



SPDA Special Envoy

SPDA Profile & Development Portfolio



H.E. PEHIN SERI DIRAJA DATO' SERI FARID IBRAHIM

Special Envoy for Trade & Investment

Southern Philippines Development Authority | 2025

Executive Summary

The Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA) Special Envoy represents a cornerstone initiative in advancing economic development, infrastructure modernization, and inclusive prosperity across Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago. Established under Presidential Decree, SPDA serves as the unified responsive agency responsible for fostering balanced growth and democratizing opportunities throughout the Southern Philippines.

Under the leadership of Honorary Administrator Gerry A. Salapuddin & H.E. Pehin Seri Diraja Dato' Seri Farid Ibrahim, serving as Special Envoy for Trade & Investment, SPDA has undertaken comprehensive development initiatives spanning 15 critical sectors—transforming the region into a competitive, sustainable, and prosperous hub within Southeast Asia.

These strategic development projects address fundamental challenges in agriculture, infrastructure, education, healthcare, energy, and technology while unlocking unprecedented opportunities for inclusive growth. Each initiative reflects SPDA's commitment to empowering communities, bridging regional divides, and ensuring that the benefits of development reach every corner of the Southern Philippines.

This comprehensive profile presents SPDA's mandate, strategic vision, and detailed overview of all 15 development sectors, demonstrating our commitment to creating a brighter future where innovation, inclusiveness, and sustainable growth intertwine.

Special Envoy for Trade & Investment



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[Special Envoy for Trade & Investment](#)

Reappointed as Special Envoy by SPDA Administrator Hon. Abdulghani "Gerry" A. Salapuddin under the administration of H.E. President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.

The Special Envoy serves as the principal representative for promoting development and prosperity in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, working directly with government agencies, international organizations, and private sector partners to facilitate strategic investments and development initiatives that transform the region's potential into tangible progress.

Vision & Mission

"Advocacy for Southern Philippines' development is not merely a choice; it's a commitment to empower lives, bridge divides, and unlock the region's true potential. Together, we can create a brighter future, where inclusiveness, innovation, and sustainable growth intertwine, making the entire nation a beacon of progress in the region."

— H.E. Pehin Seri Diraja Dato' Seri Farid Ibrahim

Our Mission

SPDA's mission centers on fostering balanced growth through activation of mass participation in development processes, democratization of opportunities, and maximization of benefits in resource utilization—ensuring that economic transformation reaches every community across the Southern Philippines.

Our Vision

To position the Southern Philippines as a globally competitive, sustainable, and inclusive region where every community thrives, contributing to national prosperity while preserving cultural heritage and environmental integrity.

Core Values

Inclusiveness • Innovation • Sustainability • Excellence • Integrity • Collaboration

SPDA Mandate & Legal Framework

Established under Presidential Decree, the Southern Philippines Development Administration operates with a comprehensive mandate to initiate and implement development projects across Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago.

1

Declaration of Policy

It is hereby declared the policy of the Government to foster and accelerate the balanced growth of Mindanao and Sulu archipelago within the context of national plans and policies, by the activation of mass participation in the processes of development to be exercised through a unified responsive agency; democratization of opportunity for improvement and maximization of benefits in the utilization and allocation of all the resources that may be available.

2

Creation of the Southern Philippines Development Administration

There is hereby created a body corporate to be known as the Southern Philippines Development Administration, hereinafter referred to as the "Administration" which shall be governed by the provisions of this Decree. Generally, the Administration shall be the agency of the government which shall be responsible for the initiation and/or implementation of development projects in such areas or fields where other government offices have not taken action or have failed as may be agreed upon between the office or agency concerned and the Administration.

Purposes and Objectives

3

Core Objectives

The Administration shall have the following purposes and objectives:

- A. Development Projects:** Promote the development of Mindanao and Sulu archipelago by initiating and/or undertaking by itself or otherwise, development and/or business projects in social and/or economic fields.
- B. Community Participation:** Generate and encourage mass active participation and cooperation of the members of national cultural communities in its activities which shall comprise manpower development, provision of material, financial or technical assistance; and initiation, development and/or implementation of projects.
- C. Community Life Promotion:** Initiate and undertake projects for the promotion of community life through organized social or economic activities and institutionalized schemes of assistance and incentives.
- D. Investment and Development:** Make investments in any field that would enhance the socio-economic development of the region, the uplift of living standards of the people and their socio-political stability.

