to be more engaged when case studies involve organizations and protagonists in their home country. Yet, a study by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) found that 87 percent of case studies feature organizations from “developed” countries. A mere 0.4 percent of case studies taught in business schools around the world are set in “least developed countries.”

John Branch, WDI faculty affiliate for the STRIDE case writing workshops, agrees that students are more engaged when a local organization is profiled in a case study.

“Students learn best when lessons are meaningful to them,” he said. “Having cases which situate management and other challenges in the Filipino context is wonderful. The benefits of the STRIDE program, therefore, cannot be underestimated.”



WDI Faculty affiliate John Branch talks with a professor during a STRIDE workshop in the Philippines.

The dearth of locally focused teaching materials can have negative consequences for schools in emerging markets, such as those in the Philippines. Educators have little choice but to use case studies and other materials that do not feature executives or other role models from their country. As a consequence, educators report difficulty encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset in their students, particularly in subjects such as science and engineering – fields that typically power economic growth.

WDI Publishing has a long history of working with faculty members to bring their research into the classroom. It has collaborated on case development with professors from the University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business as well as faculty from around the world. WDI Publishing’s case catalog features more than 500 teaching materials, which are used in classrooms at colleges and universities across the globe. WDI also has organized and delivered numerous case writing workshops at schools both in the U.S. and internationally.

GETTING STARTED

In coordination with its partners, WDI hosted its first case writing workshop in June 2014 in Manila with 33 professors representing 22 Philippine colleges and universities. Each arrived at the workshop with an idea for a case study that examined a company or organization in the Philippines. A WDI faculty affiliate began the three-day workshop by teaching a previously published case to the faculty members to show the value of using case studies in the classroom.

The second day was devoted to components of a case, including introducing the protagonist and their dilemma, organizational background, industry and competitive overview, challenges and opportunities. They also discussed how a case meets a professor's learning objectives and where to gather information. Participants then worked individually on each section, shared their ideas in small groups, and reconvened for a broader classroom discussion.

The participants were given individual time to map out their case, its content, storyline, and characters. WDI's faculty affiliate and case writing expert also met one-on-one with each participant to answer questions and help guide their work.



Andrea Meyer, a WDI contractor, assists a Filipino professor during a STRIDE workshop.

“This is creative writing, but it’s not fictional,” Branch told one workshop cohort. “You need information. You need to research your case.”

On the workshop's third day, participants fine tuned their first draft and received more feedback. In some workshops, past participants returned to speak about their case writing experiences and to encourage the current cohort.

After the workshop, participants continued to receive guidance from the WDI case writing expert. They then sent their completed case to WDI Publishing where it was edited, published, and made available for free to university faculty members worldwide.

WDI went on to manage three more workshops with the same basic outline. One additional workshop was held in 2015 in Manila, and two others were organized in 2016 outside the capital city - in Cebu City and Iloilo City - to better represent perspectives from around the country.

WDI'S IMPACT

Workshop 1:

June 2014, Manila

Workshop 2:

April 2015, Manila

Workshop 3:

April 2016, Iloilo City

Workshop 4:

September 2016, Cebu City

In early 2015, WDI Publishing published the first case studies generated from the workshops. They were among the first to be written by Philippine academics about domestic businesses and industries. Topics include science, engineering, health care, entrepreneurship, and ecotourism, among others.

David Hall, chief of party for the STRIDE project, said case writing in the Philippines was relatively unknown and underutilized in college classrooms before the WDI workshops.



David Hall, chief of party for the STRIDE project, leads a workshop discussion.

“The WDI Case Writing workshops, delivered as part of the USAID STRIDE program, have resulted in excellent case studies written by Philippine faculty,” Hall said. “The high-quality and demanding workshops have raised the standard of case writing in the Philippines, and have generated enthusiasm among faculty for adopting case-based teaching in their courses.”

To date, [WDI's Philippines Case Collection](#) includes more than 60 case studies. As the number of cases grows, so do students' exposure to local organizations. Philippine educators' cases are being taught in a variety of courses - from science and engineering to healthcare and entrepreneurship - on the undergraduate and graduate level. More students in the Philippines will now graduate with a deeper understanding of the successes and challenges of local companies.