Strategic Development Projects

SPDA Special Envoy oversees 15 comprehensive development projects spanning critical sectors of the Southern Philippines economy. Each project represents a strategic intervention designed to address specific challenges while unlocking the region's vast potential for transformation and inclusive growth.

15

Development Sectors

**Mindanao &
Southern
Philippines Territory**

Primary Coverage Area

2026

Active Implementation

Development Sectors Portfolio

1. Agriculture
2. Power
3. Infrastructure
4. Education
5. Energy
6. Public Utilities
7. Housing
8. Land Development
9. Manufacturing
10. Natural Resources
11. Financial Hub
12. Fintech
13. Tourism
14. Medical & Healthcare
15. Technology



The Southern Philippines is home to some of the nation's most fertile agricultural lands. The SPDA Agriculture Development Project addresses challenges through comprehensive infrastructure development, technology transfer, and market access support, transforming traditional agricultural practices into modern, sustainable enterprises that enhance productivity by 30-40% while improving farmer incomes and regional food security.

Key Focus Areas

- Modernize agricultural infrastructure including irrigation systems and farm-to-market roads
- Introduce climate-resilient crops and sustainable farming techniques
- Strengthen farmer cooperatives through capacity building and market linkages



Reliable and affordable electricity is fundamental to economic growth. The SPDA Power Development Project addresses supply shortages and service reliability through strategic investments in generation capacity (targeting 1,500-2,000 MW expansion), transmission infrastructure, and renewable energy development, ensuring energy security while achieving 100% household electrification across the region.

Key Focus Areas

- Expand power generation capacity through renewable energy plants and efficient facilities
- Strengthen transmission infrastructure to reduce system losses and improve reliability
- Electrify remote and island communities through microgrids and off-grid systems



Modern infrastructure connects communities and facilitates trade. The SPDA Infrastructure Development Project addresses critical gaps through strategic investments in transportation networks, maritime facilities, and digital connectivity, targeting 3,000+ kilometers of road construction/upgrades, world-class seaport development, and expanded aviation infrastructure to integrate Southern Philippines into national and international trade corridors.

Key Focus Areas

- Construct and upgrade national and provincial roads including Pan-Philippine Highway links
- Develop modern seaport facilities for containerized cargo and larger vessels
- Expand regional airports to accommodate growing traffic and attract international flights



Education is the cornerstone of sustainable development. The SPDA Education Development Project takes a holistic approach by investing in modern school facilities, teacher training programs, curriculum development, and educational technology, creating culturally-sensitive learning environments that nurture critical thinking and 21st century skills while ensuring equal opportunities for marginalized communities.

Key Focus Areas

- Construct and rehabilitate school buildings to eliminate classroom shortages
- Enhance teacher quality through comprehensive training and professional development
- Expand access in remote communities through alternative learning systems

Evolving Energy Solutions to Contribute to a More Sustainable Society

The Southern Philippines possesses abundant renewable energy resources. The SPDA Energy Development Project champions comprehensive energy transition through development of 2,000-3,000 MW renewable capacity from solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, and biomass sources, implementing energy efficiency programs to reduce consumption by 20-30%, and promoting distributed energy systems to achieve energy independence while creating green jobs.

Key Focus Areas

- Develop utility-scale renewable energy projects leveraging indigenous resources
- Implement conservation programs and technology upgrades across all sectors
- Promote rooftop solar, community microgrids, and hybrid mini-grids



Access to reliable public utilities is fundamental to public health and quality of life. The SPDA Public Utilities Development Project addresses critical gaps through comprehensive investments in water supply infrastructure, wastewater treatment systems, and solid waste management facilities, targeting 95%+ potable water access and achieving zero open dumpsites through modern waste management solutions.

Key Focus Areas

- Expand water supply systems and treatment plants for universal access
- Develop comprehensive sewerage and septic management systems
- Establish sanitary landfills, recycling centers, and waste-to-energy plants



Adequate and affordable housing is a fundamental human right. The SPDA Housing Development Project addresses the regional shelter backlog through construction of 500,000+ affordable housing units, community upgrading programs, and innovative housing finance mechanisms, prioritizing climate-resilient housing in well-planned communities with complete access to basic services, schools, and healthcare facilities.

Key Focus Areas

- Construct mass housing projects and implement community mortgage programs
- Upgrade informal settlements through community-driven development
- Resettle families from disaster-prone zones with livelihood support



Strategic land development attracts investments and creates employment clusters. The SPDA Land Development Project transforms idle lands into productive economic zones, developing 20,000+ hectares of serviced industrial land through establishment of industrial estates, special economic zones, and agro-industrial parks with world-class utilities and ready-to-build sites that significantly reduce barriers to business establishment.

Key Focus Areas

- Develop industrial estates and special economic zones with complete infrastructure
- Create agro-industrial parks linking production with processing facilities
- Establish free ports and logistics hubs for regional and international trade



Manufacturing drives economic transformation and creates high-value employment. The SPDA Manufacturing Development Project aims to increase the sector's contribution to regional GDP from 15% to 30% through targeted interventions in technology adoption, value chain development, and international market connectivity, developing integrated supply chains in food processing, furniture, metalworking, textiles, and electronics assembly.

Key Focus Areas

- Establish industry clusters and facilitate technology transfer programs
- Develop integrated value chains in priority manufacturing sectors
- Enhance productivity through automation and international certification



The region is richly endowed with natural resources including minerals, forests, and marine ecosystems. The SPDA Natural Resources Development Project promotes responsible utilization through improved governance, strict environmental compliance, and inclusive benefit-sharing, generating 100-150 billion pesos annually from responsible mining while reforesting 500,000+ hectares and restoring fisheries productivity.

Key Focus Areas

- Develop mining operations with environmental compliance and community benefit-sharing
- Implement sustainable forestry and large-scale reforestation programs
- Restore fisheries through marine protected areas and sustainable practices



A vibrant financial sector channels savings into productive investments. The SPDA Financial Hub Development Project transforms the region into a dynamic financial center serving the BIMP-EAGA region, expanding banking services to achieve 80%+ financial inclusion, developing active capital markets mobilizing 200-300 billion pesos, and promoting Islamic finance alongside conventional banking services.

Key Focus Areas

- Expand banking through new branches, digital platforms, and agent networks
- Establish regional stock exchange and bond market platforms
- Facilitate investment flows through streamlined regulations



Financial technology revolutionizes access to services and drives financial inclusion. The SPDA Fintech Development Project positions Southern Philippines as a leading fintech hub by fostering innovation, supporting 200+ fintech startups, and expanding digital payment adoption to 90%+ through mobile wallets and cashless infrastructure, providing 10 million+ users with instant account opening, micro-loans, and investment platforms.

Key Focus Areas

- Achieve widespread digital payment adoption including remote barangays
- Expand digital banking services through mobile applications
- Develop fintech ecosystem with incubators and sandbox regulations



The Southern Philippines boasts extraordinary natural beauty and vibrant cultural heritage. The SPDA Tourism Development Project unlocks tourism potential through strategic investments in eco-tourism destinations, cultural heritage sites, and sustainable tourism practices, targeting growth from 2 million to 8 million annual visitors while generating 100-150 billion pesos in revenues that benefit local communities.

Key Focus Areas

- Develop world-class eco-tourism destinations with strict conservation standards
- Preserve cultural heritage through heritage sites and authentic experiences
- Enhance tourism infrastructure and improve international connectivity



Health is fundamental to human development and economic productivity. The SPDA Medical and Healthcare Development Project addresses critical shortages through comprehensive investments in healthcare infrastructure, expanding hospital capacity by 15,000+ beds, establishing 2,000+ rural health units, training and deploying 20,000+ healthcare professionals, and ensuring quality healthcare becomes accessible and affordable for all residents.

Key Focus Areas

- Construct regional medical centers and district hospitals meeting DOH standards
- Strengthen primary healthcare bringing services to underserved communities
- Develop comprehensive health insurance and disease prevention programs



Technology enables economic growth and social inclusion. The SPDA Technology Development Project accelerates digital transformation by investing in broadband infrastructure, establishing innovation hubs for startups, and promoting digital literacy from basic to advanced programming, bridging the digital divide and positioning Southern Philippines as an emerging technology hub in Southeast Asia.

Key Focus Areas

- Expand high-speed internet connectivity to underserved areas
- Establish technology hubs providing workspace and mentorship
- Develop digital skills training aligned with industry needs



Contact Information

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Fostering balanced growth and democratizing opportunities for improvement

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