WDI's IMPACT

“Case studies give a wider and deeper perspective into the featured organizations,” said Manuel Manuel III, of the University of the Philippines Diliman. *“It has given me an appreciation of the challenges the company is facing ... and what it is doing moving forward.”*

Hall, of STRIDE, believes the project has helped lay the groundwork for deeper relationships between university faculty members and local industry leaders, connections that will grow stronger as research for the case studies continues.



Students develop case studies during an interactive STRIDE workshop.

“I have become more aware of realities in teaching my students rather than focus merely on hypothetical events and those published in textbooks,” said Aris Reynold

V. Cajigal, with Mariano Marcos State University. Faculty members who have attended a WDI case writing workshop also have begun to share their experiences and new expertise with their colleagues, something project organizers hoped would happen.

“Several faculty members in my school have been requesting pointers from me on how to write their own cases,” said Carl Abelardo Antonio, of the University of the Philippines Manila.

Christianne John Nabua from the Technical Institute of the Philippines delivered a workshop on case writing for her peers. Glenn Baticados of the University of the Philippines-Los Banos is making plans to do the same.

“We have been able to echo what we heard from the program, and right now we are coming up with our own seminar on how to teach cases at the university,” Baticados said.

In 2017, WDI will focus more on encouraging this type of follow-on training. Because of the successes reported by case writers who have used their cases in the classroom, WDI plans to conduct several train-the-trainer activities to encourage other Filipino faculty to make use of the STRIDE case collection and better prepare students for positions in their field of study.

WDI'S IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS



52

Universities from nearly all regions of the Philippines have participated in WDI's first 4 workshops



135

participants



52

universities



85

case studies



29

disciplines

This infographic displays the reach of the WDI/STRIDE Case Writing workshops. **“Participants”** refers to **Philippine professors who took part in one or more workshop sessions**. Those professors represented **52 universities across the country**. An estimated **85 case studies** written by **Philippine professors** will be published by WDI Publishing by mid-2017. Finally, **disciplines** refers to the **wide variety of academic subjects taught by the professors** who participated in the workshops.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Reeva Ann Sumulong, Angeles University Foundation:

The (case) method solicited more active participation and I think it helped the students develop their critical thinking and reasoning skills.



Hermogenes B. Panganiban, De La Salle Lipa:

I have been able to appreciate the big challenges met by company owners/managers.



Mary Gretchen Chaves, University of the Philippines, Cebu:

We are currently doing our case narrative writing and I am honored to be their peer-mentor and guide in this endeavor. Our end-goal is to be publish our cases in one UP Cebu faculty case book.



Christianne John Nabua,
Technological Institute of the Philippines:

I have echoed the three-day training I experienced in writing a case and this will be a continuation of the first training I had on how to write a case. This time, it would be on how to teach using cases.

ABOUT THE STRIDE PROGRAM

The Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for Development (STRIDE) Program will spur inclusive economic growth by boosting science and technology research. It will do this by working closely with Philippine academic institutions and industries to transform their capacity to produce research, graduates, and innovation partnerships to accelerate development in the country.

The project aims to create a dynamic network of researchers in universities and private companies who continuously innovate; entrepreneurs and investors who turn discoveries into products and companies; and a government supportive of initiatives that enable these partnerships to flourish.

STRIDE is a USAID/Philippines project under the Partnership for Growth (PFG), a White House signature initiative through which the U.S. Government and the government of the Philippines work together to improve economic growth and development in the Philippines. The five-year, \$32 million project began in July 2013. STRIDE focuses on disciplines that contribute to high-growth sectors such as electronics, chemical industries, alternative energy, translational medicine, agri-business, ICT and mobile computing, with cross-cutting themes of manufacturing and new product development.

The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Government or the USAID, and shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes.

To learn more about WDI's impact in emerging markets, visit wdi.umich.edu or contact us.



WILLIAM DAVIDSON INSTITUTE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The William Davidson Institute
at the University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Tel: (+1) 734-763-5020

Fax: (+1) 734-763-5850



wdi@umich.edu



[@WDI_michigan](https://twitter.com/WDI_michigan)

wdi.umich.edu